Camp Handbook 2027

THE FOWLER CENTER
of MCHS Family of Services



A program of MCHS Family of Services

Table of Contents

3 Letter from our Leadership

4 Values & Goals

5 Before camp

7 Packing your Oral Medications

9 Check-in & Check-out

11 What to expect

13 Camp Healthcare

14 Policies & Procedures

Message from our Leaders

Dear Parents/Guardians, Campers & Caregivers,

Another year of camp is upon us and we are so excited to have you or your loved one join us. We would like to thank you for entrusting us with the care and well-being of you or your loved one. Since 1957, The Fowler Center has prided itself in providing superior outdoor experiences to individuals with disabilities. Our staff is dedicated to making sure that each camper has the support and resources they need to make their time at camp memorable and successful. We are proud to be accredited by the American Camp Association and licensed by the state of Michigan. These organizations hold us to a standard of excellence. In this book you will find detailed information about daily schedules, how to pack, expectations, financials, and more! Take some time to thumb through it, we hope it will answer any questions you may have. If you still need more information please call our office at 989-673-2050. We look forward to serving you!

Welcome to the Family,

Mike

Michael Alm
Sr. Director of Operations

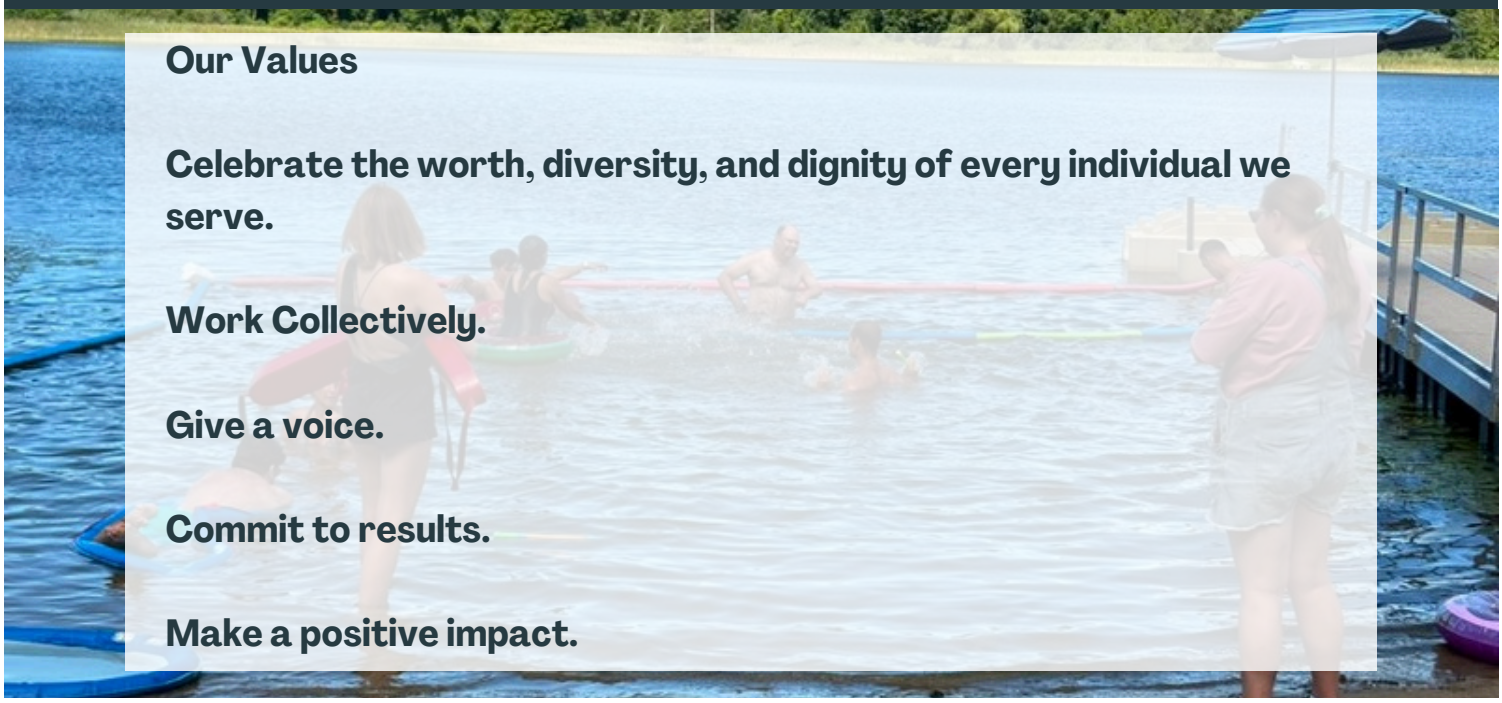


Lynn

Lynn M. Seeloff, CTRS
Camp Director



Values & Goals



Our Values

Celebrate the worth, diversity, and dignity of every individual we serve.

Work Collectively.

Give a voice.

Commit to results.

Make a positive impact.

Goal 1: To respect the individuals gifts of each camper.
Objectives:

1. Staff will be trained to identify camper's individual positive qualities and encourage campers to be respectful of themselves and others.
2. Staff will be trained to support campers on a daily basis by utilizing positive statements of encouragement.
3. Staff will follow individual behavior plans to strive for successful interventions.

Outcome: Campers will be able to express/identify positive relationship building with their staff and peers as well as maintain these skills in their daily routine post camp.

Goal 2: To empower personal growth and independence through outdoor learning and fun.
Objectives:

1. Staff will offer choices of activities to encourage self-exploration.
2. Staff will involve campers in activities of interest.
3. Staff will encourage campers to complete personal care and daily activities as independently as possible.

Outcome: Campers will be able to demonstrate success in activity participation as well as their own daily personal care to their fullest extent.

Goal 3: To provide temporary relief for our camper's families and caregivers.
Objective:

1. Campers will attend Fowler Center programs independent of the family and/or caregivers whom they reside with.

Outcome: Family members and workers will experience relief from caregiving as evidenced by personal testimonies and post-camp evaluations.

Before Camp...

Getting Ready for Camp

Refer to our “Getting Ready for Camp” info sheet for a quick checklist to ensure everything is in place for your camper to attend. If you registered online you can find this form under our "Parent Corner" tab on our website. If you registered by mail it is included in your confirmation packet.

Forms

The forms listed below are required for your camper’s attendance at The Fowler Center. All forms must be submitted no later than *30 days after your confirmation is sent. Failure to do so may jeopardize your registration status. If faxing please call to verify it has been received. If scanning, please send to Office Manager, Kim Phillips, at kphillips@mchsmi.org. You can sign and submit all forms online aside from the Physical Exam and Activities Authorization. *Note: If the legal guardian is not the person who owns the online account they must physically sign the waivers for us to keep on file. You must call the office to request the forms.* Failure to keep your paperwork up to date as needed throughout the year as requested by the office will affect your registration status.

-Profile (turned in with initial registration)
-Oral Medication Sheet
-Topical Medication Sheet
-Authorization/Release Form - must be signed by guardian
-Challenge Waiver - must be signed by guardian
-Equestrian Waiver - must be signed by guardian
-Physical Exam and Activities Authorization (good for 13 months from date of exam)*
-Health History Form
-Seizure Verification & Protocol
-Camper Medical Information (online only)
-Handbook Acknowledgement (online only)

* The Fowler Center does not guarantee participation in these activities if you fail to turn in your camper’s Physical Exam and Activities Authorization prior to arrival at camp.

Payment

If you will be paying for camp independently (not funded by CMH) a 25% deposit is required with your enrollment. Your remaining balance is due 90 days prior to the start of your session or your reservation will be cancelled. Make checks payable to *MCHS*. Send to 2315 Harmon Lake Rd, Mayville, MI 48744.

Outside Funding

If you are receiving funding from an outside agency you are responsible for initiating and ensuring we receive written authorization from your agency including the funding amount and dates of service at least 30 days prior to the start of your session. We will also need a signed copy of your camper's Individual Plan of Service (IPOS/PCP) which must include their goal for attending camp (e.g. social skills, respite, etc). If your camper's IPOS does not currently include this goal please talk to your supports coordinator. Failure to provide the current IPOS/PCP and an authorization will move you to a self-pay status and your camper's balance will be due at that time to retain their spot. *Note: If your camper is funded by an outside agency and repeatedly cancels or does not show up to camp, they will be moved to a self-pay status and required to pay a deposit in order to register for a session.*

Cancellation Policy

To help ensure a quality experience for your camper, our staffing, programming, resources, and meal arrangements are finalized well before the start of your camper's session based on our registration numbers.

Cancellations must be made by calling our Office Manager, Kim Phillips, at 989-673-2050 or emailing kphillips@mchsmi.org. Cancellations made more than 90 days in advance will receive a refund minus a 15% fee. There are no refunds for cancellations that occur within 90 days of the start of your camp session. Refunds will not be given if a camper fails to arrive, voluntarily withdraws, or is sent home from camp during a session due to illness, homesickness, or behavior. Refunds may take up to 6-8 weeks.

Prepacking your Oral Medications...

Oral Medications

With an increase in the amount of medications many individuals are taking we have found it necessary to request the following in order to ensure the safe and efficient delivery of medications to your camper. All oral medications must be signed in with a Med Assistant on Check-In day.

Please follow these rules....

- **Pre-pack ALL routinely taken oral medications and vitamins in a daily planner.** These are available at your local store/pharmacy. If you prefer, you may take them to your pharmacy to be packed together in a bubble pack. Example: All 8AM meds should be in one bubble/compartment. If you have a planner make sure the compartments are securely snapped or taped during travel to avoid loose meds that will need to be identified upon your arrival.

- **Bring the amount that is needed for your camper's stay plus an extra 24 hours** worth of medications in case a pill is destroyed or your camper's stay is extended due to unforeseen circumstances.

- **Bring the original prescription bottles/bubble packs containing at least one pill in it** for identification purposes. This is for both prescriptions and vitamins/supplements. Bring all liquids and "as needed" over-the-counters in their original bottles/packages. We will keep all these for the week. We must follow all prescriptions as they are written on the bottle. If your camper's prescription has changed you must bring written notification from your doctor.

At medication check-in you will sign that the medication record for your camper is correct when you are handing them over. You will again sign at checkout that all of your medications have been returned. Please make sure you have them all.

Due to USPS rules we cannot mail medications back to you.

Examples of prepacked medications











Checking In & Out...

Unless you receive a pre-camp email with specific instructions, the check-in/out process for ALL Overnight Camps is the same. When you arrive park in our main lot. From there you will head to the stations listed on the following page with your luggage. **Please make sure all oral/injected medications are not in your camper's luggage as you need them during the check-in process.** Please do not head directly to the cabin with your camper as our staff will not be able to take over supervision of your camper before you have been checked in at each station. Please plan for check-in to take up to 90 minutes for our larger sessions.

Summer *- During our longer/larger summer sessions our staff and volunteers will be at the parking lot to greet you and help move luggage to cabins. Your camper's quick health screening questions will be done here.*



Check In Times

Respite Weekends
- **6:30pm-7:30pm**

All other Overnight Camps
- **Last Name starts A-F: 2:00pm-3:00pm**
- **Last Name starts G-M: 3:00pm-4:00pm**
- **Last Name starts N-Z: 4:00pm-5:00pm**
- **Group Homes who have multiple campers attending the same session must call the Office Manager for a time slot.**

Check Out Times

Respite Weekends
- **1:00pm-2:00pm**

All other Overnight Camps
- **10:00am-11:30am**

**a late fee of $20/15 min will be assessed if not picked up on time.*

The process for All Overnight Camps

Station 1 - Office Manager

In- Here you will check in for the session and place money on your camper's store account for camp merchandise or pop.

Out- Here you will pick up any leftover money from your camper's store account as well as merchandise purchased.

Station 2 - Medical Assistants

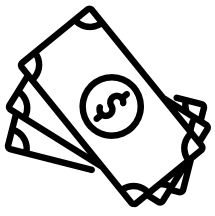
In-Here you will sign in your camper's oral medications. Please update our medical staff here if there have been any recent health changes. If meds are not correctly packed you may be placed in a separate line so that others may continue to check in.

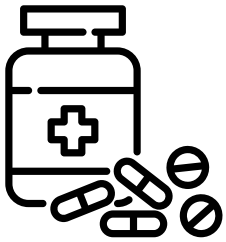
Out- Here you will sign for the return of your camper's medications and get updates on your camper's health from the week. Please ensure all medications have been returned to you as we cannot mail them due to USPS regulations.

Station 3 - Cabin Lead

In- Here you will speak with the lead counselor of your camper's cabin and meet the other cabin staff. This is where you sign in topical medications, nutritional drinks, review behavior plans, help unpack, and cover any remaining questions either of you have. This is the last step!

Out - Sign out topical medications, talk with staff about the week, and pick up your camper with their luggage! This is the last step before leaving.







What to Expect

Daily Schedule
The daily schedule at The Fowler Center varies slightly from session to session depending on the needs of the campers attending, but it generally looks like this...

7:30am Wake Up and get ready for the day
8:30am Breakfast
9:15am Cabin Tidy Time
9:45am Morning Flagpole
10:00am Activity 1
11:15am Activity 2
12:30pm Lunch
1:30pm Cabin/Free Time
2:30pm Activity 3
4:00pm Activity 4
5:30pm Dinner
7:00pm Evening Program
8:30pm Evening Flagpole
8:45pm Back to cabins, campers get ready for bed
10:00pm Lights Out

Activity Blocks
Campers participate in activities with their cabin groups during the day. Our program staff plan each cabin's schedule to allow campers the chance to experience a variety of activities throughout their session. Since we are an outdoor facility some activities are weather dependent.

Picnics
Once a week the whole camp gathers for a picnic lunch under the shade of our pavilion.

Golden Broom Award
During the week campers will help keep their bed space tidy as well the common areas in the cabin. The cabin that does the best in cleaning up their cabin during cabin tidy time will get awarded The Golden Broom at the next morning's flagpole.

Program Areas: During our classic sessions campers will participate in various activities in each of our program areas. They will be scheduled to ride horses once and participate in one of our challenge activities during the week. During our specialty sessions campers will participate in activities based on the goals of the session and be supplemented by activities in some of our program areas.

- Creative Arts- paint/draw, crafts, theater, songs, dance
- Nature Activities- nature hikes, outdoor cooking, educational activities
- Gardening- planting, harvesting, weeding, make fresh recipes
- Sports & Recreation- group games, sports, fitness, archery
- Horseback Riding– *licensed medical provider & guardian waivers required*
- Challenge Education– *licensed medical provider & guardian waivers required*
  - Universal High Ropes Course with Zipline
  - Climbing Wall
  - Tree House
- Waterfront
  - Swimming - All individuals who have had a seizure within the last year will be required to wear a Personal Flotation Device. Campers wanting to swim in the "deep end" must pass a swim test.
  - Mile Swim - only offered for special occasions, campers must pass the deep end test. Campers will swim outside of the normal waterfront boundaries, some as far as 3/4 the way across the lake. All campers wear a PFD and swim with staff. Lifeguards are on shore, in boats, and in the water.
  - Boating
  - Fishing
  - Sand Activities

Campouts

One night each week campers have the choice to enjoy nature as they prepare evening snack over a fire and sleep outside in a tent. Campers who prefer to sleep in the cabin may do so. Camp does not provide air mattresses or sleeping pads, so if your camper desires one please bring it along with their sleeping bag. *Campers who do not sleep through the night, need to wake multiple times for the bathroom, or will not safely stay in the tent will not be able to sleep at campout.*

Evening Programs

Some all camp activities your camper may experience are Campfire & S'mores, Banquet Dinner & Dance, Hayride/Ice Cream Social, Carnival, Water Night, Mock Rock, Fear Factor, Superhero Night, and more.

Camp Healthcare

Healthcare Staff
Each Session The Fowler Center employs a Camp Nurse to administer camper medications and respond to any illness or injury that may occur throughout the course of the week. The Fowler Center typically employs a Registered Nurse or Licensed Practical Nurse to fill this role, however, due to unforeseen circumstances The Fowler Center may employ an EMT or Wilderness First Responder (WFR) to fill in as the Health Officer. At times, when camper enrollment is increased (e.g. summer camp), The Fowler Center also employs additional healtcare staff who will help the Camp Nurse pass medications.

Cabin Staff
During Orientation our Cabin Counselor and Program Staff are certified in CPR & Basic First Aid.

Illness at camp
If at any time during the camp session your camper runs a fever and/or has other signs of a contagious illness, as deemed by the Camp Nurse, they will be isolated from the group to allow for rest and to discourage the spread of infection throughout the camp community. A healthcare or cabin staff will supervise them while they are isolated. Campers will be provided meals as tolerated and activities to pass the time. If off-site medical treatment is needed or if their separation from the group lasts longer than 24 hours we will contact you by phone for further guidance. If offsite medical care is deemed necessary, a doctor's note may be required for the camper to return. If it is determined that the camper has an illness that is contagious (such as influenza, COVID, a severe upper respiratory infection, persistent vomiting, etc) your camper will not be able to complete the session.

Illness prior to camp arrival
If your camper, or a household member, has been sick (including but not limited to headache, vomiting, diarrhea) within the 2 weeks prior to your arrival at camp please let the office know by calling 989-673-2050 before check-in day. If your camper has been diagnosed with an easily contagious illness (e.g. chickenpox, flu, persistent vomiting, persistent diarrhea, colds, fever, strep throat, etc.), that has affected their attendance at school or another program, within a week of the start of camp we will need a doctors note approving their attendance for the session. Camper temps will be taken on check-in day along with a few questions about their current health.

Medical Cannabis
Due to federal regulations, medical cannabis and THC is not allowed on MCHS property. If you have specific questions please call 989-673-2050 or email lseeloff@mchsmi.org

Policies & Procedures

Cell Phones
Get ready to Unplug at Camp! TFC has over 200 acres to explore and loads of activities to take part in. Cell phones should be left at home or with parents/guardians at check-in. Cell phones found in luggage will be stored in the office until check-out.

Staff Gifts
We understand that you may want to show your appreciation for our staff however, we are not able to accept any monetary gifts from campers or families of The Fowler Center. If you would like, you may purchase a small store packaged food item for staff to share that have the ingredients listed. Knowing that your camper enjoyed their time with us is present enough. If you wish to write a heartfelt note to the staff you are more than welcome to do so. Donations to The Fowler Center for the purpose of staff awards may be made in lieu of individual gifts if you so desire.

No Pets
Pets of campers and seasonal staff are not allowed at camp due to the high volume of people and lack of information The Fowler Center has about the animal. Please do not bring your pet to check-in or check-out.

Camper Care & Personal Hygiene
Camp is a great place to experience the outdoors and "get your hands dirty". However, it is also important for all campers to practice good hygiene. Campers shower at least every other day while attending camp and, of course, may shower more if wanted. Our cabin counseling and program staff are trained during orientation to provide care to the individuals we serve including toileting, showering, transferring, brushing teeth, feeding, changing clothes and more. The staff will provide the least restrictive environment for your camper that they can, meaning they will encourage your camper to be as independent as possible while at camp. Any specific instructions on the care of your camper should be written on the profile and discussed with your camper's lead counselor. Staff hired as Jr. Counselors will not provide direct care but are an additional hand at activities and extra supervision for the group.

Camper Birthdays
If your camper's birthday is happening while at camp we will make sure to celebrate them on their special day! Remind staff of their birthday at check-in. If you would like to send them a **food and candy free package** for their birthday please label it "BIRTHDAY" and send it to camp ATTN: Lynn Seeloff. In either of these scenarios please call our office to let us know it is coming.

Camper & Parent Concerns
If at any time you have a concern please see a year round administrative staff who is prepared to address your needs.

Camp Store
If you elect to leave your camper money for camp store they will have the opportunity during the week to go "shopping". Items vary from pens to hooded sweatshirts with prices from $0.50 - $50.00. Please leave money on account for your camper at check-in. We are not responsible for money left in the care of your camper.

Laundry
Please make sure you pack enough clothes for the duration your camper's stay at The Fowler Center. We do have a spare small washing machine for emergencies. Most soiled clothes/linens will be rinsed, hung to dry, and put in a separate bag and labeled "soiled linen" for you to take home. Our camp is in a rural setting and uses well water. At times our well water has reacted with chemical sunscreens and may cause rust looking stains on clothing items. Keep in mind that camp is outside and can get messy, it is always a good idea to pack extra clothes. Please do not send new or expensive clothing. See Packing list for other items you should not pack.

Meals
While at overnight camp individuals are fed three meals and an evening snack each full day. Day campers will receive a bag lunch and afternoon snack. Please make sure to list all allergies/dietary restrictions on the profile so that we can properly plan for your camper's needs. If your camper has extensive dietary restrictions and you would like to request the menu for the week your camper is attending you may do so two weeks before their arrival date. If you have arranged with the Camp Director to bring special food for your camper please label all products with your camper's full name and the ingredients included in the dish (if not in an original package). Due to allergies of other campers and health department regulations we must know a complete list of ingredients in the food you bring. You may drop these items off in the main building during check-in. Do not leave your cooler at camp.

Snack Food
Your overnight camper is provided with an evening snack each day. Please do not send food with your camper due to camper allergies, specific diets, and we do not want to attract critters into the cabin.

Electronics
Please do not send electronics to camp. We have plenty of activities planned to keep your camper engaged. Camp is a time to "unplug" and get to know more about each other, ourselves, and the world around us. We realize that some of our campers use music and visual stimulation as part of their BIP (Behavior Intervention Plan). If your camper requires these things please fax/email a copy of their BIP in so that our staff can be consistent in assisting your camper. If your camper does not require these things in their BIP please leave them at home. If found after check-in items will be stored away and returned upon check-out.

Camper Phone Calls
Campers do not have access to the office phone to make calls out. Please do not tell your camper that he/she will be able to call you from camp each day. We have 60-80 campers at times and we are not able to accommodate that number of phone calls. Past experience has also taught us that it may intensify homesickness. We encourage campers to engage in the day's activities, get to know their cabin mates, and write letters home instead. Cell phones are prohibited at camp.

Packing For Camp
Please refer to our packing list (located on the tab labeled "Parent Corner" on our website) to ensure that your camper has everything they need for their stay at camp. The Fowler Center does not allow personal sports equipment, pets, or weapons. We also ask that you do not pack expensive jewelry, designer clothes, electronic devices, sentimental belongings, or snacks. If these items are found upon arrival you will be asked to take them home. If you have already left items will be confiscated and returned upon check out.

Camper Mail
Everybody loves getting mail! If you would like to stay connected with your loved one while at camp please do so by mail. Please send it early enough so that your camper can receive it during their session. Mail will be passed out daily during rest hour (after lunch). If your camper would like to write letters home please send them with the necessary supplies such as paper, envelopes, and stamps. **Please do not send food in packages.**

Cabin Mate Requests
The Fowler Center will make every effort to accommodate **one** mutual cabin request per camper. However, due to the nature of camp and to promote positive cabin cohesion, we are unable to honor multiple requests. Cabin assignments are made keeping in mind age and level of care needed. We will try to accommodate your request to the best of our abilities. The Fowler Center reserves the right to move a camper due to behavior concerns, sleeping patterns, personality conflicts, and the like. You will be notified in this event.

Property Damage
Property damage caused by your camper will be billed to you at The Fowler Center's discretion. Past due accounts must be paid before attendance at another camp session.

Additional Info
MCHS Family of Services reserves the right to dismiss an individual at any time during their attendance at camp based on illness, injury, or a safety risk to themselves or others. All campers must be medically stable and must not be a safety risk to self or others (behaviorally, sexually, or physically) in order to attend camp. We reserve the right to determine an individual's eligibility to participate in any of our camp programming and sessions.

Camper Behavior
Please make sure that you send in your camper's current behavior plan. Fowler Center staff will follow behavior plans and utilize other methods (i.e. calling parents for advice) if faced with challenging situations in order to help your camper be successful. However, participant behavior such as excessive harm to self, verbal aggression towards others (including threats and bullying), physical aggression towards others, or gross property destruction may result in immediate dismissal from the session and possibly the program, without refund. In an emergency where a camper poses a safety risk to themselves or others, The Fowler Center's trained administrative staff may intervene and call the police if necessary. This is of course a last resort and we will take every necessary step we can to work with your camper.

Bringing Your Own 1:1 aide
If you are sending your own aide to work with your camper please let us know. You will receive a packet for you and the your staff to review, sign, and return. This packet will include expectations for 1:1 aides, Fowler Center policies/procedures, program information, FAQ's, and background check forms for the staff to complete and return at least 2 weeks before their arrival at camp.

Non-sufficient Funds
Checks that are returned "non-sufficient funds" will incur a service fee.

Lost & Found
Please mark all of your camper's belongings with their first, middle and last initial in permanent marker. Items that are not marked and cannot be identified on the last day will be on a general table at the start of check-out. Please check this table for lost items. Also, make sure once you leave the cabin you have all of your luggage and do not leave it behind. Items you have left behind can be mailed to you after prepayment of postage. If upon returning home you find items that do not belong to you we ask that you please let us know. Items left at camp and not collected will be donated to Goodwill 2 weeks after the end of the summer camp season.

E-Communication
The Fowler Center currently uses electronic communication to keep you and the community up to date with the latest happenings at camp. Please make sure we have your current email address so you receive information on upcoming registration, fundraisers, events, pertinent information from other agencies we partner with, or more (make sure we are not on your "junk e-mail" list). E-mails from our registration system will come from "mail@fowler.campwise.com".

How Can I help???
Being part of a non-profit, The Fowler Center can use your help in the following ways…

- Do you know a skilled worker? Carpentry, painting, heat/cooling, etc?
- Spread the word-tell your family and friends about camp and Travel Adventures.
- Fundraisers
- Donations- monetary or check out our website for our wish list.
- Volunteering at camp - clean up days, camp programs, special events
- Adopt an Animal Program

See you soon!

We hope to see you at our Spring Open House May 15, 2027. At our open house you will have a chance to meet our staff, get a tour, and see where you will be sleeping! If you are unable to make it and would like to tour our facility before coming to camp please call our office at 989-673-2050 and arrange a time with our Camp Director, Lynn Seeloff

Like us on Facebook @fowlercenter
Follow us on Instagram @thefowlercenter

The Fowler Center is a program of MCHS Family of Services.
To find out more about MCHS visit www.mchsmi.org



Contact Us

2315 Harmon Lake Rd
Mayville, MI 48744
989-673-2050
www.thefowlercenter.org