

2025 Teen Programs Family Guide

Summer Programs

Camp Kennedy Outpost Camp – Entering 9th grade boys and girls

Western Travel Trip - Entering 10th grade boys and girls

Alaska Travel Trip - Entering 11th grade boys and girls

Welcome

We are thrilled that you have chosen one of the Tamarack Camps' Teen Programs for this summer! These wilderness leadership programs will provide campers with the opportunity to step outside of their comfort zones, experience new adventures, meet new people, and become a part of a special community. They are an opportunity for campers to explore a minimum impact lifestyle through hiking and camping, to practice “letting go” and to develop autonomy and a stronger sense of identity.

Our goal is for all campers to embrace personal growth and passionately contribute to their community, with a supportive and awesome staff ready to facilitate the experience. Being part of an incredible community and exploring new places never disappoints. The Teen Programs are meant to be challenging; our high communal standards allow participants to push themselves to new levels. Our close community draws strength from its unique members, so no two programs are ever the same. All campers bring something to the table, even if they don't know it yet! This summer will be incredible and rewarding. We recognize that preparing for camp can be a daunting task. In our attempt to answer questions that may arise, this Family Guide serves as a comprehensive resource before and during the summer months. Whether you begin 2025 as a new camp family, or return as a “seasoned pro,” the following packet provides useful information about important dates, special programs, and critical policies. Please review all this material to successfully prepare for the exciting adventures ahead. As always, our number one priority remains the health, safety, and well-being of our entire camp community. With that in mind, we have included a section in this guide specifically to address important medical information. Together, with nurturing staff, energizing programs, and transformational experiences, we look forward to a healthy, safe, and positive summer at "The Greatest Place on Earth!"

We can't wait to see you at the bus,
Carly Weinstock, Camp Director
Matt Russell, Assistant Director of Teen Programs
Emily Dempsey, Teen Programs Coordinator

All trips will depart from and return to Adat Shalom
 29901 Middlebelt Road, Farmington Hills MI 48334

Program	Departure Date	Departure Meeting Time	Return Date	Return Time
Kennedy 1	Monday, June 16	8:00 AM	Thursday, July 10	8:00 AM
Kennedy 2	Monday, July 14	8:00 AM	Thursday, August 7	8:00 AM
Western 1	Wednesday, June 18	7:00 AM	Tuesday, July 22	8:00 AM
Western 2	Monday, June 23	7:00 AM	Sunday, July 27	8:00 AM
Western 3	Wednesday, June 25	7:00 AM	Tuesday, July 29	8:00 AM
Alaska	Sunday, June 15	7:00 AM	Friday, August 1	8:00 AM

Packing Information

Unlike Camp Maas, luggage should be brought to the bus on departure day. Our super-human staff will help to load bags onto the bus. Luggage is limited to ONE duffle per camper. We will have a laundry day halfway through the session or trip. Hiking boots, sleeping pads, and sleeping bags may be tied together to load separately from the duffle. Pillows and day packs may be carried onto the bus.

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

Teens should spend at least six weeks breaking in their hiking boots, even if they were used the previous summer. In order to break them in, campers should wear a school backpack with books while “hiking” around the neighborhood for at least thirty minutes, three days a week. This will help soften the hiking boots and toughen up their feet to help avoid or greatly reduce blisters during the hikes.

PACKING

A Tamarack Camps Teen Program is more rugged than many other camping experiences. Campers do not need all new clothing for camp. There are important items, such as a sleeping bag, hiking boots and rain gear that are beneficial to the safety and comfort of your teen and must be appropriate for the experience. Starting in the spring, there will be zoom meetings to

review the general aspects of the summer, expectations of the campers, as well as to answer any questions you may have. During the meetings we will also review the clothing list, including what to pack and how to fit everything into one duffle bag, and discuss additional details of the summer including how much money to bring. Attending one of these meetings is mandatory for all local campers and parents.

Do not pack anything sentimental or expensive! No knives of any kind are allowed at camp!

CLOTHING FOR SHABBAT Shabbat is a very meaningful time at camp, but specific clothing is not necessary. Normal, casual camp attire can be worn.

LABELS

To minimize loss, we request that you mark all of your teen's clothes and personal property with their first and last name. You can use permanent marker or purchase nametapes. Please label all camping equipment, disposable cameras, eyeglasses, sleeping bags, etc. Please review with your teen what he or she has brought to camp and where in the duffle bag they are located.

TAMARACK CAMPS WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY LOST, MISPLACED OR STOLEN ITEMS.

PASSPORTS

All Camp Kennedy and Alaska Trip campers must have a valid Passport and the Border Crossing Form, which must be signed before a notary.

ELECTRONICS

Teen Programs are about enjoying the outdoors and sharing wonderful experiences with new and old friends. Electronic devices take away from time we could be spending enjoying each other's company and our beautiful surroundings. Smart phones (which usually do not work due to our remote location), e-readers, tablets, gaming systems, and music players are not welcome at camp. Digital cameras and GoPros are permitted. Playing cards, favorite travel games, guitars, hand drums, cowbells, and tambourines are welcome and highly encouraged!

CELL PHONES MAY NOT BE BROUGHT TO CAMP. If cell phones or other electronic devices are brought, a camper may be sent home.

SPENDING MONEY The amount varies and depends on how many gifts and souvenirs each camper is interested in purchasing. Tamarack Camps will provide three meals each day along with snacks; however, campers may spend their money on occasional snacks and meals.

We suggest approximately:

Camp Kennedy campers: \$50-\$100

Western Trip campers: \$250-300

Alaska Trip campers: \$350-400

OUT OF AREA CAMPERS If you live outside of the metro Detroit area, special transportation arrangements may be organized. Campers may bring their luggage directly to the bus, or if you prefer, duffles can also be shipped to camp (via UPS, FedEx, etc.). When shipping luggage, please ensure it arrives at least 5 days prior to the start of the program. For more details, please contact Rachel Pitt at rpitt@tamarackcamps.com or 248-952-9111.

Departures

DEPARTURE DAY

Please be sure to come to the bus on departure day with:

1. A daypack loaded with rain gear, a sweatshirt, long pants, hiking socks, bug dope and bus materials (books, cards, games, etc.)
2. A bag lunch and water bottle filled with water
3. Duffle bag, sleeping bag, sleeping pad, and pillow
4. Passport – staff will collect and hold passports throughout the summer
5. Spending money (staff are happy to hold for campers)
6. NO SNACKS allowed

Summer Preparations

EXPECTATIONS

The summer, like the rest of life, has high and low points. Not every moment of camp will be filled with wonder and excitement. Encourage your teen to have a reasonable and realistic view of camp. Discuss both the ups and downs your teen may experience.

PHYSICAL PREPARATION

Tamarack Camps' Teen Programs include physically challenging adventures and activities, but given proper preparation, it will not be beyond most teens' personal physical limits. If your teen is already in good shape, they should keep it up. No previous wilderness experience is required, but a willingness to learn and work with others will ensure they have a positive adventure in such a challenging environment. To help your teen have the best summer experience, it is necessary for them to be in an appropriate emotional and physical condition. Every minute they put in prior to their summer experience will pay off once they get out there. If they do not already engage in 30 minutes of aerobic exercise three times a week, we recommend that they put in the time to begin training now. Before a teen begins any exercise program, please consult with their physician. The most important kind of training is aerobic fitness (running/jogging, bicycling, skating...), the kind which stimulates heart and lung activity for at least 30 minutes without stopping. They can also consider specific training techniques to prepare for the summer such as climbing stairs or walking around your neighborhood with weight in their backpack.

PHYSICAL EXPECTATIONS Travel Trip campers should expect to hike nearly every day, for an average of 6-10+ miles. Some of the hikes throughout the summer will be steep, long and physically challenging while others will be shorter and easier. In addition to the day hikes, campers will participate in two backpacking trips ranging from 3-5 days, weather permitting. On these backpacking trips, campers will carry a 30+ pound pack.

Campers will take breaks regularly throughout the hikes and do not need to be able to hike these distances non-stop. The breaks will range from 5-30 minutes, some for water, and others for a snack or lunch.

CAMP KENNEDY, for entering 9th graders is nestled in the woods of Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Camp Kennedy's property is captivating in itself, as it was the former governor of Michigan's hunting lodge a century ago. Tamarack teens have been going to Kennedy since the 1960s. Kennedy campers challenge themselves to step out of their comfort zones through a 4 day backpacking trip through the Porcupine Mountains, and a 3 day canoeing trip at our other

outpost camp, Agree up in Wawa, Ontario! When not on trips, campers get to explore the beautiful beaches and trails at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, which is right in Kennedy's backyard. A summer at Camp Kennedy is sure to be magical and transformational.

Emotional Needs

INCLUSION

Tamarack Camps is committed to a culture of inclusion and welcomes everyone, regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Every member of the Tamarack Camps community has a right to be addressed by a name and pronoun that corresponds to their stated gender identity. Campers will be housed with the gender that most closely aligns with their gender identification. Discrimination, bullying and harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or family composition is prohibited.

SOCIAL WORKERS

We take mental health seriously at camp and have a wonderful team of social workers. Please feel free to share concerns about your teen prior to the start of camp.

COMMUNICATE CANDIDLY

Talk candidly with the camp staff, specifically Carly Weinstock, Director; Danielle Tagai, Director of Mental Health, Teen Programs; and/or Gail Chynoweth, Director of Health, Teen Programs. These connections allow our team an opportunity to apply expertise in helping your teen adapt to the routines of camp life. Through sound communication, many challenges can be resolved.

DISCUSS CONCERNS BEFORE CAMP

As the first day of camp approaches, some children experience anxiety — leaving home, new surroundings, and uncertain schedules — just to name a few. Please encourage your teen to discuss these emotions, rather than responding to your perception of their feelings. Empower your teen to handle the separation confidently. Please refrain from this comment: "If you don't like it, I'll come and get you." This communicates unrealistic expectations for your camper.

HELP YOUR TEEN COPE AT CAMP

Most teens need a few days to adjust to life at camp. During this time, homesickness—even for returning campers—is quite natural. Most campers cope with these concerns and, with the ongoing guidance and sensitivity of our staff members, build support systems. We communicate positively and work diligently to help campers feel comfortable.

PARENT QUESTIONS DURING CAMP

If, after reading a letter, you feel concerned about your camper or, alternatively, if you haven't heard from them in a while, please feel free to contact us directly at 248-627-2821. Your message will be directed to the appropriate person and answered within 24 hours.

PARENTS

We take our job as an "in loco parentis" (in place of a parent) seriously. Therefore, along with

preparing your teen emotionally for the challenges of camp, please prepare them for the realities of being away from home. Please review our code of conduct with your child so they are totally aware of our expectations.

Health and Safety

CLINIC STAFF

Doctors/nurses are always onsite at Camp Maas and available for phone consultations for physical and emotional concerns of campers and staff members. Most of our providers work in pediatrics, family medicine, or in emergency rooms in the Detroit Metropolitan area. Staff are in regular communication with our clinic throughout the summer.

CAMPBRAIN

Tamarack Camps collects and manages all health information through CampBrain, a secure, web-based health management system. To submit your teen's health information, you will receive an email invitation from CampBrain and should use the same user name and password you used for camp registration.

IMMUNIZATIONS

The Tamarack Camps immunization policy requires everyone to be immunized according to the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control, State of Michigan, and American Academy of Pediatrics.

LICE

Campers on the Tamarack Camps Teen Programs are in very close contact with each other. Therefore, we recommend that parents check their teens for head lice in the weeks preceding camp and treat as necessary so that all teens coming to camp are lice and nit free. If your child's exam reveals live lice and/or nits (eggs) the morning of departure, they will be sent home along with their belongings and guidelines for treatment. Parents will be responsible for administering the treatment. Or, if preferred, the Lice Sisters are available to treat your child(ren)—for a fee. The camper's head must be nit-free in order to return to camp.

FOOD ALLERGIES

Increasing numbers of teens have food allergies and we will gladly work with families to provide alternative menu items or special foods for most allergies. If, however, your teen has a life-threatening or airborne food allergy, a Tamarack Camps Teen Program is not the right place for them.

Tamarack Camps' Teen Programs are not nut-free programs. Nuts are served, including peanut butter, which is available to campers at most meals. Counselors are notified of campers with allergies, including when and how to use an Epi-Pen. The counselor and/or camper will carry an epi-pens at all times.

While we will do our best to avoid messiness and cross-contamination during meals, these things are always a potential risk on camping trips and during regular meals.

We cannot guarantee that:

1. Campers will not buy food items containing nuts or other allergens during pop/snack stops.
2. Campers will not touch surrounding objects, or each other, during meals.

Our goal is to provide a safe and healthy environment for every camper. There may be circumstances when our program will not be appropriate for an individual child. If your child has a severe, life-threatening allergy to nuts, a nut-free program is recommended. We expect our campers to understand their food allergies and to be able to advocate for themselves (read ingredients, ask questions, etc.). Our Director of Health for Teen Programs, Gail Chynoweth, is happy to answer any questions or concerns.

OUTSIDE FOOD

Campers are not permitted to bring any outside food to camp unless authorization has been obtained prior to the start of the summer. This is to ensure our observance of Kashrut, sensitivity to food allergies and to protect us from bears and other animals.

NOTIFICATION FOR MEDICAL CIRCUMSTANCES Parents will be contacted by a staff member or medical staff if a teen must see a doctor.

Parents will not be notified if their teen receives treatment by the staff for cuts, colds, insect bites, stomach virus, headaches, rashes, sore throat, etc.

It is the parents' responsibility to pay for medical visits and medications necessary throughout the summer.

MEDICATIONS

This year, we will continue to partner with AMAC Pharmacy which provides safe, prepackaged medications to camp.

Medication forms and prescriptions are due: May 1 for Teen Programs.

All Tamarack Camps participants (Camp Maas, Teen Travel Trips, Outposts, Israel, and TLV) are required to use AMAC Pharmacy services to obtain all medications that will be administered during a summer program. This includes over-the-counter medications that are taken routinely or as needed, excluding medications such as Tylenol and Ibuprofen.

Tamarack Camps will not accept or administer gummy medications/vitamins; in the heat and humidity they melt and stick together. Please also avoid liquid medications when possible, as they spill/get messy.

Complete the form and check that AMAC will be providing medications. If the medication is a prescription, you must have your doctor electronically prescribe the prescription to AMAC Pharmacy by June 1st to have it filled in time for camp. If the medication is an over-the-counter medication, AMAC Pharmacy will automatically package that medication based on what is entered by the parent on the form. There is a \$10 fee for packaging in addition to a co-pay required by your insurance.

If your prescription is not able to be ordered through AMAC Pharmacy due to the rare instance of an insurance issue, please come to the Federation Building (6735 Telegraph Road, Bloomfield Hills) to drop off your medication. If drop-off is needed, you must still enter the medication information online in the Medical Record form, and in addition, you must complete the AMAC form by choosing "AMAC will be providing no medications" at:

There may be a packaging fee if medication cannot be ordered through AMAC.

For all TEEN PROGRAMS, permission must be given by Gail at gchynoweth@tamarackcamps.com before choosing this option. She will then make further arrangements with you and outline your next steps. The only exclusions to this are epi-pens and inhalers. Only those medications do not need to be ordered. Please make sure these medications are not expired and send 2, if possible, on luggage drop-off day.

Those choosing not to use the pre-packaged medication option for any medications that CAN be filled by AMAC will be assessed a \$200.00 processing fee. Please remember for teen programs to get a prescription for the entire length of your teen's trip.

MEDICAL STAFF AND SUPPLIES

Your child's health and safety is our absolute, number one priority. Each staff member working on our teen programs is certified in Wilderness First Aid or Wilderness First Responder and CPR. Many staff members are also lifeguards. Doctors and nurses at the Camp Clinic are accessible by phone at all times. Every precaution is taken to safeguard the health of each and every camper. In addition to the clinic staff, a licensed social worker is available for consultation. The programs are supplied with a listing of the nearest medical facilities and consult with the Camp Clinic throughout the summer. The Wilderness First Aid courses train our staff to manage medical situations when they are an hour or more from a first responder. This includes while the campers are in remote backcountry situations, or even on a day hike.

Each program is also supplied with multiple satellite phones that can be used to contact the proper authorities or medical personnel in the case of an emergency. In addition, each program carries a fully stocked first aid kit, including such items as dressings, splints, bandages, over-the-counter and other medications, antibiotic, antifungal, steroid ointments, and epi-pens. Our medical staff provide training on how and when to use the supplies provided by our clinic, medication administration and on common illnesses and injuries that occur at camp. Camp Kennedy is approximately 40 minutes to the nearest hospital, located in Munising, Michigan. Agree Outpost Camp is approximately 40 minutes to the nearest hospital, located in Wawa, Ontario. Both Outpost Camps are accessible by first responders, who respond when we call 9-1-1.

Summer Staff

DIRECTOR/SUPERVISOR

In addition to the counselors, there is a director or supervisor who is directly responsible for each program. These are older, more experienced staff members who have proven themselves as leaders at camp. They arrive at camp before the staff for a highly-focused training facilitated by the Director in areas including leadership, safety procedures, how to keep their staff and camper's healthy, Jewish programming, and how to identify camper problems including suspected abuse, neglect, and psychological issues, among others.

COUNSELORS

Your teen's counselors are college students and graduates who have camp work experience or other informal education experience in settings working with children. Staff members report to camp at least one week before camp begins for highly-focused training facilitated by the Director and supervisors. Our staff training provides our counselors with the necessary tools to be able to handle camper issues, and when necessary, to bring challenging situations to the

supervisor. Also, our counselors are trained on emergencies procedures, and to seek additional support when necessary. Staff training includes sessions on leadership, Tamarack values, camper security, how to motivate campers, and how to spot and handle incidents of abuse by and among their campers and other staff.

Communications

CAMPER PHONE CALLS

Campers will call home on one or two scheduled phone days. Campers will use a camp phone to call home to talk to parents for a few minutes, however, there is not time for teens to call friends and other family members. Phone calls are typically made in the late afternoon or early evening. We encourage parents to write down important phone numbers (cell, home, etc.) for the campers to keep with them. however, there is not time for teens to call friends and other family members. As previously noted, campers are not permitted to bring cell phones to camp.

MAIL

Please write to your teen a few times during the summer. It means a great deal to campers to hear from home and mail is always a fun time.

PACKAGES

We have a strict no-package policy. We accept letters and cards only – no large envelopes. Over the past years, despite rules limiting size and contents, we have seen an overwhelming increase in the amount of prohibited items like food (including nuts and non-kosher items and various electronics). Unfortunately, this creates challenges—especially in terms of health (protecting campers with food allergies). If a package is sent, it will not be delivered to your camper, and, instead, will be returned to sender (at sender's expense). To avoid potential frustration, please share this policy with other family members and friends. When packing, please consider including extra allowable items, such as books, magazines, comics, stationery, and fun games. Of course, should you forget to send your child with a critical item necessary for the camp experience (specific shoes, for example), exceptions will be granted, but must be coordinated directly with the camp office.

TRAVEL TRIPS: Please only send mail through the United States Postal Service. Please consult the specific trip itinerary for mail address and pick up dates. Mail can take up to one week for delivery, so please mail letters early.

CAMP KENNEDY

Please send camper mail to:

Camper's Name
Camp Kennedy
E16699 H-58
Shingleton, MI 49884

EMAIL AND FAX

It is not possible for emails or faxes to be sent to any of the teen programs - only traditional USPS mail is available.

PHOTOS Throughout the course of the summer, we will post pictures on smugmug approximately once per week. The purpose of this initiative is to provide a flavor of our various activities and photographs are randomly selected. It is possible that your teen may not appear in

a picture, which is not representative of any intentional “slight” or indicative of a negative experience.

Returning Home

LAST DAY

Campers complete their summer at Adat Shalom Synagogue (29901 Middlebelt Rd, Farmington Hills, MI 48334). Each family will receive a call or email two or three days before the end of the summer to confirm the approximate time to meet the campers and bus.

LOST AND FOUND

Throughout the summer, staff will work to return all lost items directly to the campers. If, after returning home, items are found, families will be notified of all found items. Tamarack lost and found will be:

Tamarack city offices, in the Federation Building
6735 Telegraph Road, Bloomfield Hills
Wednesday August 13 and Thursday August 14
8am – 5pm