

2023

BYM Camps Family Handbook

Teen Adventure | TA Leadership Training | TA Farm & Art



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Welcome to 2023 at BYM Camps!

Dear Campers & Families

Welcome to Summer 2023 at BYM Camps! Whether you're new to BYM Camps or returning for the latest of many glorious summers with us, we can't wait to see you, to play and adventure with you in these beautiful Appalachian mountains, to get to know who you are now, in this moment. We're so excited to make 2023 the best summer yet at BYM Camps, and we're overjoyed that you'll be a part of it.

This Family Handbook will provide you with important information about how camp operates, how to drop them off and pick them up, the necessary paperwork and documentation we need before your child arrives at camp, what to pack (and what not to pack), and so much more! Even if you are a returning family, please look over this handbook, because several aspects of BYM Camps have changed from previous years. In general, please use the Family Handbook as your guide to start preparing for camp!

We will be in touch by email and through [The Spark](#) newsletter with several additional communications and opportunities to connect throughout the Winter and Spring, to ensure that you have the most accurate and up-to-date information about Summer 2023 at BYM Camps. If you have any questions about this handbook, about our programs or policies, or about anything else related to Summer 2023, please don't hesitate to [contact us](#).

We'll see you at camp!

Cheers,

Brian Massey (he/him)

Program Manager, BYM Camps

January 15

REGISTRATION FOR THE 2023 CAMP SEASON OPENS

March 15

FINAL DAY TO WITHDRAW BEFORE FORFEITING DEPOSIT

May 15

FULL BALANCE FOR CAMPER TUITION DUE

June 20

**MEDICAL FORM AND
IMMUNIZATION RECORDS DUE**

July 1 - July 23

**TEEN ADVENTURE, TA LEADERSHIP TRAINING,
AND TA FARM & ART**

Brian Massey (he/him)

PROGRAM MANAGER, BYM CAMPS

BRIAN@BYMCAMPS.ORG

(336) 301-5210

Teen Adventure Base Camp

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LEXINGTON, VA 24450



Rosie Eck (she/her)

CO-DIRECTOR, TEEN
ADVENTURE

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Contact Info and Communication

Communication with BYM Before Camp

Before camp is in session, please reach out to Brian Massey by phone or email. Brian can address most pre-camp questions and concerns or connect you with your camp's director as needed.

Communication with BYM During Camp

Teen Adventure campers will spend their experience on the trail and away from the TA Base Camp (with the exception of two days at the beginning of the session, and two days of closure)."

Communication with Your Camper During Camp

Teen Adventure has been designed to meet the needs of older, more independent and capable young people. Teens doing Teen Adventure Program (TAP) and Teen Adventure Leadership (TALT) will spend their camping experience on the trail (with the exception of two days at the beginning of our session and two days of closure). Thus, there is no central location for visiting or phone calls. You are welcome to send letters or care packages to Teen Adventure. Remember, mail will be forwarded only at scheduled transition times requiring transportation or food drop off, etc. Also remember that anything your teen receives will have to be consumed, disposed of, or carried on their back for the remainder of the trip!

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY: Please call the Teen Adventure Base Camp directly at this number: 540-463-7234. Additionally, if possible, please email the Program Manager (brian@bymcamps.org) and put "URGENT" in the email subject line. Every effort will be made to get an emergency message to your camper as soon as possible.

Directions, Drop-Off and Pick-Up

We would love for you to drop your camper off at the Teen Adventure Base Camp so you can meet our staff and see where the magic begins!

- If you have campers going to another BYM camp on the same day, we ask that you drop off your TA camper first.
- Please do not bring pets when dropping off or picking up campers.
- Finally, leaving camp can be a tender experience. Please leave some space in your schedule for parting rituals and goodbyes.

Drop-Off
1-3PM
July 1

Pick-Up
10:30-11:30AM
July 23

Directions to the Teen Adventure Base Camp from I-81 at Lexington, VA

Take 64 West.

Take first exit - US 11 South.

Take US 11 S Bypass.

Go straight at the light (where the Bypass rejoins US 11) onto Rt. 251 (at this light look at your odometer – the left fork onto Blue Grass Trail is 10.2 miles from the light).

Continue straight, road becomes Kyger Hill Road (667).

Fork LEFT over bridge as road becomes Blue Grass Trail (612), for approximately 4.5 miles.

Turn left onto Spring Branch Road (662), go approximately 2 miles. Turn right onto Snakefoot Road (661), go approximately 1 mile. Turn left into the Teen Adventure Base Camp driveway.

[Google Maps](#)

Health and Safety

Your Child's Health and Safety are our Our Top Priorities

Teen Adventure is a rigorous outdoor program, which is why we take many steps to make sure that your camper is happy and healthy, whether they're on the trail or on the farm. The majority of our seasonal staff are trained in Wilderness First Aid, and many are trained in Wilderness First Responder / EMT.

Please read through the following information to ensure a safe and healthy summer for your child. And if any of your health and safety questions are unanswered here, please feel free to reach out to [Brian Massey](#).



Medical Form & Immunization Records

Your child's medical form and immunization records are necessary parts of the application to camp and are DUE before they arrive at camp. Without knowledge of your campers' needs, it is very hard for us to take the best care we can of your child. Please ensure that you or your physician's office send us a copy of the information outlined in the Medical Form found in the registration system, prior to arriving at camp. You may use our form to submit information or it may be whatever form your physician provides to you, provided their form covers the same information. This form must be submitted every year, and all campers must have a physical exam within one year of the start of their camp session. All campers must have received all immunizations listed on this form that they are eligible for. BYM recognizes religious and medical exemptions from this policy. However, we ask that medical exemptions be accompanied by documentation from your child's doctor, confirming the camper has a medical reason they cannot be immunized. Please contact us should you need this additional form for your child. Please take care to review your camper's medical information by June 20.

Medications

Please be aware that BYM Camps can only administer prescription drugs in accordance with direction from licensed medical personnel. BYM Camps must have a doctor's written direction on the original labeled bottle of

medicine. Please note that we also require a doctor's note for any over-the-counter medications your camper brings to camp. Camper parents / guardians must supply the camp with enough medicine for the time the camper attends one of our camps, or make arrangements to ensure that the prescription can be refilled at camp. Some medications may require approval from the prescribing doctor to ensure the camper can safely participate in camp. It is not recommended to disrupt a camper's medication schedule during the time they are at camp.

Ticks

At BYM Camps, we take ticks very seriously. During the summer, staff are instructed to facilitate regular tick checks, and it is a point of emphasis throughout each session. We also provide families with information about ticks in advance of the summer, and provide recommendations for how to reduce their camper's risk. You can find some of that information here:

- [Information about ticks and tick-borne illnesses in the US \(CDC\)](#)
- [Information about Lyme disease \(CDC\)](#)
- [How to prevent and avoid tick bites \(University of Rhode Island\)](#)

Lice Policy

Parents should check their campers for lice and nits before they come to camp. Campers should not come to camp if they have an active case of head lice or any nits. If a camper comes to camp and is found to have either nits or live head lice, they will be sent home to be treated.

Rejoining Teen Adventure is dependent on the specifics of trip scheduling since the campers are not stationary for long periods of time and meeting up with them may be difficult or impossible. Lice checks should be done at least one month ahead of time to give time for thorough eradication before a camper shows up. Parents may either do the work themselves or hire the services of a professional nit-picker if such is available to them. For more information on head lice on the [CDC's website](#).

Food & Allergies

We are proud of the delicious, nutritious meals and snacks that we serve. Teen Adventure campers participate in all aspects of meal production, from meal planning to meal preparation to clean-up. We provide healthy, high-quality food and regularly accommodate a variety of dietary needs such as omnivores, vegetarians, vegans, and gluten-free diets. We are also able to provide for campers with allergies to such things as peanuts, eggs, etc. Every camper has access to healthy food choices that are safe for them to eat, though dietary restrictions may reduce the number of options available to them. We do our best to accommodate a wide range of eating needs but cannot

guarantee that all preferences / pickiness can be accommodated. We ask questions about your camper's diet during the registration process, so our staff can be informed and prepared to nourish all members of our camp communities.

Sickness or Injury While at Teen Adventure

Teen Adventure staff are all trained in CPR and First Aid, many are trained in Wilderness First Aid, and several are trained as Wilderness First Responders. Teen Adventure has on-call medical and mental health personnel available for support and consultation. Teen Adventure staff are equipped with the training and supplies to care for most injuries and sickness while on the trail. However, if more rest or care is needed, camp staff will transport the camper to base camp if appropriate, or to a local clinic or hospital if appropriate. They will stay with the camper while they receive care. We will contact you as soon as possible if we see the need to do this. Your insurance will be billed for any off-site medical care that is provided.

We will make every effort to return the camper to their group and complete their Teen Adventure experience. However, if they require extended rest or healing, that might not be possible, and they might have to go home. We will be in touch with their parents throughout.

What to Bring to Camp

Teen Adventure
TA Leadership
Training
TA Farm & Art

The following list is extremely important so please follow it closely.

Proper equipment is essential for all TA campers. Our goal is to provide exciting, challenging and positive outdoor adventures. However, the quality of your camper's experience depends largely on the appropriateness of the equipment you provide. The misery caused by an ill-fitting backpack or inadequate shoes can color a camper's attitude toward backpacking, hiking and camping, in general. Please help your teenager enjoy Teen Adventure! All items in the Required Equipment section are absolutely necessary. For safety reasons, campers are not permitted on the trail without them.

BYM Camps is able to help families acquire the required equipment, if necessary. If you need assistance or support, please reach out directly to [Brian Massey](#).



Required Equipment

- **Frame backpack with shoulder straps and a hip belt**

It is essential that your backpack has padded shoulder straps, a padded hip belt, and sternum straps (across the chest). Please test fit the pack before coming to camp (add weight for an accurate fit!) and ensure that all straps can be tightened securely. This allows the weight to be distributed across the whole torso and into the legs, instead of resting mainly on the shoulders. The pack must fit your camper well - we don't want them to be uncomfortable when they hike! If you have doubts or questions about how to gauge the size and fit of a backpack, contact a reliable outfitter.

- **Synthetic sleeping bag with stuff sack**

We recommend a sleeping bag filled with a synthetic fiber. Down filled sleeping bags will absorb water and become heavy and less warm if they get wet, and flannel sleeping bags are simply too heavy. Stuff sacks are necessary for packing the sleeping bag tightly. Many campers also bring a "sheet sack" to line the sleeping bag on hot nights; these can be bought, or DIY'ed (fold an old twin top sheet in half long-ways and sew up the bottom and side).

- **Footwear**

- **Hiking shoes or boots**

Since we carry more weight on the trail than our legs are normally accustomed to, it is important to have

sturdy hiking shoes which can provide the feet and ankles with extra support. If you plan to have your camper wear sneakers while hiking, check that they have enough support: grasp a shoe in two hands by the heel and the toe, and twist - it should feel very stiff, not bendy. There should also be ample room in the toe box, with a snug fit around the midfoot and heel. If you buy new shoes or boots, be sure to break them in by wearing for several days in the weeks leading up to camp! Wool socks for hiking are highly encouraged, as they wick sweat and help prevent blisters (wool socks are often thicker than other socks, so be sure that they fit in your shoes! Many people wear hiking shoes a half or whole size larger than their everyday shoes.)

- **Water shoes**

Water shoes are for canoeing, playing in the creeks, etc., and must protect the camper's feet. They must be close-toed and secure around the heel. Old sneakers work well. Crocs and open-toed sandals are NOT allowed to serve as water shoes (however these can be great in-camp shoes as long as they have a secure heel strap).

- **In-camp shoes**

These are for wearing in the evenings around the campsite. They should be lightweight and have a heel strap. Examples include sandals and crocs.

Required Equipment (Continued)

- **Sleeping pad**

- These are for comfort and insulation sleeping on the ground. Closed-cell foam pads are nice because they are quick to set up and won't absorb water. Inflatable pads are also acceptable (check first that they don't leak and we recommend a ground cloth or second pad underneath to avoid popping during the trip).

- **Toiletries**

This includes a toothbrush, toothpaste, and menstrual products if necessary. Other hygiene products can be brought in small travel containers as needed. Please do not bring soap, shampoo, or a towel, as there will most likely not be an opportunity to shower, and we do not want to contaminate natural bodies of water. Please also keep scented products such as deodorant at home.

- **Waterproof raincoat or poncho**

- **2-3 water bottles** (or 1 bottle and a reservoir)

- **Flashlight and/or headlamp, and extra batteries!**

- **Mess kit** (lightweight and non-fragile bowl and spoon for eating meals on the trail)

- **Sunscreen lotion** (not aerosol cans)

- **Dry bags or heavy-duty garbage bags** (to keep clothes and sleeping bag dry)

- **Clothes**

- **2 synthetic t-shirts**
- **1 long sleeved shirt** (for warmth and/or sun)

- **2 pairs synthetic shorts**

- **1 pair synthetic long pants** (hiking pants or lightweight fleece)

- **Synthetic jacket or fleece sweater**

- **Underwear**

- **2-4 pairs of wool socks**

- **Warm hat**

- **Sun hat**

- **Swimwear** (a swimsuit or anything lightweight and quick-drying that your camper is comfortable swimming in)

Recommended/Optional Equipment

- **Bug repellent spray** (not aerosol cans)

- **Tick-prevention spray** (Permethrin)

- Recommendation is to pre-treat clothes and sleeping bag before camp. For more information, go [here](#).

- **Zip lock bags** (to help keep things dry on the trail)

- **Waterproof pack cover**

- **Bandanas**

- **Sunglasses, glasses strap**

- **Letter writing materials** (camp can be very humid, so we recommend sending peel off stamps and envelopes rather than those that seal with moisture)

- **Reading material, journal or sketchbook** (small)

- **Disposable camera**

- **Playing cards**

- **A clean set of clothes** (to wear the day trips get back)

Do Not Bring

- Any item you cannot bear to lose or would not want to see damaged
- Cell phones, i-pods, or electronic games
- Food or candy
- Fireworks, matches, lighters, candles, spark igniters, or any other type of fire starter
- Weapons (small camping knives are permitted, but counselors must be made aware of them and may hold onto them)
- Drugs, alcohol, nicotine or vape products (bringing these items or improperly using prescription drugs will result in campers being sent home)

REMEMBER

YOU HAVE TO CARRY ALL THIS EQUIPMENT IN YOUR PACK, ON YOUR BACK, THROUGHOUT YOUR TRIP. THIS IS TRUE WHETHER YOU ARE ON THE FIRST-YEAR TEEN ADVENTURE PROGRAM, THE SECOND-YEAR TA LEADERSHIP TRAINING, OR TA FARM & ART. PACK LIGHT! LOAD YOUR PACK AND TRY IT ON. THEN ADD 15 POUNDS OF CANNED FOOD! MAKE SURE THAT IT FITS WELL AND IS COMFORTABLE. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO STRESS ENOUGH THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPER EQUIPMENT.



A note on the Quaker Testimonies and packing for camp:

Quakers, or Friends, follow a set of 6 core values known as testimonies. They are Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equity, and Stewardship (often remembered by the acronym S.P.I.C.E.S.). These testimonies provide a framework for much of the structure and philosophy at camp. You are welcome to visit [our website](#) to learn more!

While you and your camper(s) prepare for camp, we ask that you keep these in mind. In particular:

Simplicity

Camp is a wonderful opportunity to “get back to the basics” and experience the simple joys of connecting to nature and each other. For this reason, we ask that you please leave items like cell phones and electronic games at home. Since we are outside a lot of the time, we also recommend that you bring clothes and supplies which you are comfortable with getting dirty, wet, or otherwise damaged. We want your camper to be free of worries as much as possible, so pack in a way that helps them feel safe. Avoid bringing items that you cannot bear to lose.

Peace

Nonviolence at camp is extremely important. Please do not bring weapons or potentially dangerous items. This includes things that perpetuate non-physical types of harm, such as clothing or books with offensive language. Thank you for doing your part to make camp a safer space!

Equity

BYM strives to ensure that all campers feel welcome and comfortable and the presence of extraneous and expensive items can interfere with that. To that end, we discourage packing additional items beyond those suggested here.

Stewardship

We are so grateful for the gifts of nature, and we want to care for the environment as best as we are able. On the trail we practice Leave No Trace (LNT) which means we leave nature as clean as (or cleaner than!) we found it. Please bring toiletries in rub/roll/squirt containers rather than aerosolized spray cans, to minimize the spread of pollutants. We pack out all trash, so consider avoiding individually packaged or single-use items where possible (e.g. bring a roll of floss instead of floss picks).

We are so excited to share this summer with you! Thank you for considering the Quaker S.P.I.C.E.S. as you pack.

Camp Culture

Creating a Diverse Community

At Teen Adventure we strive to create an emotionally safe, fun, inclusive, respectful, engaging community where diversity is honored and celebrated. Campers, staff, and families at Teen Adventure may represent diversity in terms of learning styles, life experiences, and social identities (including: religion, class, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and ability). With the guidance of our trained staff this can create a wonderful opportunity for young people to expand their awareness and learn from each other's experiences.

Gender Inclusive Camps

Teen Adventure and Teen Adventure Farm & Art are gender inclusive summer camps and communities that are not divided by an individual's sex assigned at birth. Rather, we support each community member to be in housing and social groupings that most align with their gender identity. BYM Camps includes non-binary and transgender staff and youth, and we work to model inclusivity in many ways, including by inviting all community members, as they feel comfortable, to share their gender pronouns. BYM Camps is a community where campers and staff use the full spectrum of gender pronouns and identify with the full non-binary spectrum of gender.

Behavioral Expectations

BYM Camps strive to strike a thoughtful balance between the needs of the individual and needs of the community to provide a safe and healthy camp experience for all. Behaviors that imperil individual or group safety or actions that seriously violate community norms may necessitate that camper(s) be sent home.

We spend time at the beginning of each session discussing positive behavioral expectations. As with any community, conflicts or disruptive behaviors will arise. Staff are trained to help campers work through these issues productively, and most can be dealt with through discussion and with support. We will respond to each situation lovingly and with attention to all circumstances; however, conflicts or behaviors that are egregious or that cannot be resolved in a way that supports the community as a whole may result in a camper being sent home from camp.

Camper Code of Conduct

These values and more are outlined in the BYMP Camps Code of Conduct. We ask that all parents/guardians review this information with their campers and sign their agreement with it by June 20. While the signable document is in our registration portal, you can also review it [here](#).

Tuition and Policies

Tuition

It is our commitment that no child will be turned away due to their family's financial situation. For the 2023 Summer, our Sliding Scale Tuition Levels for Teen Adventure and Teen Adventure Farm & Art are as follows:

Full-Cost: \$4500

Operating Cost: \$3750

Sliding Scale: \$3000, \$2250, or \$1500

Deposits and Dates

Before May 15: \$100 deposit is required upon registration.

After May 15: full tuition is required upon registration.

May 15: full balance of tuition is due.

Policies

Deposits are non-refundable, unless you are requesting reduced tuition through the Sliding Scale or other means.

Unpaid balances for any and all family members must be reconciled in order for a camper to be registered.

No tuition reduction will be made for a late arrival or an early departure.

Payment can be made by credit card through our online registration system, or by check through the mail.

Registration cancellations made before March 15 are eligible for a tuition refund, except for the non-refundable deposit.

Families are responsible for the full amount of tuition if a cancellation is made after March 15, except in cases of severe illness, injury, family emergency, or other extenuating circumstance.

Families who request reduced tuition through the Sliding Scale have two weeks from confirmation of their rate to accept and confirm registration, or to withdraw their registration and receive a refund of the deposit.

There will be no refund if a camper is asked to leave during the session for an infraction of a camp rule, for disruptive behavior, or if a camper is voluntarily withdrawn.

Campership

Gifts to the BYM Campership Fund ensure that all young people can have an impactful experience at BYM Camps, regardless of their ability to pay. Each year, more than 40% of our families receive a Campership that enables them to send their kids to camp. To learn more or donate, visit [here](#).

After Camp

Staying in Touch with Each Other

If you or your camper would like to stay in touch with other campers and their families throughout the year, please encourage your camper to get the necessary contact information while still at camp! However, if they get home and either lost it or forgot to get it, please feel free to contact the Program Manager, who can help connect campers and their families. We love to support the camp community all year round!

Staying in Touch with Us

The Spark is our newsletter for parents and families of current campers. Way Opens is our newsletter for all members of the BYM Camps community. Please make sure you're signed up for both by clicking [here](#).

Surveys & Feedback

Throughout the summer and in the fall, BYM Camps emails surveys to all parents and campers. The information we collect from these is essential to our ongoing processes of growth, development, and evolution. Please pass the



survey to your camper and take the time to complete the survey yourself. Your voice and perspective really matter, and have a big impact!

Mail, Lost & Found, & Shipping Items Home

Any mail that arrives for your child after they have left camp will be forwarded to you or returned to sender. BYM Camps claims no financial responsibility for personal items lost, stolen, or damaged during your child's stay at camp. For this reason, we discourage camper families from sending any items to camp they wouldn't be willing to risk losing. Any lost and found items not claimed within one-week of the last day of camp will be donated within a week of camp's end. If you claim an item before that time,



Medical Bills

Medical bills incurred over the summer will be sent from off-site facilities to your insurance provider. If necessary, BYM Camps will pay for prescriptions up front, and then bill families.

Photos from Camp

With today's emphasis on preserving every moment in pictures and Instagram posts, we prioritize an environment where campers can live in the moment and not worry about how they look. We understand many families want to see photos of their children at camp, but because of the sizes and locations of our camps and the scope of our programming we are unable to photograph every camper. We will take and share as many photos as possible without impacting programming or the camper experience. Campers are welcome to bring disposable cameras or digital cameras (that they don't mind getting lost or broken) if they want to take pictures themselves. If they do, we always love when campers share their best photos with us as well. The magic that happens at camp is hard to capture!

