

## Camp YouCan 2014 Parent Information

*Camp YouCan can be an extremely positive experience for youth living with epilepsy. It promotes independence, builds self-esteem and gives your child a chance to build lasting friendships. We hope camp will be special for your child. The information below should answer many of your questions and help you and your camper get ready for the experience. The staff at Camp YouCan is excited about the upcoming camp and looks forward to providing a great experience for your child.*

### **Contact Information**

Meg and Kael Busing (Camp Directors) 402-770-3936, youcan.camp@gmail.com  
Stacey Doty (LIFE) sdoty77@hotmail.com  
YMCA Camp Kitaki 402- 234-4141  
14917 E Park Hwy Louisville, NE 68037

### ***What do you need to do before coming to camp?***

1. Complete and return required forms to Camp Directors NO LATER THAN August 5, 2014. Forms are available on-line at [www.epilepsylife.com](http://www.epilepsylife.com) and can be printed and mailed to 11030 Leavenworth St, Omaha, NE 68154.

#### ▪ CAMP APPLICATION/ON-LINE REGISTRATION

The first entry point of your child being considered for Camp YouCan will be the application you will need to fill out on-line or via email/mail. Please complete the on-line registration, submit payment AND complete all the Registration Forms you can find on our website. If you cannot complete on-line registration and need to request a packet by mail, please contact the Camp Directors.

#### ▪ HEALTH EXAMINATION AND MEDICATION ORDER FORM

This is completed and is to be approved and signed by your child's **current Neurologist or Epileptologist**. Please provide the most current seizure/medication information. This may be subject to change prior to camp and you can notify staff if there have been any recent changes. Please turn in the forms on time and **DO NOT** wait for the most current information. It is safer for all to have the general medical information by the deadline, even if it needs to be updated during registration.

#### ▪ ADDITIONAL FORMS TO BE SIGNED AND RETURNED BY August 4, 2014

- 1) Camper Background Form
- 2) Camp YouCan Liability Waiver
- 3) Code of Conduct/Discipline form with parent signature

These need to be read and signed by the parent and/or child prior to camp. Please read them carefully as you will be bound by these agreements/consents.

## ***The Camp YouCan Staff***

The Camp staff consists of the Camp Directors, Camp Counselors, and Medical Staff. The Counselors have experience with youth and most of them are school teachers, nurses, school counselors, or work with children in some capacity. The Medical Staff have experience working with seizures and other medical issues. We choose our staff according to their experience, maturity, responsibility, and/or dedication to the cause of epilepsy.

The hiring process involves an interview and Criminal Background Checks prior to hiring for the volunteer positions. All staff is required to go through Epilepsy 101/Seizure First Aid Training so they have a basic understanding of seizures and the appropriate response to a seizure.

YMCA Camp Kitaki's paid and professionally trained staff will be running camp activities including ropes course, archery, and boating.

## ***Lodging and Room Assignments***

Camp is a great place to make new friends and have new adventures. Campers will be staying the night in a cabin. The campers sleep on bunk beds so if your child has nocturnal seizures and can't sleep on the top bunk, please specify on your Camper Application. Please also specify in the Camper Application if your child has any special considerations that will affect room assignments (such as behavioral issues, troubles getting along with other youth, nocturnal seizures, certain situations that are particularly difficult for your child that may affect room assignments, etc).

## ***A Typical Day at Camp YouCan***

Both days will follow a structured schedule. Meals are served in the Dining Hall. Snacks will be provided by the camp including granola bars, fruit snacks, crackers, etc. If there are special dietary needs for your child, please indicate this on the Camper Background Form.

We realize that camp is full of potential seizure triggers just by the nature of what it is. We are fully staffed and prepared to handle seizure activity while at camp. That being said, the camp environment is full of activity, promotes a lot of socialization with peers, and youth may have a mixture of both excitement and anxiety about the whole experience. We attempt to compensate for this by creating the opportunity for a full night's sleep and by providing periods of downtime throughout the day. We also encourage campers to try new activities, overcome limiting belief systems and learn more about epilepsy while they are at camp.

## ***Contacting Your Child at Camp***

It has been shown that one of the most beneficial outcomes of epilepsy camps, like Camp YouCan, is that they provide youth living with epilepsy the sometimes rare opportunity to gain independence and make friends with other youth living with epilepsy. When the camper has minimal or no contact with their parents for the 2 days, it helps them attain the true benefits of camp. Therefore, we ask that parents refrain from contacting their child while they are at Camp YouCan. In case of emergency or to inquire about your camper, a phone number will be given to you at camper registration to reach camp staff if needed.

## ***Homesickness/Emergencies***

Campers who are relaxed and well rested when they come to camp are less likely to become homesick. We encourage you to start preparing your child for camp ahead of time by looking at pictures of YMCA camp, working with your child to learn about the new environment, and refraining from expressing your own anxious feelings about their time away from home. Our professional staff are trained to help your child if he/she becomes homesick and every effort will be made to help ease their fears. Studies have shown for short term separations, frequent contact with parents/loved ones is not helpful. If necessary, we will call for your input and, as a last resort, may ask you to pick up your child.

We emphasize safety and do our best to avoid injuries during activities. We have trained Medical Staff to provide medical attention to campers experiencing seizures, having medical issues, and needing first aid. If your child is having major medical issues, excessive seizure activity or seizure activity that is outside their usual pattern that you describe, or any other medical emergency that requires professional medical treatment, parents will be notified immediately. If necessary, we will call 911 or help to transport your child to the Emergency Room

## ***Bedwetting***

Bedwetting can be very embarrassing for a child. Please notify us if your camper may have a problem so we can handle it discreetly and professionally. Please assure your camper that his/her counselors are there for their needs and will help them through these types of challenges.

## ***Seizures/Accident/Illness or Loss***

We will provide seizure first aid and let the seizure naturally resolve itself if possible. In the case of an extended seizure, unusual seizure activity (seizures that are out of the

norm for your child), injury, or illness, we may need to seek medical attention for your child. We will contact the parent immediately if this is the case. If we are unable to get in touch with you immediately, your signature on the Camp YouCan Liability Waiver gives the Camp Director and/or the Camp Medical Staff permission to seek medical attention for your child.

There is some inherent risk in camp activities and accidents can occur. All medical expenses will be the responsibility of the camper's family.

Camp YouCan is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged articles. We advise your camper to bring nothing of monetary or psychological value in order to avoid a loss. Please label your child's belongings to decrease the chance of it being lost or stolen.

### ***Medication Packaging***

This procedure **MUST** be followed in order to ensure the safety and well-being of your child. If there are any special instructions that need to be followed, please explain on the Health Examination and Medication Order Form.

1. On the Health Examination and Medication Order Form, make sure all medications are listed. If necessary, use the back of the form to give as much detail as possible. The form must be signed by your child's current Neurologist/Epileptologist and must be returned no later than August 5, 2014. If any changes are made prior to camp, tell the staff/nurses during camp registration.
2. Keep all daily medication in the original prescription bottle. The bottle must state the child's name, name of the medication, dosage and time taken. A prescribing doctor's name and contact information must be on the bottle. Please include a written/typed summary of the administration of the medication if needed.
3. If your child has a VNS, please send the magnet along with them to camp and include any instructions on a summary form.
4. If your child is taking vitamins or other medication that is not prescribed for epilepsy, it must be stated on the medical release form. Any additional medication must be in the original prescription bottle.
5. The medication in the original prescription bottles, the VNS magnet, and any other medical supplies must be placed all-together in one zip-lock storage bag with your child's first and last name (written in permanent marker) on the outside of the bag.
6. If the medication is not stated on the Medical Release Form or additional permission is not stated in written documentation then we cannot administer the medication.

## ***What to Bring To Camp***

Comfortable clothing and tennis shoes are highly advised. Dress appropriately for the weather keeping in mind that in the evening, the weather usually cools down.

Sunglasses, water bottle, sunscreen, extra socks are encouraged. Please bring sleeping bag and pillows (if you do not have a sleeping bag please contact camp directors for assistance).

Please DO NOT send: money, knives/firearms, food, iPods, electrical games, Cds, cell phones or anything of significant value.

## ***How Do I Get To Camp?***

Each camper's family is responsible for getting their child to camp on opening day and picking them up at the end of the session. If you would like to request to carpool with another camper/family, you may contact the Camp Director to see if any assistance can be offered in finding a carpool. There is no guarantee for finding alternative transportation but we will do our best to try to assist you.

YMCA Camp Kinaki is located between Omaha and Lincoln. The fastest and easiest way to get there is to take I-80 and the Mahoney State Park exit 426. Go South of HWY 66 approximately 4 miles until you pass through the town of South Bend. Camp is just past South Bend and the entrance to YMCA Camp Kinaki is on the left hand side of the road.

## ***Opening Day***

Camp Registration on Sept 5, opening Day, is 5:00pm. If you are unable to check-in during this time, please contact the Camp Director in advance.

Registration will be in the main YMCA Camp Lodge.

After meeting the Camp Staff in the main entrance and storing your luggage, parents and campers will go to registration, get their room assignment, and check in their medications/discuss additional medical needs with the medical staff.

Following check in, parents and campers will be taken to meet their camp counselors. After saying goodbye to their parents, campers remain with their camp counselors and activities/ice breaker introductions will begin at 6pm.

## ***Sunday***

Official check out is at 1:00pm on Sept 7 but we are asking all parents to come at 10:30am for a 1 hour parent meeting. It's a great time for all parents to come together to discuss their struggles and commiserate with others who have been through similar things. It's been a very powerful time for both parents and staff and we'd love to see all of you attend. You will then be reunited with your children at 11:30am for a lunch, provided by HyVee, and quick recap of the weekend. You should be on the road no later than 1pm.

As campers will be released only to people who are listed on the Release Form, counselors/staff will ask you to sign the Release Form when picking up your child or another camper. Please do not be alarmed or affronted if asked to provide identification. After uniting with your child, please be sure to stop at the Medical Staff Station to pick up your child's medication and get a medical update about your child. Please make sure you have received ALL your medications and belongings before you leave.