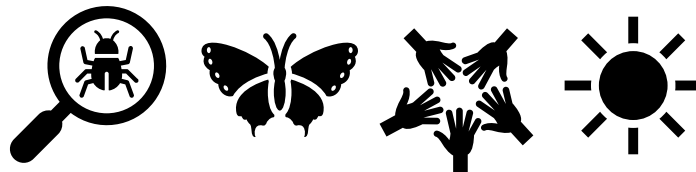




**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Camp Birkett Outdoor Center

Field Trip Programming & Planning Guide



Welcome to Camp Birkett Outdoor Center's Field Trip Program. Our mission is to provide outdoor recreational and educational programs for youth, families, and the community at-large, that is inclusive, accessible, and empowers all ages in developing the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to engage in outdoor activities. Camp Birkett also provides the perfect learning grounds toward building skills in teamwork, leadership, and greater self-confidence. Our teamwork challenges, and outdoor adventure activities offer something for everyone. We integrate our core values of Respect, Responsibility, Caring, and Honesty into everything we do. Our team prioritizes creating an experience that is inclusive, celebratory of differences, and welcoming to all.

Our Curriculum Offerings

We offer two focus areas for programming. This guide includes some of our favorite programming options, but we encourage you to let us know any specific interests you and your students have, and we can tailor our programming to your needs.

Outdoor & Adventure Education

Camp Birkett has a long history of offering certified and safe instruction in canoeing and archery, as well as opportunities to build other outdoor skills such as fire safety, orienteering, and more. These skills can increase students' feelings of confidence in participating in outdoor activities, opening doors for their further connection with the natural world.

Leadership & Teambuilding

Our roots as a summer camp led to a wealth of games, activities, and challenges that build students' leadership skills, and collaborative ability, and strengthen their relationships with their group mates. Plus, they're fun!



Highlighted Program

Camp 101

For the schools whose students go on an overnight camping trip in middle school, this one-day program is an excellent introduction to many of the experiences they will have at an overnight camp. For students who do not have a lot of outdoor experience, going away to camp can be a lot to take in. By participating in our one-day program, we can increase student's knowledge and comfort with the camp experience, making it more positive and accessible to all.

This program includes the following options:

Morning Circle Camp Songs

We'll sing a few silly camp songs, teaching the words and moves to make your students feel like pros.

Operation Camp!

Will I get eaten by a bear? What if I get a tick? Dispel camp anxiety in this session where we'll answer student's questions about everything outdoors. We'll include information for identifying poison ivy, knowing what sort of wildlife they might encounter (and what to do if they do), and other common concerns. Campers will also hear about what makes camp such a great experience, and how they will grow through the experience. We'll finish up with learning how to play a classic camp game: Gaga ball!

1-2 Outdoor & Adventure Activities

Choose activities from our outdoor & adventure section. Consider ones such as canoeing and archery, where building a little skill now can go a long way in boosting student's confidence in the future.

Takeaway Arts & Crafts Project

Consider finishing up the day with a classic camp takeaway project such as learning to make friendship bracelets, bead lizards, plastic cord boondoggles, or tie dye (tie-dye \$5 extra per participant)

Outdoor & Adventure Activities

Outdoor activities are great for helping students develop comfort and confidence in the outdoors. As they learn these skills, they feel more prepared and capable of participating in outdoor activities safely and comfortably, which can open doors to more new experiences and deeper engagement with their environment. Outdoor skill building is also inherently cooperative, requiring students to work together. Our workshops require students to engage in critical thinking and experiential learning, and to challenge themselves with new experiences.

Archery

Join us in the archery range to learn an ancient skill still enjoyed today. Students will learn the basics of using simple or compound bows and practice their aim on different targets. In this class, we talk about the importance of breath, calm, and focus to succeed in the archery range.

Canoeing

Learn basic paddle strokes and take a trip out into Silver Lake as a class. Students will learn techniques for canoeing, as well as basic canoe safety. Through a simple obstacle course or a paddle out into the lake, they will work in pairs to communicate and steer the canoe. Going out in canoes allows opportunities to see wildlife, learn a new skill, and increase student's connection to the world around them.

Fire building & Fire Safety

A classic outdoor skill that is valuable and increases students' understanding of fire safety. Students will create a fire ring, learn what makes good tinder for starting fires, construct campfires for different purposes, cook a snack or simple meal, and learn to safely put a fire out. A great teambuilding experience as students work in groups to forage for kindling and build their fires.

Shelter Building

How do you select the best space to build your shelter? How do you build using limited materials? Shelter building is a hands-on collaborative activity as students must work together to plan, hold things up, fasten, and problem-solve. Students learn different ways to construct a shelter from a tarp, cords, and their surroundings. Each shelter fits a different situation by providing protection from damp ground, sun, or rain. A great skill-building workshop if you intend to spend time outdoors with your students throughout the semester.

Teambuilding

Built on years of summer camp leadership programming, our teambuilding activities are designed to be fun and challenging. They can strengthen your student's self-confidence, their trust in one another, and the entire class's ability to work as a team. We can schedule a single period of teambuilding activities, or an entire day's worth for your students, with varied activities that challenge them in different ways and are super fun! Because teambuilding activities require varying levels of abstract and critical thinking, as well as collaborative skill, we will design the activities based on the age of your students and the goals you are hoping to reach. Below are a few examples of activities we have taught, but the curriculum for your students will be tailored to them.

Note, because some activities rely on students to work towards trusting each other physically and emotionally, they will be asked to step into a challenge by choice mindset. Students have full control of how much they would like to participate in each activity, but to learn and grow, discomfort and trust may be necessary. Please make sure your students know this before signing them up!

Laughing Leaders

This teambuilding session focuses on fun and silly challenges that are filled with joy and laughter. Less serious than other sessions, it works to bring students together by creating truly fun memories. This session is a great way to get to know one another at the start of the year or celebrate at the end of the year. The activities encourage the vulnerability of being willing to be silly in front of others. Can you get a cookie in your mouth without using your hands? Can you shave a balloon without popping it? Can you throw a rubber chicken through a hula hoop held by your teammates blindfolded more times than an opposing team? The sky is the limit to the silliness possible for your laughing leaders!

Lead Me to Safety!

This teamwork challenge requires students to trust one another, listen to each other, and think about how to give instructions that their teammates can understand and easily follow while blindfolded. They will work their way through an obstacle course together and discuss what traits made for the most successful experiences leading and following.

Alligator River

This challenge requires the entire group to work together to navigate a treacherous river full of alligators, without leaving anyone behind! Students must talk through their strategy together, test their ideas, and start over when necessary.

If you are interested in teamwork activities, reach out to speak with our program director!

FAQ's, Trip Planning, & Policies & Procedures

FAQ's

Q. How many activities or workshops can we do in a day?

A. Two to four depending on what activities are chosen.

Q. How long is the day?

A. We offer full or part-day programming to fit your needs.

Q. What happens if it rains?

A. This will largely depend on what workshops are chosen and the severity of the weather. If we are scheduled to do archery and it is drizzling, we might erect a canopy for students to be under or provide rain ponchos. If the weather is more severe, we will switch to a backup activity indoors such as making catapults. For canoeing, we will only venture out onto the lake when we are certain it is safe to do so. We will keep an eye on the forecast and be in touch with your program a few days out if there is the potential for weather to cause disruptions so we can discuss alternative plans.

Q. What sort of training do the facilitators have?

Facilitators leading canoeing and archery are certified by the American Canoeing Association and the USA Archery Organization respectively. All staff are certified in CPR/First Aid and receive curriculum training before leading programming.

Trip Planning

Transportation

Schools are responsible for the arrangement of transportation to and from Camp Birkett Outdoor Center.

Arrival and Departure Times

Arrival times are flexible as we understand schools come from different distances. At the earliest, schools may arrive at 8:30 a.m. and should depart by 2:30 p.m. Exact times can be set when you schedule your program.

Sample schedule

9:30	Arrival
9:40-10:00	Opening Circle, Norms & Expectations

10:00-10:15	Group up and intro activity
10:15-11:15	Workshop #1
11:15-12:15	Workshop # 2
12:15-1:00	Lunch & Games
1:00-2:00	Workshop #3
2:00-2:30	Closing circle
2:30	Departure

Weather Conditions

Please note some of our programming is weather-dependent, and we will not run certain activities when it is not safe to do so. We have alternative curriculum options for bad weather which we will discuss with you during the initial booking. Depending on the programming chosen we can reschedule as space allows.

Students with Specific Needs

We want this to be an engaging and fun experience for all students. Please let us know if there are needs, we should take into consideration while planning so we can do our best to support those needs during your time here.

What to Bring

Schools are expected to bring the following:

- Any medications that need to be distributed during program hours.
- Any emergency medications including Epi-pens and inhalers.
- A roster of students

All participants (Students, Chaperones, Teachers) should bring the following.

- A sweater or jacket
- A raincoat or poncho if there is a chance of rain
- A change of clothes
- Close toed shoes (shoes need to have both toe and heel. Crocs and other slides/mules are not considered close toed shoes)
- Sunscreen
- A sack lunch and snacks
- A water bottle

*Camp Birkett maintains a supply of surplus rain gear, water bottles, and backup lunch and snacks for participants who need them.

Policies & Procedures

Cancellation & Refund

Deposit is due at the time of booking. We will issue an initial invoice reflecting your total estimated cost. Final cost will be based on updated participant numbers provided two weeks out from your booking. Cancellation notice must be sent 60 days in advance to the date of programming, 100% of deposit (50% of total program fee) kept if cancelled.

Code of Conduct

- No swearing or inappropriate language
- No smoking or vaping
- drugs, alcohol weapons, vapes, and cigarettes are not permitted onto the property
- All regular school rules apply
- Physical punishment is not permitted by state law or Camp Birkett guidelines
- Medical marijuana and cbd products may not be stored or administered on Camp Birkett property.
- Camp Birkett Outdoor Center strives to be a welcoming space for all. We do not allow any derogatory language that disparages any aspect of a person's identity, including but not limited to: gender, race, sexuality, disability, or age

Please do not bring the following:

- Cell phones
- Firearms, knives, weapons
- Electronic devices
- Money or other valuables
- Vapes or other nicotine or marijuana products

Planning timeline

Upon Booking

- Sign and return reservation contract
- Submit your deposit payment (20% of the estimated total listed in your reservation contract) to:

Ann Arbor YMCA

ATTN: Emma Roeder

400 W Washington St.

Ann Arbor, MI, 48103

90 Days Prior

- Confirm program plan and submit additional 30% deposit

One Month Prior

- Distribute parent letter and packing list
- Distribute health information form
- Distribute teacher and chaperone guidelines

Two Weeks Prior

- Send a final roster of participants
- Finalize transportation to and from camp

Before You Leave

- Determine student groups for the day – Each group should be 8-11 students
- Bring the following paperwork: Health Information Form, Student Roster, Map to Camp

Post Field Trip

- Complete feedback form
- Submit remaining 50% payment based on updated invoice (will take into account any changes from the initial participant numbers)