



**CAMP SPEERS-ELJABAR YMCA
RESIDENT CAMP
PARENTS HANDBOOK
SUMMER 2010**



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WELCOME TO THE CAMP SPEERS-ELJABAR YMCA CAMP FAMILY!

Thank you for choosing Camp Speers-Eljabar YMCA for your child's summer camp experience! Our 1,100 acres of wilderness in the Pocono Mountains provide the perfect setting for our diverse, challenging and fun programs. Campers will make lifelong friends and learn about the world from exceptional staff. They'll acquire and strengthen new activity proficiencies as well as values based, social skills. They'll learn acceptance and appreciation of all people while interacting and living with children and staff from diverse backgrounds. But most of all, they will have FUN!

This handbook will help you prepare your child for camp and answer a wide range of frequently asked questions. We encourage you to read and become familiar with it. Please complete the enclosed forms with detailed, accurate information and return all forms including the health form by **June 1st**. If you are registering after June 1st, please complete and return all forms at least two weeks prior to your child's camp attendance. If you have any questions or concerns about the registration process, please contact our Camp Office by calling 570-828-2329 between 8am – 6pm M – F or 9am – 5pm Sa-Su.

Please don't hesitate to let us know how we can ensure that your child's camp experience is exceptional. Again, thank you for choosing Camp Speers-Eljabar YMCA. I look forward to seeing you on check-in day.

Cordially,

Daniel Deets
Sr. Program Director/Residential Camp Director

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OPEN HOUSE DATES

Sunday, April 18 th	1 – 4 pm
Sunday, May 16 th	1 – 4 pm
Sunday, June 6 th	1 – 4 pm

Meet some of the summer camp staff and tour the facilities.

ABOUT CAMP SPEERS-ELJABAR YMCA

1. A Proud Heritage

Begun in 1948 as the first YMCA resident camp to welcome and fully integrate campers of ethnic, social and economic backgrounds, Camp Speers-Eljabar YMCA continues to be a place where all children regardless of background share life enhancing summer camp experiences. In the 1970s we added outdoor education, weekend group retreats and conferences to our offerings, thereby becoming a year round facility. With the growth of Pike County in the late 1980s we began offering recreation, day camp and child care programs to residents of the communities surrounding Camp.

2. Leadership

The most important part of a good camp experience is the staff. We are very proud of our outstanding staff who provide leadership in the cabin and program areas. Staff members are carefully selected for their character, commitment to youth development, and skills. Each summer, international students from around the world join our staff as counselors and help broaden the campers' experience. There is an overall ratio of one staff member to every four campers. Cabin counselors are assigned at a maximum of a one to six ratio. All campers are under the supervision of trained camp staff 24 hours a day.

3. Mission

We serve a diverse community and build spirit, mind and body through a unique combination of Summer Camp, Outdoor Education, Conference, Retreat and local Community Programs. As a YMCA, we help build strong kids, strong families and strong communities by providing experiences that instill responsible citizenship, healthy lifestyles, environmental stewardship, international/cultural understanding and cooperation, concern for others and respect for differences.

4. Accreditation

Camp Speers-Eljabar YMCA is accredited by the American Camping Association (ACA), annually licensed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and exceeds the National Standards of the YMCA. Our camp programs are operated within or above the highest standards regarding health, safety, personnel selection, and facility maintenance.

MORE THAN A SUMMER CAMP

We have been committed to providing memorable camping experiences that build healthy bodies, open minds, and rekindled spirits for all. We are a year-round, non-profit organization offering weekend retreats for youth, families and groups, as well as environmental education, leadership development & teambuilding for school students. We also offer programs for youth and families of Pike County such as school age child care, day camp, and horseback riding lessons & trail rides. Come discover for yourself the magic that is Camp Speers-Eljabar YMCA!

IMPORTANT DEADLINES

- One month prior** to attendance – all fees paid in full
- By June 1st** (if registering after June 1st – at least two weeks prior to camp attendance) – the following should be completed and returned to the camp office:
 - ✗ Activity Waiver/Photo Release Form – signed by the parent
 - ✗ Authorization to Administer Medication Form – note must be signed by physician & parent
 - ✗ Cabin-mate Request – in writing by the parents of both campers
 - ✗ Camper Information Form
 - ✗ Health History & Medical Form – must be signed by physician as well as the parent & be notarized
 - ✗ Medical Retainer Deposit - \$200
 - ✗ Store Fund – Recommended amount is \$ 25 per two week session for snacks. Additional money may be left for souvenirs.

FEES & FORMS

1. Payment of Camp Fees

Full payment is **due at least one (1) month prior** to the session(s) that your child will attend. Receipts for payments will be mailed only upon request. Other required advance payments are riding fees (where applicable), changeover weekend fees (where applicable), laundry (if desired), and store money.

2. Refund Policy

Except for the deposit, all other advance payments are refundable if written notice of cancellation is received by the camp office **at least 30 days prior** to the start of the session(s) your child was scheduled to attend. No fee reductions will be made for late arrivals or early departures. It is understood that in the case of homesickness, dismissal, or voluntary withdrawal, there is no refund of fees. If it is deemed advisable to send a camper home for medical reasons, a prorated portion of the camp fees will be refunded.

3. Camper Information Form

The enclosed *Camper Information Form* helps us learn about campers prior to their arrival so that we can plan the best camping experience for them. The Camp Director, Program Director, Head Counselors and Cabin Counselors will read this form. The more information that you provide the better we can anticipate your child's needs. Please complete and return it to the camp office **by June 1st**.

4. Health History and Examination Form

- Campers must be examined by a physician within two years of attending camp.
- The physician must update and sign the physician's portion of the *Health History & Examination Form* annually.
- The *Health History & Examination Form* must be completed and signed by the parent, and the report of physical examination signed by your physician.
- This form must be **NOTARIZED** and mailed to the camp office **by June 1st**.

For the health and safety of your child, it is absolutely essential that we have a complete medical history and all information pertaining to allergies, medications, etc. This provides our nurses with required authority for administering medications and treating the camper. We strongly recommend that you ask your doctor about administering appropriate tetanus and other inoculations with the physical examination. **No child can be admitted to camp without a completed Health History and Examination Form.**

5. Authorization to Administer Medication Form

The *Authorization to Administer Medications Form* must be completed and signed by both the parent and the physician and returned to the camp office **by June 1st** for us to administer any medication to your child, whether prescription or over the counter.

This would include any medication that you send "in case" your child needs it. We stock routine medications such as Tylenol, Benedryl, Chloroseptic, etc. You do not need to send these to camp with your child. We will dispense these medications as directed by our consulting physician as needed and as directed under his standing orders.

6. Activity Waiver/Photo Release Form

The *Activity Waiver/Photo Release Form* gives your permission for your child to participate in camp activities. It also provides you with the opportunity to indicate which, if any camp activities you prefer for your child not to participate in.

We like to celebrate and record your child's experience at camp through video and still photography. We share these images via the eCamp website so that you can see what's happening at camp while your child is here. We also use the images for promotion and recruitment purposes. The Photo Release provides you with the opportunity to request that your child's image not be recorded or used.

7. Cabin Assignments & Cabin-mate Requests

The Program Directors and Head Counselors assign children to cabin groups based on their age and grade in school. If you are sending more than one child to the same camp, we suggest that they not be in the same cabin. When two campers of similar age who are not in the same family **mutually request in writing by June 1st** to be together, we will do our best to fulfill this request. We avoid grouping more than two friends together to prevent cliques from forming.

Children should not come to camp expecting to be in a particular cabin, since the makeup of each cabin group changes from year to year and session to session according to total enrollment. We strive to ensure that each cabin group reflects the diversity of the camp population and is comprised of campers of similar age.

If your child is attending for more than one session, it is likely that he/she will change cabins with each session. Cabin Counselors work to build teamwork and community within their cabin group and take special care to do so during the first few days of each session to ensure that all within their group develop a sense of belonging and connectedness.

8. Store Account

Please establish a store account prior to your child's arrival at camp. The suggested amount of store money is \$25.00 per two week session for basic snacks and small souvenirs, and should be sent in advance with the camp fee. Your deposit will act as a credit account which your child draws against to purchase snacks/juice, camp T-shirts and sweatshirts, toothpaste, combs, writing material, stamps, film, etc. Clothing prices range from \$10.00 to \$40.00. Food and drink purchases are limited to approximately \$2.00 per day. Unless other arrangements are made in writing prior to Sept. 15, uncollected store money will be considered a donation to our campership fund.

PREPARING FOR CAMP

Campers are encouraged to develop a sense of responsibility while at camp. They take care of themselves and their belongings with counselor supervision. We ask that you encourage your child to help select and pack his/her items for camp. (Don't worry too much about neatness!) One of the greatest things children can learn from this camping experience is how to take care of themselves. Support your child's decision to come to camp, and allow him/her to make choices when planning for camp. Above all, concentrate on the new and positive experiences he or she will have.

1. **We have a simple dress code at Camp.** No clothing that reveals underwear (bras or pants) or midriffs. Shorts must be at least fingertip length. No clothing with inappropriate logos such as drug, alcohol, or tobacco references. No clothing that is too revealing, including bathing suits. Do not bring open-toed shoes to wear outdoors – our rocky terrain causes injuries to unprotected toes and feet. Flip-flops or other open toed sandals may be used in the showers.

2. Things to Bring

We urge campers to dress comfortably at camp and in the kinds of clothes they would wear for play at home. We recommend that you do not buy new clothes for Camp – instead send along old, comfortable clothing that can get dirty and/or stained and that you won't care if it is lost or damaged. Please be certain to mark your child's name clearly on all articles. (You may choose to order a clothing name stamp; see flyer enclosed.)

Packing List (guidelines for a 2 week session)

___ 10-12 "T" Shirts	___ 2-3 Long Pants (more for horseback riding)
___ 1 Sleeping Bag	___ 3 Bath Towels
___ 2 Long Sleeve Shirts	___ Underclothes (14 days)
___ Sheets (Twin Size)	___ 1-2 Beach Towels
___ 2-3 Sweatshirts	___ 14 Pairs Socks
___ 1 Blanket (Twin Size)	___ 3-4 Washcloths
___ 10-12 Shorts	
___ 1 Pillow and Case	

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Pair Hiking Shoes or Boots (horseback riders need boots with a minimum of a 1 inch heel) | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Raincoat & Hat or Poncho |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soap w/Carry Case/ Shampoo | <input type="checkbox"/> Bug Repellent (Non-Aerosol – wipes work best) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Pairs Old Sneakers | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Pairs Pajamas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toothbrush and Paste | <input type="checkbox"/> Laundry Bag (well marked) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Light Jacket or sweatshirt | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 or more Hat/Caps |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comb/Brush | <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight w/ extra Batteries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 or 2 Swimsuits | <input type="checkbox"/> Water Bottle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen | <input type="checkbox"/> Water shoes or flip-flops (for the shower and waterfront only) |

Optional Things to Bring

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Camera (prefer disposable) | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing Materials/Journal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunglasses | <input type="checkbox"/> Stationery w/Stamps |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good book to read | <input type="checkbox"/> Dress Outfit for Formal Dinner |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deck of cards or small board game | <input type="checkbox"/> Helmet for horseback riding &/or mountain biking (we supply helmets – some campers choose to bring their own if they have them) |

3. Things NOT to Bring

The following items are not allowed at camp and will be confiscated and held until the final day of camp.

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| Cell Phones* | Knives** | Bows/Arrows |
| MP3s/IPODS* | Guns/Ammunition** | Fireworks |
| Electronic Games* | Drugs** | Skate Boards |
| Computers* | Tobacco** | |
| Radios* | Alcohol** | |
| | Inappropriate Clothing | |

* Camp Speers-Eljabar YMCA is not responsible for valuables or electronics brought to camp.

** Campers found to be in possession of weapons (including but not limited to knives and/or guns), drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products will be asked to leave camp; parents will be notified to pick up their camper immediately.

CAMPER ADJUSTMENT

Parents **and** first time campers experience a wide range of feelings as the first day of camp approaches. Along with the excitement and anticipation of all the wonderful new experiences ahead, there may also be anxiety about these new, unfamiliar experiences. Realize that even though this separation is hard on you too, it is a wonderful opportunity for your child to build confidence and a sense of self-reliance. The following suggestions for first-time campers will help you and your child make the most of this important transition.

1. **Come to Open House.** Open House dates are Sunday, April 18th, May 16th, June 6th from 1-4 PM. This is a great time to become familiar with the camp setting, program areas, and some of the camp staff. Call the office to schedule a personal tour if the Open House dates are not convenient for you.
2. **Pack for camp together.** By doing this, campers know what they’re bringing to camp and where everything is packed; thereby making them feel responsible and capable. This is also a great time to talk about all the wonderful opportunities ahead. Campers may want to try living out of their trunk for a couple of days to practice organizing their belongings. Resist the urge to pack for them; they need to start learning the independence that is expected at camp.
3. **Letters and postcards** are the primary method of communication with your camper. Send letters with positive news from home assuring all is well with you and the rest of the family. Campers love getting mail and may feel “left out” if they don’t receive any and their cabin mates do. Camper-to-parent phone calls are not allowed, and parent-to-camper calls are strongly discouraged especially in cases of homesickness. Our staff will notify you in the event of an emergency situation. Note: The mail often takes one to two extra days for delivery. Please send mail a few days early in order for it to reach your child in time.

4. **Pack pre-addressed and stamped envelopes** for your campers to send letters home. Discuss possible topics and encourage them to write to you. Make a realistic commitment to write to them as well.
5. **Homesickness is a natural feeling experienced by many campers**, for most, it passes after a day or so. Occasionally, a camper will send a “distress letter” the first or second night of camp before they are really into the full swing of the program. These letters are common and are usually followed by a brief “Camp’s great” postcard, or no letters at all because they are busy having a great time.

If you receive a letter from your child expressing homesickness, we encourage you to contact the camp directors for more information. We will check with your camper’s counselors and let you know how things are progressing. Do not rush up to Camp expecting your child to be miserable. You’d be amazed to learn about parents who did so only to have their child greet them with “Why are you here? I’m having a great time!” By the time you receive the “homesick letter” your child is likely to have already overcome it and is enjoying camp to its fullest.

If your camper has a severe case of homesickness, we will contact you immediately to discuss how to improve the situation. Counselors are trained to keep campers busy and engaged with activities as a strategy to keep homesickness under control.

6. **Keep good-byes short.** The transition from home to camp can be awkward and the sooner campers can jump into camp life the easier the transition will be. Letting campers unpack their own belongings and make their own bed is an important step in developing confidence in their ability to care for themselves. Frequently, parents feel guilty about leaving so quickly but our experience shows that short and sweet good-byes are easiest on everyone. You’re welcome to get more information or speak to a staff person at this time, but campers should be encouraged to join their group.
 - Use positive messages about camp such as, “You’re going to have such a great time!” or “What a great opportunity to meet new friends!”
 - Avoid promises to come pick them up if it doesn’t go well. Instead, show your faith that they will enjoy themselves and have a positive experience.

ARRIVAL AND CHECK-IN PROCEDURES

1. **Check-in** is between **12:30 and 3:00 PM** on the opening day of each session. Please do not arrive early, as you will be required to wait until 12:30PM. You will be directed by signs to the Check In area.
2. **Health Screening** The screening includes a head check for lice. Camp has a strict lice policy and any child having nits or eggs will not be admitted to camp until they are nit free.
3. **Medications/Health Care:** Deposit any medications and discuss with the nurse any special medical needs regarding your camper.
4. **Cabin Assignments:** You will be given your child’s cabin assignment once you’ve completed the check in process.
5. **Visit Cabin:** Meet your camper’s counselor. Parents are welcome to enjoy our camp setting; however we encourage **departure by 3:30PM**. Be sure to leave your camper on a positive note. (See Camper Adjustment section for tips on helping your camper to settle into camp)

HEALTH CARE

1. Medication

All medications must be in their original container with the prescription information clearly labeled on the

container.

All medications, vitamins, acne creams, etc. (prescription or over the counter) must be prescribed in writing by the physician on the ***Authorization to Administer Medications Form***. This must include the dosage and administration schedule. For a prescription drug, the doctor's orders must be the same as the label on the medication container. A child will only be given medication in the dose and schedule directed by the prescribing physician. No medications may be kept in the cabins! This includes both prescription and over the counter medications.

We stock routine medications such as Tylenol, Benedryl, Chloroseptic, etc. You do not need to send these to camp with your child.

2. Accident/Illness & Emergency Treatment

Camper health and safety are very important to us. All campers are checked daily for any signs of illness. If your child has a serious accident or illness, requires medical treatment by a physician, or requires more than 24 hours of confinement in the health lodge, you will be notified as soon as possible. The services of a physician and pediatrician are available at the Dingmans Medical (1 mile from camp) as well at Milford Urgent Care Center (15 minutes from camp). Hospital services are available at Wayne Memorial Hospital, Honesdale, PA; Pocono Medical Center in East Stroudsburg, PA; Bon Secours Hospital in Port Jervis, NY; or Newton Memorial Hospital in Newton, NJ.

We will make the necessary travel arrangements and implement follow-up care in our health lodge at no additional cost. However, medical expenses incurred (doctor, hospital, prescription, etc.) are your responsibility. **Please be sure to provide your insurance information and a copy of your current insurance cards** and fill out the permission to provide necessary treatment or emergency care section of the ***Health History and Examination Form***. **This form must be notarized to be valid.**

3. Medical Retainer Deposit

Medical providers will make every effort to bill your insurance company for charges incurred should they attend to your camper's medical needs. However, there is no guarantee that your insurance company will cover these charges. For this reason, we require a Medical Deposit of \$200.00 for each camper prior to arrival (either by Check or MasterCard, Visa, Discover, American Express). If unused, it will be returned to you on checkout day. For your convenience, the registration form now includes a section where you may provide credit card information or you may attach a separate check for the medical deposit. **Please Note:** In order for the physician's office to bill your insurance, we require clear, legible copies of both sides of all health insurance cards (medical, dental, eye, etc.) and the name and date of birth of the insurance subscriber.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

All staff members participate in an intensive training program that prepares them to deal with all aspects of camp life. We emphasize positive, age-appropriate discipline techniques that guide and encourage children, and at the same time establish clear behavior guidelines and expectations.

At all times, staff members are guided by the principle that all children and adults deserve to be treated in a respectful and caring manner. Campers are expected to treat fellow campers and staff with respect and to abide by all camp rules. These rules, and the consequences for not following them, are shared after dinner on the first night. At that time campers are encouraged to ask questions to ensure clear understanding of the rules. Individuals are held accountable for their actions. Staff members support campers by clearly defining and enforcing expectations and responsibilities. Campers are expected to participate in daily duties such as setting their table, cleaning their cabin, picking up litter on the camp grounds, and keeping their personal space tidy.

If significant behavior problems do arise, parents will be consulted and a plan for behavior management will be developed. In the event the camper's behavior does not improve after all avenues of intervention have been explored, or when one camper's actions are detracting from the experience of others, the camper will be sent home.

Some actions require immediate dismissal from camp. These actions include but are not limited to: smoking or use of tobacco products, consumption or possession of alcohol and/or illegal drugs, or endangerment of self or others,

or threats of endangerment to self or others. Campers sent home because of behavior problems will not be entitled to any refund of fees, and parents will be responsible for all transportation from camp.

The staff of Camp Speers-Eljabar YMCA is not trained to handle campers who have severe emotional disturbances, demonstrate violent behavior or who routinely violate rules and policies. If your child has severe behavioral problems, we can refer you to programs designed to accommodate these special needs.

THE CAMP PROGRAM

A well-rounded camp experience includes being exposed to a variety of educational and recreational programs. We feel that an important part of a camper's experience is to have a choice of activities that meet the abilities of a variety of children. It is our goal to offer many fun, creative, and safe programs in accordance with the guidelines and standards of the American Camping Association. *We will assume that your child may participate fully in camp unless we receive a signed written request stating otherwise. (Enclosed)*

1. **Typical Daily Schedule Mondays – Fridays** – The schedule below should be used as a guide, circumstances sometimes call for changes in times and/or activities.

8:00	Breakfast	4:30	Discovery Hour/Master Schedule Hour
8:45	Morning Watch/Flag Rising		
9:00	Coaching Period 1	5:15	Cruisers
10:00	Class Rotation Time	5:30	Dinner
10:15	Coaching Period 2	6:30	Evening Watch
11:15	Class Rotation	7:00	Eljabar Evening Program
11:30	Coaching Period 3	7:30	Speers Evening Program
12:20	Cruisers	8:30	Showers (may be later in Speers)
12:30	Lunch	9:15	Devotions (may be later in Speers)
1:30	Quiet Time/Siesta	9:30	Lights Out – Eljabar
2:15	Store Snack Time	10:00	Lights Out - Speers
2:45	Cabin Activities/Free Swim		

2. **Coaching Periods:** Upon arrival each camper selects three activities for each week they are at camp. They will attend three one-hour activity lessons each day. Swim lessons are automatically provided in Camp Eljabar unless the camper's parent informs us otherwise. All activities emphasize skill development, appreciation of the activity, non-competitive instruction, and fun!
- **Archery** – Campers learn to follow safety commands and use eye/hand coordination in using a bow and arrow to hit a target.
 - **Arts & Crafts** – At our craft lodge, campers choose from a variety of projects and also use their own creativity to design works of art. They bring these projects home at the end of the session.
 - **Basketball** – Campers will work on basic skills to more advanced skills in this progressive program.
 - **Canoeing** – Red (intermediate) swimming level required. Campers learn parts of the canoe; equipment needed, loading/unloading procedure, variety of strokes, etc. The class culminates with canoe races/games/activities to practice the techniques learned. The Speers advanced canoe class prepares campers for a trip down the Delaware River on the final day of class.
 - **Ceramics** – Campers use clay to sculpt, mold, and design various projects. Speers campers also try their hand at the potter's wheel. Projects are kiln-fired and taken home at the end of the session.
 - **Confidence Course** – On this low ropes course, campers individually and/or as a group work to overcome physical and strategic obstacles. Campers also learn how to safely "spot" and assist each other.
 - **Climbing Tower** – Campers learn proper climbing technique, safety practices, and use of climbing equipment. Campers challenge themselves to climb higher each day on the wall/tower. Certified climbing instructor, annually inspected equipment.
 - **Digital Arts** – Campers explore & practice the art of storytelling through the use of digital photography and/or video production. Campers will bring home a DVD with their "story".

- **Drama** – Campers learn dramatic techniques and produce a short presentation for the class.
 - **Fishing** – Learn fishing techniques and how to find the best fishing hole for the type of fish you want to catch. Catch and release policy enforced.
 - **High Ropes*** – Campers receive extensive training on equipment use, safety, commands, procedures and teamwork. Under belay, they navigate 6 different elements rigged 30 feet in the air. Elements include Giant’s Ladder, Pamper Pole, Incline Log, Burma Bridge, Wild Woozy, and Balance Beam. This activity is supervised by specially trained and verified instructors. Independent inspection of course and equipment is conducted annually.
 - **Kayaking** – Blue (highest) swim level required. Lessons include proper use/care of equipment, safety precautions, how to roll, paddling techniques, etc. Advanced Kayaking class teaches river techniques and culminates with a trip to the Delaware River.
 - **Land Sports** – Campers choose from a wide variety of sports. Option #1: Specialty Class - Campers select a specific sport (basketball, soccer, volleyball, etc.,) and receive 5 sessions in that sport. Option #2: General Land Sports – Campers are introduced to 5 different sports over the week. These are not competitive classes, but are instructional clinics with scrimmages.
 - **Mountain Biking** – Campers will work on skill development, ride trails and learn basic maintenance skills.
 - **Newspaper** – Campers will produce a newspaper for distribution to all campers at the end of their session. They will learn interviewing techniques, writing skills, story development, computer design and layout, etc.
 - **Photography** (Black & White) – Campers will learn the importance of placement, lighting, focus, etc. in photography. Our Speers dark room allows campers to develop and enlarge their own black and white pictures.
 - **Outdoor Living Skills** – Campers study nature and learn survival skills first hand in this outdoor odyssey. Activities include pond studies, critter hunts, exploring the sphagnum moss bog, survival techniques, campfire building, preparing campfire meals, shelter building, etc.
 - **Riflery** – Campers are taught to follow safety commands and use eye/hand coordination when using a BB gun (Eljabar) or Pellet gun (Speers) to hit a target.
 - **Sailing** – Blue (advanced) swim level required. Certified lifeguards instruct classes of 1 or 2 campers per sailboat on our 42-acre Lake Nichecronk. Lessons include rigging/derigging the sailboat, tacking, capsizing, etc.
 - **Swimming Lessons** –The first day of each camp session, swim tests are given to determine the swimming level of each camper. Campers are then placed according to their ability in one of three levels of swim lessons – green, red, or blue. Swim lessons are expected for all levels in Camp Eljabar unless the parent informs the staff otherwise. In Camp Speers only beginning level (green) swimmers are required to take swim lessons. Lessons follow the YMCA swimming instruction guidelines and are conducted in designated areas of our lake.
 - **Woodworking*** – Campers select from a variety of projects to build at the Speers’ woodshop. They learn to follow a plan, measure and cut wood to the appropriate size, assemble, sand, and surface finish their project.
3. **Evening Programs**- all-camp events that are true camper favorites! Campfires, overnights, MTV night, ZAP, Name That Tune, Skits, Scavenger Hunts, Carnival Games, Olympics, and much, much, more!

4. Horseback Riding Programs

Campers may register for Horseback Riding Lessons, Ranch Camp or Equestrian Camp for an additional fee. Horseback Riding Lessons and Ranch Camp are offered in one week cycles. Equestrian Camp is a two week program. Campers participating in the horseback riding program are required to wear long pants and shoes or boots with a ½-1” heel. Camp provides safety helmets but campers may bring their own riding helmet if they prefer. Campers’ helmets will be inspected by the Ranch Director to be sure that they meet safety requirements. An evaluation ride on the first day of the session determines placement of campers by experience. Campers progress at their own pace.

- **Horseback Riding Lessons – Horseback riding lessons consist of five 45-50 minute sessions taken as one of the campers’ coaching periods. Campers are grouped by age and then experience. The first lesson usually includes a skill level evaluation. Four of the lessons are ring riding and one lesson is a trail ride, weather permitting.**
- **Ranch Camp (Eljabar Campers)** - Ranch camp takes place at our riding stables and consists of three hours per day for five days during the camper’s one-week stay. Campers may participate in Ranch Camp for as many weeks as they attend camp or may choose to do so during one week portions of their camp attendance. They still experience all aspects of camp while receiving specialized ranch instruction. The three-hour lessons are divided into three sections – riding lessons, horse care, and sciences. Campers learn “hands-on” handling and leading, grooming and saddling, parts of the horse, horse health, feeding, cleaning tack, etc
- **Equestrian Camp (Speers Campers)** – Equestrian Campers will participate in progressive riding lessons in English or Western styles, learn the basics and beyond of horse care, perform stable chores and learn teaching techniques by assisting with lessons for new riders. This program includes a special event such as an evening trail ride, gymkhana or simulated horse show.

5. Chapel

The YMCA’s four core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility are central to all programs at Camp Speers-Eljabar YMCA. A chapel service based on one of the core values is part of each weekend’s “all-camp” program. Together, campers and staff plan the service, incorporating inspirational stories, original skits and plays, music, and readings that demonstrate campers’ understanding of the core values.

In addition to chapel, if you wish to have your child(ren) attend Catholic Mass; please indicate this in writing and we will provide transportation to a nearby Catholic Church.

6. Overnights

Weather permitting, every camper attending will have the opportunity to experience the adventure of an overnight campout somewhere on our 1,100 acres. Cabin groups cook dinner over the fire, sleep out under the stars and enjoy an evening campfire. It is very helpful if each camper has a sleeping bag for this overnight.

7. Off-Site Trips

- Speers’ campers may have the opportunity to participate in off-camp trips while they are at camp as part of the Advanced Canoeing and Kayaking Coaching Periods. These trips are a few hours in length and take place during the camper’s morning coaching periods on the nearby Delaware River. Each trip’s challenge level is determined by the ability of its participants.
- Our Leaders in Training program takes a one or two night overnight trip to a nearby state park or to the Delaware River for hiking and canoeing.
- Counselors In Training also participate in a three to four day out of camp trip hiking or canoeing.
- Camp supplies all food and equipment, except for sleeping bags, for the trips.

8. Grace

Campers have a moment of reflection and thanks at the beginning of each meal when they sing or say a “Camp Grace”.

9. Devotions

At the end of each day the cabin group shares “devotions” to close the day. The cabin counselor guides the group in discussing an inspirational reading or discussion on one of the core values, and how they can apply it to their own lives. They may choose to discuss a related topic such as bullying or making friends as well. This is also the time for sharing the joys of the day and allows the cabin counselor to ask if there is anything that the campers need. It’s a wonderful part of the bonding that happens within a cabin group.

10. Weekends

Campers enjoy a variety of special events during the weekends as well as a bit of “down time” to recharge their energy levels. Carnivals, theme days and short field trips are typical weekend activities.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

Campers appreciate lots of letters and postcards. Write often but don't dwell on home problems, favorite pets, or how much everybody misses them. When you write, be cheerful and newsy. All properly addressed mail, e-mail, and faxes are sorted each day to ensure same-day delivery. Mail, e-mails, and faxes received after 1:00pm will be sorted for delivery the following day. Your camper will be encouraged to write home frequently, but don't expect too many letters – “no news is good news” – your camper may be too busy to write.

1. **Mailed Correspondence:** Please allow 4 days for a letter to travel in either direction. Improperly addressed and/or unstamped envelopes delay mail. For younger campers, we suggest you pre-stamp and address several envelopes or postcards for relatives and friends. Address mailed correspondence as follows:

Camper Name
Camp Name (Speers or Eljabar) and Cabin #
143 Nichecronk Road
Dingmans Ferry, PA 18328

2. **E-mail & Photos:** We are using an email and photo service called Bunk1. You will need to register with this secure site to view photos and send emails. Please visit our website: www.campspeersymca.org and click on the link to Bunk1. You will be able to send unlimited plain text emails at no charge. If you wish to “dress up” your message with photos, borders, games, etc., you will be charged an additional fee by Bunk1. You will also be able to view photos of their campers and have the opportunity to purchase prints, t-shirts, mugs, etc.
3. **Faxes:** Although regular mail and e-mail are preferable, you may fax your camper at 570-828-2984. **Please limit faxes to one page per camper per day.**
4. **Packages**

UPS, FedEx, DHL, Airborne Express, and the US Postal Service all deliver packages to our address.

Packages of food from home, though intended to please, are a problem for us. Many campers do not receive packages and feel left out when others get them. Most importantly, food in cabins attracts insects and rodents and can be a risk to campers with food allergies. **To help us do our job, please do not send packages containing food.** Special non-food packages may be ordered from “Sealed with a Kiss” or “Camp Pacs” (info enclosed.)

5. Telephone Calls

Campers are not allowed to make or receive phone calls or to have cell phones at Camp. To check on your child's progress, you may call the camp and speak with one of the camp staff. The Camp Office is open from 9am – 5pm each day. Staff can be reached by calling 570-828-2329.

After office hours, one of the senior camp staff members carries a cell phone that emergency calls are routed to. In the event that you need to reach a Camp Staff member for an emergency after office hours, dial our camp office 570-828-2329 and press the number 1 when you hear the message. Your call will be transferred to the Director on Duty who is carrying the cell phone.

If your child has a problem, illness or urgent message for you, the camp staff will call you.

6. Visiting Camp & Changeover Weekends

Please do not visit campers during the camp session. We believe your camper will have a better total camp experience if left with peers and staff the entire period. Parents/Guardians of campers staying more than one session may visit their camper(s) between sessions. You may take your camper out of camp on checkout Saturday after 1:00PM or on registration Sunday after 9:00AM. All campers leaving camp must check out at the camp program office and return to camp between 1:00PM and 3:00PM on Sunday. Campers will not be released to anyone other than their parent/legal guardian without advanced written permission on file in the camp office. Campers registered for our Changeover Weekend will enjoy special activities on camp property and may participate in out of camp trips to local attractions for a portion of the Changeover period.

FOOD

1. Meals

Meals are a popular time at camp. Delicious, well-balanced, hearty meals feature plenty of camper favorites, fresh fruits, vegetables, and more. A vegetarian option is also available at each meal. If your camper has special dietary needs (such as severe allergies) please make note of this on the *Camper Information Form* and *Health History Form* so that we can prepare appropriate meals for your child. Our menus feature foods that are low in sugars, fats and sodium as well as high in fiber and other essential nutritional factors. We prepare foods in the healthiest ways possible, minimizing adding fats, sugars or sodium during cooking. A salad and fruit bar is available during lunch and dinner. A cereal and fruit bar is available during breakfast.

2. “Picky Eaters”

At each meal there are several options for your child to choose from. No camper ever goes hungry. Even the pickiest eaters will try things at Camp that they refuse at home. Our counselors keep an eye out to ensure that all campers are well fueled and hydrated.

3. Food Care Packages

We do not allow campers to have food in their cabins, as this attracts bugs and rodents to the cabin area. We also have to be very careful about food allergies with our campers. As well intentioned as it may seem to send a box of cookies for your child’s cabin group, we can’t allow the campers to share them in the event that a camper may be allergic to an ingredient. For these reasons, **please do not to send food “care packages”**.

4. Store Snacks

Each day campers may choose a snack and a beverage from our Camp Store. The store offers a variety of 100% fruit juices and bottled waters. We also offer low fat, low sugar snacks like rice cakes, chex mix, pretzels, granola bars, and fruit. Frozen fruit and yogurt bars are also available for purchase. Purchases at the store are charged to the camper’s store account. The most a camper would spend per day on snacks at the store is \$ 2. An amount of \$ 12 per week is more than adequate for snacks from the Camp Store.

MISCELLANEOUS

1. Birthdays

We’ll be happy to recognize your child’s birthday if it falls while he/she is in camp. We’ll recognize your child’s birthday during a meal and have the entire camp community join in wishing him/her a wonderful birthday. Additionally, we’ll provide a special snack for his/her cabin group to enjoy as part of his/her birthday celebration.

2. Laundry

Please include a bag marked with your child’s name for soiled clothing. A laundry service costing \$15 per week is available for campers staying more than two weeks. If interested, please deposit appropriate amount in your child’s store account.

DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

1. **Check-out** is between **9:30 and 11:30 am** on the closing Saturday of each session. This allows campers time to eat breakfast and say their good-byes.
2. **Store Account Balance Refund:** Upon entering Camp during Check-out, we will provide you with a sheet detailing your child's store purchases and indicating his/her balance. You will also be given a form to indicate whether or not you wish your child's store balance to be donated to the staff end of summer celebration or the campership fund or a check sent to you via mail. (Only those accounts that contain more than a \$10 balance. All other amounts will be donated to our campership fund.)
3. **Sign-out Camper:** Proceed to Camp Speers or Eljabar and sign your camper out with the Counselor. Campers will be released only to parents unless you have designated an alternate name on the release form.
4. **The Camp Store:** The Eljabar Camp Store will be open for campers and parents to purchase souvenirs between 10 – 11:30 am.
5. **Lost Property:** Please allow time at check-out to make sure all your child's belongings have been packed. We do our best to locate and return items that are left behind, but do not return items such as socks, underwear, or items that have not been marked with the camper's name. We will hold items until September 30th for you to pick up. Or, if you prefer, we will send them to you C.O.D. The camp is not responsible for damage, theft or loss of personal items brought to camp. (Now's a good time to remind you to send older clothing that you don't mind having lost or damaged)
6. **Tipping:** We discourage tipping individual staff members. Persons wishing to acknowledge staff contributions to their child's camp experience may donate any amount in the name of a cabin counselor or staff member toward the staff end-of-summer celebration! Your gifts help us make this a truly memorable evening for our staff. Please stop by the administrative office on your way out of camp to make a donation, and thank you for supporting our staff.

DIRECTIONS TO CAMP SPEERS-ELJABAR YMCA

We are conveniently located near major urban areas: 1 ½ hours from New York City, 1 ¼ hours from Westfield, NJ, 2½ hours from Philadelphia, 4 hours from Baltimore, MD, 1½ hours from Danbury, CT, and 1 hour from Scranton, PA. Following are written directions or you may wish to go to our website to download exact directions from your home. (www.campspeersymca.org) If you are using a GPS, please use 100 North Nichecronk Road Dingmans Ferry, PA

New Jersey: Use I-80 west to Route 15 North (Exit 34B in New Jersey) to the Route 206 Intersection (or take Route 206 north from Routes 22, 78, 287). Continue on Route 206 north to Route 560 west (Tuttle's Corner - one mile past "Stokes State Forest".) Turn left. Follow Route 560 and signs to Dingmans Bridge. Cross Dingmans Bridge and follow through traffic light at intersection of Route 209. Proceed straight on Route 739 North for 5.5 miles to signs for camp. Turn left on Nichecronk Road, camp office is ½ mile on right.

New York City: Lincoln Tunnel, Route 3, Route 46 to I-80 and then follow directions for New Jersey above.

Connecticut: Use Route I-84 west to Pennsylvania Exit 34 (Lords Valley and Route 739). Follow Route 739 South approximately 10 miles to signs for camp. Turn right on Nichecronk Road; camp office is ½ mile on right.

Pennsylvania:

(Scranton & North): Use Route I-84 east to Exit 34 (Lords Valley) and follow directions for Connecticut.

(Stroudsburg & South): Use Route 209 North. Turn left at traffic light in Dingmans Ferry onto Route 739 North. Camp is 5.5 miles from light. Turn left on Nichecronk Road and camp office is ½ mile on right.