



# Voyageur Serendipity 6-Week Trip Handbook



Camp Stephens is owned & operated  
by YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg

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# Transportation Information

**PARENT EMAIL** - The majority of correspondence regarding Camp Stephens is through email, please ensure we have your correct email address on file and it is checked often.

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## Camp Buses

All buses depart and return from the West Portage YMCA-YWCA, 3550 Portage Avenue. We use highway coaches to transport the campers to and from Kenora. The bus ride is approximately 2 ½ hours. You may pack a light snack for the trip to camp. We also recommend wearing a light sweater or a jacket as the bus and boat ride to camp can be chilly. We will have a supervisor on each bus.

<b>July 7, 2024</b>	Camper drop-off at West Portage around 7:00am (exact time tbd, will be emailed)
<b>July 12, 2024</b>	Camper pickup at West Portage around 2:30pm (exact time tbd, will be emailed)

## Personal Transportation

Families who are arranging for their own transportation to Kenora must meet at the Kenora Harbourfront located beside the MS Kenora

<b>July 7, 2024</b>	Camper drop-off at Kenora Harbourfront at 9:30am
<b>July 12, 2024</b>	Camper pickup at Kenora Harbourfront at 11:30am

\*Camp Stephens provides boat transportation from the Harbourfront in Kenora to Copeland Island. The boat ride is approximately 15 minutes. We will provide a lifejacket for each camper. Please make sure luggage is well-labeled and waterproof.

# Transportation Information

## 6-Week Trip Transportation

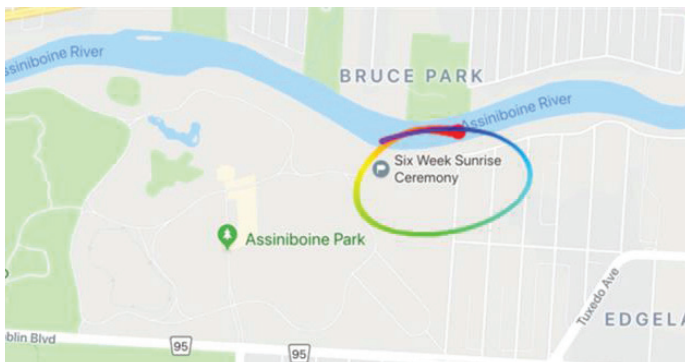
- Camp Stephens will provide transportation from Winnipeg to Kenora and back for the camper's prep week on the island.
- Campers are responsible to provide their own transportation to the Sunrise Ceremony at Assiniboine Park\*. Family and friends are invited to attend this traditional ceremony.
- At the conclusion of the Sunrise Ceremony, Camp Stephens will provide transportation to the 6-week tripper's drop-off and pick-up points via camp and or rental vehicles. We will outsource any additional transportation that is required during the trip (eg. train, boat, plane).
- Campers are responsible to provide their own transportation home from camp after the Return Ceremony. Family and friends are invited to the island for the Return Ceremony!

<b>July 7 - 12</b>	6-week campers prepare and plan for their trip at Camp Stephens
<b>July 13</b>	Sunrise Ceremony in Winnipeg - Meet at Assiniboine Park* at 6:30am
<b>August 24</b>	Return Ceremony at Camp - Family and friends are to meet at the Kenora Harbourfront by 9:30am. Camp boats will take you to the island.

## Sunrise Ceremony

Family members, friends, previous 6-weekers, Camp Stephens staff and alumni gather at Assiniboine Park\* at 6:30am for a send-off to this year's 6-week canoe trips. A tradition-rich ceremony is performed, passing the torch from the previous 6-week canoe group to this year's group and commissioning them on their journey.

**NOTE:** 6-week campers will depart directly from the Sunrise Ceremony and will be taken to the starting point of their amazing journey. Campers should have all their gear and packed items with them at the Sunrise Ceremony as Camp Stephens island is NOT the starting point.



\*Sunrise Ceremony location is on Assiniboine Park Drive - north of the Athletic Fields, close to the Wellington Crescent park entrance. Location is subject to change and will be communicated closer to ceremony date.

# Sign In Procedures

## **10 business days prior to departure or arrival:**

To ensure accuracy and regulate camp transportation, changes to the following information must be received by our camp office **10 business days** before your camper's departure or arrival:

- Transportation options – Camp bus or personal transportation
- Authorized persons to sign (other than parent/guardian specified on their registration).

## **Bus sign in procedure - Day of departure at West Portage:**

- Ensure your camper has all necessary items prior to boarding the bus.
- Give any medications to the staff designated to collect them.
- Each highway coach is allocated a bus #, deposit your camper's luggage to the designated bus, sign in your camper with the designated staff and have them promptly board the bus.

Buses depart exactly at your designated time from 3550 Portage Ave. and are not allowed to stop on the road to pick up passengers.

**Note: If your camper misses the bus, you will be responsible to transport them to camp.**

## **Personal transportation (to Kenora) sign in procedure:**

- Give any medications to the staff designated to collect them.
- Deposit your camper's luggage with the staff designated to load the boat and sign in your camper.

# Sign Out Procedures

## **Bus sign out procedure**

- Check the buses' estimated time of arrival (via your email or our camp website).
- Keep note of registrar's announcement regarding which set of campers are on the bus.
- Campers who have been given permission by their parents/guardians to sign themselves out will disembark first and should collect their baggage. Once signed out, campers are free to depart.
- Campers whose parents must sign them out must stay with camp staff until parents sign them out.
- Claim your camper's medications from the camp staff assigned, take your camper's belongings only once unloading of everyone's luggage is finished.

## **Personal transportation sign out procedure:**

- Claim your camper's medications from the camp staff assigned.
- Pick up all your camper's luggage at the Harbourfront and sign-out your camper with our staff.

# Wilderness Program Overview

## Why a 6-week Canoe Trip?

The 6-week canoe trip is truly a Canadian experience. By travelling the waterways of this great country and stopping in remote villages, you will learn so much about our culture, history and land. Unlike other canoe trips, you will cease to be a “participant”. Instead, you will become a “co-tripper” who is actively involved in all aspects of the journey. Leadership, adventure, self-discovery, and a supportive community are the hallmarks of this journey as group members come face-to-face with each other’s weaknesses and strengths and learn to celebrate each member’s uniqueness.

This trip is a chance to strip away the clutter and busyness of your life and to live simply with only the items in your canoe and the people in your tent. It is this simplicity and remoteness that helps us to reflect on what is important in our lives...and who we want to be as people. The 6-week canoe trip is a trip of a lifetime – with memories to match.

## Trippers

Two Wilderness staff members – called Trippers – lead all trips. Being a 6-week Tripper goes beyond the requirements of having their Bronze Cross, Wilderness First Responder and CPR Certifications. In addition to being our most experienced Trippers with multiple years’ experience counselling, tripping and working with youth under their belt, Trippers are hand-selected for their love of the wilderness; advanced educational philosophy; superior communication skills; and commitment to the “Y” philosophy of helping young people learn and grow.

## Routes

The Trippers and 6-week participants – with help from detailed route information from past years, local sources, and/or from the Ministry of Natural Resources – meticulously plan the routes. Each group travels approximately 750 to 1,000 km during their 42-day adventure. This means that every day you will have approximately six to eight hours of paddling! Each night you will stop at a different spot, set up tents, cook your evening meal and get some rest for your next day’s journey. Back at base camp, the Wilderness Coordinator provides regular updates to your parents on where you are along your route.

## Safety Precautions

At Camp Stephens, the Wilderness Coordinator has a detailed, day-to-day itinerary of each trip and closely monitors the 6-week participants’ progression. The 6-week trips are required to check-in, using their GPS tracker and can communicate to camp staff and emergency personnel as needed via two way text. If trips are significantly late for their check-in, or if they request assistance, an emergency procedure is immediately implemented.

## Food

The 6-week canoe trip carries a planned combination of dried and fresh foods to provide tasty, nutritious meals and snacks for those long paddling days. Trips also stop in various remote communities to pick up their food drop (food they mailed to themselves) and fresh food. While on the trail, water filters (or a chemical process like “Pristine”) is used to provide fresh drinking water.

# Timeline - Dates to Remember

## **January – April**

Wilderness Trippers will be in communication with the campers directly to get to know each other and discuss details of the trip.

## **June – Trippers Cup Date TBD**

The previous year's Serendipity and Voyageur canoeists conduct a slideshow presentation of their 6-week trip to this year's participants and their parents. Afterward, Camp Stephens staff meet with parents and participants to review the trip details and answer any questions.

## **July 7 - 12, 2024 – Journey to Camp Stephens**

6-week participants head out to camp and spend their first week: checking and packing their personal gear, food, and equipment; planning their route; painting their paddles; participating in canoeing sessions, swim tests and team-building exercises.

## **July 12, 2024 – Return to Winnipeg**

6-week participants head back to Winnipeg to pick up any last-minute things and spend one last night with family and friends before embarking on a journey of a lifetime.

## **July 13, 2024 – Sunrise Ceremony (Assiniboine Park\*)**

Family members, friends, previous 6-weekers, Y staff and Camp Stephens' alumni gather at Assiniboine Park\* at 6:30 AM to send off this year's 6-week canoe trips. A tradition-rich ceremony is performed, passing the torch from the previous 6-week canoe group to this year's group and commissioning them on their journey. Campers will depart directly from there to begin their journey.

## **August 22-23, 2024 – Trips Return**

Trips return to Camp Stephens a couple of days before their Return Ceremony with family and friends.

## **August 24, 2023 – Return Ceremony (Camp Stephens)**

The Return Ceremony is a welcome home celebration in honour of their tremendous achievement! 6-weekers follow tradition and perform skits and songs to explain the events that happened on their life-changing journey. Parents and friends arrive at the Kenora Harbourfront at 9:30 am where they are taken across to Camp Stephens in our boats. The Return Ceremony starts around 11:00 am with a buffet lunch provided. Boats back to the Harbourfront start leaving at 12:45.

\*Sunrise Ceremony location is subject to change.

# Health and Wellness

## Emergency & Health Information (ePACT)

By now you should have filled out the electronic Emergency and Health information on your ePACT account. If you did not receive the ePACT account sign-up email, please contact the registration team at [campregistrar@ymanitoba.ca](mailto:campregistrar@ymanitoba.ca). It is recommended that parents consider any restrictions to activities, medical issues or dietary needs that the camp should be aware of, and send further information if needed.

## Medications and Health Concerns

We strongly recommend that all 6-week participants get a physical exam and talk to their family doctor about any medical concerns or medications BEFORE THE TRIP.

If your child is on any medication, please attach a note to the prescription, stating the medication usage instructions (e.g. – Ann must take one pill before each meal) and your signature. Please send all medication in the original container with the camper's first and last name and hand it to camp staff on departure date. Medications are available for pick-up on the day of their return. If, after you have returned the form, your camper is placed on any new medication, please send the above information and signature to camp with your camper.

**IMPORTANT:** Please inform the camp in writing of any changes (medical, social, emotional, family environment) that occurs between filling out the ePACT electronic forms and the start of the trip.

## DURING the trip: Medications

The following medications will be brought on the 6-week canoe trip by the Wilderness Trippers.

- pain medication (eg Tylenol)
- anti-inflammatory medication
- anti-histamines
- anti-diarrheals
- and laxatives.

All prescription medications will be dispensed by the trip leaders at the prescribed time and dosage. If it is necessary to obtain a prescription for your child while they are in attendance at camp, you will be contacted and informed of the situation. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to make arrangements for payment with the pharmacy directly.



# Camp Policies

**Behavior** – YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg's Camp Stephens strives to be a fun, safe and active environment where everyone has a chance to be their best. All campers, staff and volunteers pledge to treat each other with dignity and respect. Inappropriate behavior such as abusive language, aggression or use of prohibited items such as (but not limited to) tobacco, alcohol, non-prescription drugs or offensive printed materials that prevents others from enjoying a positive camp experience will not be permitted. Campers may be sent home at the parent's expense and there will be no refund of camp fees.

**Photography/Video** – Photographs and/or video taken at camp may be used for public promotional initiatives by the YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg. All photos are the property of the YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg. To exclude your child from these initiatives, written request must be sent to the attention of the Camp Director prior to attending camp.

**Authorization** – All parents/guardians must complete and sign an Emergency & Health Form.

This form authorizes:

- your child to participate in the full range of camp activities
- the Camp Director and their appointee, in the event of accident or illness affecting your camper, to authorize on your behalf all procedures, including admission to hospital and necessary treatment therein, as they may deem essential for the care and well-being of your child. (Such action is to be taken only when immediate contact with the parent/guardian cannot be made.)

This form also outlines your responsibility to:

- accept financial responsibility in excess of the benefits allowed by Provincial Health and/or Medical Insurance. For campers coming from out of Canada, travel insurance is strongly recommended.
- notify the camp in writing of any changes that occur in your child's health between completing the Emergency and Health form and attending camp
- notify the camp in writing if your child is exposed to an infectious disease during the three weeks prior to camp

**Assumption of Risk and Release** – YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg staff and instructors make every reasonable effort to minimize exposure to known risks. However, by registering your child in a YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg Camp Stephens' program, your child will be involved in physical activities – and with any physical activity, there is a risk of injury. All parents/guardians must sign the Emergency & Health form that releases the YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg, and its respective officers, directors, employees, volunteers and agents, and their successors and assigns, from all liability for damages sustained in consequence of loss, injury or damage to yourself or your child, and from all other actions, causes of action, claims, demands or damages of any kind with respect to death, injury, loss or damages to any person or property including yourself or your child arising out of or connected with preparation for, or participation in YMCA-YWCA of Winnipeg programs or activities.

**Cancellations & Refunds** - Cancellations must be submitted in writing no later than 30 days prior to the start of camper's session in order to receive a full refund (less a non-refundable 20% camp deposit). No refunds will be provided for cancellations submitted after deadline. Camp fees are non-transferable.

**Returned Payments** - A service charge will apply for each returned payment. Service may be suspended until the account is paid in full. Camp Stephens reserves the right to cancel registrations with an outstanding payment. Unpaid accounts will be sent to a collection agency.

Camp Stephens reserves the right to cancel or amalgamate canoe trips at their discretion if there are under 4 participants signed up for a canoe trip.

# Mail

Canoeists are always excited to receive mail, especially after long journeys. The 6-weekers will have an opportunity to receive mail during their voyage partway through the trip AND at the end of the trip (at the established pickup location)

The mailing address for Camp Stephens 2024, once confirmed, can be found online at:  
[ywinnipeg.ca/camp-stephens/contact-us](http://ywinnipeg.ca/camp-stephens/contact-us)

Please do not use a private courier company as they cannot reach us on the island nor will they leave packages in our mailbox. There is no fax or email available for campers. Camp Stephens is not responsible for lost or undelivered mail, nor mail that arrives after the camper has gone home.

**Mail FROM 6-week Campers:** Campers can mail letters back home when they reach the communities on their route. Campers are advised to pack pre-addressed and pre-stamped envelopes along with sufficient stationery.

## Lost and Found Items

At the end of each session, all available lost and found items will be displayed for all campers to see. Any unclaimed items will be sent to Winnipeg on the bus where it will be made available for parents to view upon picking up their returning camper. It is highly recommended that all parents look through it even if they do not suspect their camper is missing any items.

- Any still unclaimed lost and found items will be made available for parents to look through on a date in September. Date will be announced via email and website.
- Items not claimed by September 30<sup>th</sup> will be donated. Unclaimed medications will be safely disposed of at a pharmacy. Camp Stephens is not responsible for lost or damaged items

## Contact Information

Winnipeg Office (3550 Portage Ave., Winnipeg) – Please contact our camp registrar for inquiries about registration, payment information and other general camp questions.

Office hours: Monday thru Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM  
Direct line: 204-831-3157  
Email: [campstephens@ymanitoba.ca](mailto:campstephens@ymanitoba.ca)  
Website: [ywinnipeg.ca/camp-stephens](http://ywinnipeg.ca/camp-stephens)

# Camp Packing List

## PLEASE LABEL ALL ITEMS WITH YOUR FIRST AND LAST NAME

Divide clothes into three groups - dry, wet and traveling home. Dry clothes are for nighttime and around the campfire while wet clothes are for paddling. Have a change of clothing which is always kept dry ensures both hygiene and comfort.

When packing for camp, think in terms of layering clothing - change in weather simply means removing or adding a layer of clothing.

### Personal Equipment List

- Sleeping bag and Stuff Sack lined with garbage bag to keep it dry
- EnsoLite pad or Therm-a-rest - used as a buffer layer between body and ground
- **VERY IMPORTANT** - Rain jacket and pants (please make sure this is waterproof and NOT water resistant) Windbreakers are not acceptable as a raincoat; raincoat that is large enough to accommodate a heavy sweater.
- 30L dry bag such as 'Seal line' or a Stuff Sack lined with a garbage bag. Everything to be brought on trail should fit into this dry bag
- 1 cup - Thermal mugs are good
- 1-litre capacity water bottle – good for long portages
- Wood paddle
- Personal Flotation Device - PFD (optional but are more comfortable than camp PFDs)

**Wet Clothes** (for the day) - These will get VERY dirty and worn

- 1 – 2 pairs of nylon or cotton shorts
- 1 – 2 T-shirts
- 1 pair pants (no jeans or heavy materials): for sun and bug protection - worn for portaging
- 1 pair long johns: polypropylene or wool is best for warmth when wet
- 1 long sleeved undershirt; preferably polypropylene (no cotton)
- 1 long sleeved flannel or cotton shirt: for sun and bug protection
- 1 Bathing suit
- Warm fleece jacket or wool sweater – do not use cotton
- Toque and mitts (for cold windy rainy days)
- Hat – baseball cap or wide-brimmed to keep noses and ears from burning
- Underwear
- 2 pairs of wool socks (cotton draws heat away from cold feet when wet)
- **VERY IMPORTANT** - 1 pair of hi-top sneakers or hiking boots; these will get wet and must have plenty of ankle support for portaging and walking on wet slippery rocks (an old pair of good quality runners works well)

# Camp Packing List - CONT'D

## Dry Clothes (for evenings)

- 1 pair of shorts
- 1 pair of pants: army pants or nylon pants are good
- 1 T-shirt
- 1 long sleeved shirt
- 1 set long underwear
- 1 warm sweater
- 2 pairs wool socks
- Pajamas or sleeping T-shirt and boxer shorts
- Underwear
- 1 pair dry shoes – light cotton runners, or sturdy sandals like “Tevas” or “Chacos”

## Traveling Clothes (prepare for either warm or cold weather)

- 1 pair shorts
- 1 T-shirt
- 1 pair of pants
- 1 sweater

Because cotton does not keep moisture off skin when it gets wet, it is better to get polypropylene products for insulating layers next to the skin and wool or fleece for warmer layers: these materials have air pockets between the fibres, which serve as an insulator.

## Toiletries - On Trail

- Toothbrush
- Hairbrush
- Lip balm with sunscreen
- Sunscreen\* (with at least 30 SPF)

## Toiletries - At Camp

- Shampoo, Soap
- Lotion
- Deodorant
- Towel

\*reflection from water and canoes makes the summer sun very intense. Bring **lots of sunscreen** as you will need to lather up your ENTIRE body at least twice a day.

## Optional

- sunglasses
- flashlight or headlamp
- camera and film in waterproof containers
- waist pack to carry small personal stuff
- journal, pen or a book
- crafts (embroidery, thread, seed beads)
- Mosquito repellent - non-aerosol, consider citrus based repellents since DEET products (i.e. Muskol) are strong (they melt plastic) or a **bug shirt/hat (STRONGLY RECOMMENDED).**
- Extra bathing suit to keep at camp for use upon returning to the island