



Camp Fitch – YMCA – Packing List Clothing and Equipment List

Sack Lunch – Bring a disposable packed lunch for the first day or buy one from our cafeteria. A drink is provided. (Please, no glass containers)

Bedding

Sleeping bag or sheets and blankets (2)

Pillow/pillowcase

Clothing

Warm Winter Jacket – preferably waterproof, if not, a waterproof windbreaker or jacket to be worn over or under a coat.

Boots – waterproof

Tennis Shoes

Winter Hat

Gloves

Sweaters and Sweatshirts

Heavy & Light Shirts

Jeans or Sweatpants – 3 to 4 pair

Pajamas – 1 pair

Underwear – 2 or 3 pair

Socks – 3 to 4 pair

Toiletries

Toothpaste & Toothbrush

Soap

Towel & Washcloth

Comb or Brush

Kleenex or Handkerchief

General & Optional Equipment

Flashlight

Camera (preferably disposable)

*****Prohibited Items*****

Cell Phones

Money

Food

Gum & Candy

Electronic Devices (games, mp3 players, etc.)



Information Packet

The Camp Fitch Experience

Each year the fifth grade students of James W. Parker Middle School pack up and head off to Camp Fitch for several days of outdoor education. To help parents and students understand the program better we have put together this packet. Please take a few minutes to read and discuss this with your child. Many questions and concerns you have will be answered by the information in this packet.

About Camp Fitch

Camp Fitch is owned and operated by the YMCA of Youngstown, Ohio. Camp Fitch is located on the shores of Lake Erie, in North Springfield, PA. It has hundreds of acres of woods and trails. There are several creeks and streams. There are several lodges for instruction and sleeping. All facilities are handicapped accessible and student friendly with plenty of hot water and heat.

Camp Fitch offers a wide range of activities for the students. Foremost are the lessons in history, science and outdoor living. Students learn as they experience. Even the games played at Camp Fitch are designed to promote thinking and cooperation. There are such supervised activities as rock climbing, hiking, crafts, animal care, cross-country skiing, and just about anything else you could wish for in terms of a camp.

The staff members at Camp Fitch are well trained and prepared to give campers the best and safest visit possible. They are friendly and readily available to help the students at any time.

Getting Ready for Camp

The preparation for Camp Fitch begins about two months before camp and continues right up to the day the students get on the bus and head to camp. The program is kicked off with a parent night, followed the next day by a presentation given to the students. At both presentations, information and questions are addressed. Much of the information is the same as what you will find in this packet.

Fundraising to Help Pay the Cost of Camp

To help parents with the cost of sending their child to Camp Fitch, this year the students are given the chance to sell Yankee Candles. For each item you sell, the child's account is credited with a profit which goes directly toward the cost of their trip. Any extra money made after camp bills have been paid is placed in the fifth grade fund. This fund travels with the class as they move on to sixth grade. Selling candles is a great way to help pay for Camp Fitch. With Yankee Candle, you can sell locally to friends and family or you can forward the information online and your customers can order and pay on their own. The items will be shipped directly to them. Some families are not interested in participating in the fund raiser and prefer to simply pay the cost of camp. This is also an option.

Lessons Before Camp

About a week before the students leave for Camp Fitch, they are given a lesson on preparing for the experience. At this time, they learn about staying warm, dressing in layers, and packing a good waterproof duffle bag. They discover what is allowed at camp and what is forbidden at camp. They are told about the schedule they will follow and what to expect in terms of classes.

Parent Contact

As the preparations progress you can expect to get plenty of reminders and instructions. About a week after the fundraiser is returned, you will get a packet with the balance your child has due, the permission slip, packing list, pick up information for when we return to school on Friday, medication alert, gear alert, and first day lunch options. All important forms are usually due about mid November. Communication is very important to us and the success of the Camp Fitch program. By the time camp rolls around, all of your questions and concerns will have been addressed, and if they haven't, please don't hesitate to contact the school.

The People Going to Camp

The Fifth Graders

The biggest group of people going to Camp Fitch will be the fifth grade students themselves. Fifth grade is a perfect time to offer this program. The children are young enough to enjoy the campfire sing-along, and old enough to convince mom and dad that they will be fine. Fifth grade at JWPMS marks the time when the children from two communities come together and join a larger one. Camp Fitch is a time when students form lasting bonds and become a closer group. Friendships are formed and life-lasting memories are developed.

The High School Counselors

Two months before the trip, high school students are invited to apply to become a Camp Fitch counselor. Once the applications are turned in, a team of faculty and principals begin the difficult task of selecting high school counselors. Approximately two to three counselors are chosen for every ten to fourteen campers. When needed, extra counselors are taken along to ensure a positive experience for students of all ability levels. The counselors are seniors, juniors and occasionally a sophomore from our GMHS. The counselors must have three recommendations from high school teachers. Picking counselors is as rewarding as it is difficult. Many applications come in. Only the very best ever make it to camp as a counselor.

The counselors are paired up with campers. Each group of students has both male and female counselors as they complete camp activities. The counselors remain with the students the entire time at camp. They receive training from the fifth grade teachers and from the camp directors as well.

The Trip Itself

The big day arrives, butterflies fly, counselors wonder what they have gotten themselves into, and fifth graders, most of whom have been packed for a month, grab their pillow and head for camp.

Day One

The trip starts at about 10:00am at the middle school when the students board the busses. The campers arrive at Camp Fitch about 45 minutes later. They meet the staff, unpack, check out their lodge, and then head for lunch. That first afternoon they have two classes and option time. Dinner is served and the students have a short time to regroup before evening activities. Lights out comes at 10:00pm.

Day Two

The second day starts with a morning hike or morning activity before breakfast. Campers can choose to skip the hike and meet their group at the dining hall for a home cooked breakfast.

After breakfast, the students participate in two to three classes and then return to the main lodge for a hot lunch. Following lunch the students have three more classes.

Following the afternoon classes, students go to dinner. The food is good and there is plenty! After dinner the students go to their cabins where the counselors encourage them to clean up before evening activities.

The second night's activities have become one of the highlights of the Camp Fitch experience. We would love to share the events of that night with you, but we want it to be a surprise for the students. Following the activities, there is a campfire and snack before bedtime.

Day Three

The final day at camp begins just as the second with one exception: the children are a little more tired! Breakfast is served and afterwards they return to their cabin for pack-up. The students attend one more class, then head for lunch. Lunch is another home cooked meal, followed by a counselor presentation and final picture session.

We then load the busses and head for JWPMS. A note will be sent home detailing the time and pickup instructions.

