



What is BOLD & GOLD?

YMCA BOLD & GOLD is an outdoor leadership development program for teens that is dedicated to inspiring courage and confidence in diverse groups of young people (aged 13-17) through outdoor adventures. We run single-gender and all gender off-site expeditions that engage youth through backcountry trips that range in length. Our goal is to increase confidence, courage, emotional intelligence, wonder, and community awareness in participants. We do this through activities such as backpacking, hiking, canoeing, and whitewater rafting. BOLD & GOLD prepares young people to be the next generation of leaders through multicultural experiential education in the natural world.

What is the cost?

Trips range in cost from \$775 to \$995. This includes all food and specialized outdoor gear.

Do you offer financial aid?

Yes! We offer financial aid. Email campduncan@ymcachicago.org for the financial aid application.

Where and when do expeditions begin and end?

All trips check-in on Sunday Between 2-3 PM at Camp Duncan 32405 N U.S. Highway 12, Ingleside, IL 60041. Check-out is also at Camp Duncan and is Friday from 2-3 PM.

How many campers are on each trip?

Each trip will have a max of 10 campers and 2 leaders.

How challenging are the trips?

Participants new to this type of adventure can be successful if they are motivated, open to learning new skills, willing to work closely as a team, and are able to demonstrate leadership skills. Trips may be very challenging at times regardless of a participant's experience in the outdoors, but the instructors will ensure that everything is within the abilities of the group. You do not need to have any outdoor experience to complete a BOLD & GOLD expedition and you do not need to be an athlete. Being in shape and physically active before you arrive is helpful but is not required. Come prepared to meet new people, try new things, have fun and challenge yourself. You may make mistakes, but you will learn from them and go on to meet challenges, both individually and as a group.

Our Intro to Adventure trip is great for individuals looking for a slow introduction into the outdoors and wanting to experience everything a BOLD & GOLD expedition has to offer but on a smaller scale.

Where will I sleep and go to the bathroom?

We provide lightweight tents and there are typically 2-4 participants in each shelter. You will use a sleeping pad, a warm sleeping bag, and you can bring a backpacking pillow or use extra clothes. Instructors will be sleeping in their tents close by! On backpacking courses, some campsites will have pit toilets nearby. Participants will learn the art of Leave No Trace bathroom use and staying clean and hygienic in the backcountry.

Will I shower?

Yes, but not as much as you usually do. Throughout the week campers will have the opportunity to swim in lakes and rivers to clean off. On the last night of our one-week trips, campers will stay at a more developed campground and have the chance to shower. On our Intro to Adventure and Rock Climbing trips we will be staying at front country camp grounds where you will have access to a bathhouse.

What will we eat?

Eating well is really important to us and you can expect lots of lessons on cooking and opportunities to show your skill in the kitchen. The menu is largely vegetarian with lots of grains, pasta, cheese, beans, veggies, fruit, and nuts. Meat is heavy and spoils easily, but we do occasionally eat chicken, beef jerky, and summer sausage.

Example Typical Menu Items:

- Breakfast: Oatmeal, grits, granola and milk
- Lunch: Summer sausage, cheese, crackers, tortillas, peanut butter and jelly, tuna
- Dinner: Rice and beans, macaroni and cheese with bacon, loaded mashed potatoes, ramen
- Snacks: Trail mix, granola bars, fruit, goldfish. You will be given a supply of snacks to carry with you throughout the week to eat whenever you are hungry.

What about drinking water? Is it clean?

On our backcountry trips, we will purify our drinking water using a filtration system and we boil water used for cooking. Instructors will teach you how to properly treat your water before drinking.

How heavy will my backpack be (for backpacking trips) and what will I carry?

Your size and ability to carry the weight of the backpack is taken into consideration. Backpacks typically weigh 20-30 pounds. Instructors will help you adjust your pack to carry the weight safely and in the most comfortable fashion. On backpacking expeditions, you will carry all of your personal belongings (sleeping bags & pads, clothes, toiletries) as well as some of the group gear (tents, cooking stove/utensils, water filters, etc.) and food.

On paddling expeditions, you will have your gear in your canoe with you (in provided dry bags) and will be responsible for transporting it to and from each camp site. On front country trips (rock climbing, dunes mini trip, intro to adventure) you can pack in anything you like so long as it can get dirty and you can carry it yourself. Your personal belongings you do not wish to bring along will be kept in your duffle or backpack back at base camp.

How many miles will we hike/canoe in a day?

Backpacking expeditions will travel 3 to 7 miles each day. Canoe trips will paddle 8-12 miles a day.

What does a typical day look like?

1. Wake up
2. Breakfast
3. Solo time meditation activity
4. Pack up camp
5. Hiking/canoeing
6. Lunch
7. Hiking/canoeing
8. Set up camp
9. Structured down time
10. Activity/dinner prep
11. Dinner
12. Reflection activity & campfire (if campsite permits)
13. Bedtime

Will I be able to have my phone?

No. Camp Duncan is a technology-free camp and no phones are permitted at all, they should be left with guardians. Instructors will carry cell phones and a satellite device to use in case of an emergency.

Are BOLD & GOLD Trip Safe? Who are the Leaders?

Absolutely! The safety of participants is our highest concern. Travel in the outdoors always involves risk. The most important thing we do to mitigate risk in our programs is to be certain our instructors follow our safety policies and practices. Participants will be led by our outstanding wilderness instructors who hold certifications in CPR, AED, child abuse prevention, Wilderness First Aid or Wilderness First Responder. Our staff are experienced outdoor educators with an extensive background in working with youth. They go through a rigorous 7-day training on BOLD & GOLD curriculum, how to develop leadership in youth, safety practices, and group dynamics management. Emergency plans and procedures are in place and staff are always on call back at Camp Duncan and ready to respond in case of an emergency.