

These questions will hopefully answer many of your concerns and help you with the registration process. Leadership Retreat questions are at the top of the page and Regional Camps are at the bottom, please view both sections.

Leadership Retreat

Acceptance Process - Essays

Are essays a requirement to get into a leadership retreat?

Submitting essays is part of the selection process for the Retreats. Once you register you will receive a confirmation email with a link to 4 questions. The registrant will be required to answer 2 of the 4 essay questions and submit them for review and acceptance.

How are the essays reviewed and by whom?

Once the essay questions are submitted they are reviewed by the selection committee. The committee will then accept the registrant based on the submissions or give the registrant a chance to re-submit the essays after 1 or more of the submissions are not accepted.

Acceptance Process – Letters of Recommendation

Do the letters of recommendation have to be completed by Muslims?

No, they do not.

Who can complete the letters of recommendation?

Letters of recommendation can be submitted by local leaders, i.e. Imams, Islamic Studies teacher, public school teacher, counselor, etc.

Why are letters of recommendation needed for a leadership retreat?

National Leadership Retreats are a chance for motivated Muslim youth to attend and acquire leadership skills that can be taken back to the community. We want the local leaders to know these youth are coming and recommend them for leadership roles in their community for future events.

Acceptance Process - General Questions

Why does an individual have to go through a selection process to get into a leadership retreat?

The purpose of the Leadership Retreat is to have a group of youth who are willing to come and be motivated to return to their communities with ideas to initiate a movement in the other local youth. We want to be sure that the youth who register are serious about this and have the maturity, desire and support that are needed.

How long does it take to confirm your acceptance into a leadership retreat?

The average review and acceptance of essays should be no longer than one week once they have been submitted.

If you have been to a leadership retreat previously do you still need to complete the selection process requirements?

If you have attended a previous Leadership Retreat you will not need to submit letters of recommendation again; however, you will still need to submit the essays. The essays are not only a part of the acceptance process but a way to start the youth thinking about the theme and goals of the upcoming Retreat.

Transportation Questions

Is transportation included in the registration fee?

The registration fee includes the lodging at camp, meals and activities. Travel costs to the camp and back home are the responsibility of the family.

If I am sending my child by air, is there someone at the airport to meet them?

Once you have purchased your child's flight you will need to forward the itinerary to camp@myna.org. All schedules will then be reviewed and compiled in order for volunteers to coordinate the pick up of the youth. Unless told otherwise, we will be planning on picking up your child from the baggage claim area. Volunteers will not be going to the gates to collect the youth from there unless they are flying as unaccompanied minors. In this case MYNA camp administration must be told of this so that special arrangements can be made.

How is my child's flight arrangement finalized?

First you will receive confirmation that your child's letters of recommendation and essays have been accepted, and then it is the family's responsibility to purchase the desired flight. Please be sure to use the airport that is suggested in the confirmation email and the arrival/departure dates given. If you use another airport or date there is no guarantee there will be adult supervision for your child unless you make additional arrangements with local friends or relatives, in that case the MYNA administration is no longer responsible for your child making their scheduled flight.

How will my child get from the airport to the campgrounds?

Once your itinerary is received the Camp Administration will make a compilation of all flights arriving and departing. This information will then be coordinated with the local volunteer committee which will assist in transporting all the youth to the campground and then back to the airport.

General Questions

How are the youth monitored and chaperoned? Are the girls interacting with the boys?

The youth are separated by gender and then by age groups. Each group is then assigned to a counselor who is with them at all times. In addition to the counselors there are at least 2 adult advisors present at the camp at all times.

Will my child know who his/her counselor is prior to the camp?

It is always our goal to have the cabin assignments completed 1-2 weeks prior to the start of camp. This gives chance for the counselors to email the youth with basic information about them and start building that connection before camp starts.

What items do we need to pack for the camp?

A packing list will be sent to you when the counselor sends out their welcome email to the campers.

How will I be able to get a hold of my child during the camp?

The campers are required to turn over their phones to their counselors at the start of each camp. They are allowed to ask for them during free time or recreation time to make calls home. Due to schedules and activities it may be hard for the youth to call home on some days. If a child absolutely feels that they need to speak with their parents we will assess the situation and allow them to call at other times if needed.

Some parents become worried when they do not hear from their youth, but please be assured if anything were to happen we would not hesitate to contact you and inform you. We will provide numbers for emergency contact if needed, but please also understand that the advisors are involved in the programs as well and might be unavailable during certain times. In past camps we have also experienced trouble with acquiring signals dependent on our locations in the camp. Leave a message and we will return the call as soon as we can.

Regional Camps

Are essays necessary to get into a regional camp?

No they are not.

Does an individual have to be accepted into a regional camp?

No, once you are registered you are accepted and may make whatever travel plans necessary to get to the camp.

Camps in General

Is it necessary to have an access code in order to register for a camp?

The only time a code is needed is during special situations with payment plans and scholarships. These codes will be given directly to the applicants.

What is the absolute cut off age for someone who wants to attend any sort of MYNA camp?

Do to insurance liability issues a youth should not be younger than 11 ½ years old or older than 18. In the situations of Retreats we encourage the ages to be 14-18 years old, but those who are motivated and younger are encouraged to register. Their essays and letters of recommendation will still be subject to review and acceptance.

What are the other options for those who would still like to be a part of MYNA camps but are over age?

If you have been involved with MYNA as a youth but have reached the age of 19 then join us as a counselor. Counselor applications for every camp are always at the bottom of the camp description on www.myna.org.

If you are registering siblings, how is that done?

You may register siblings on the same registration form. After you have completed the registration for the first youth there will be a section for guests or additional registrations. You will need to complete the same information for the sibling and answer the registration questions for that child as well.

I can't afford for my children to attend a MYNA camp. What are my options?

MYNA never wants a family's financial situation to be the reason for youth not attending a camp. We offer scholarships for families that provide the necessary forms and qualify. A link to the financial aid application can always be found in the camp's description on www.myna.org.

General Questions for All Camps

Are the boys and girls kept totally separate? If not, how does the camp prevent them from socializing unnecessarily?

The boys/girls are in separate cabins and on separate sides of the camp. Recreational activities are also done separately. Both groups will eat meals at the same time but on opposite sides of the dining hall. The genders are not completely separate but they are monitored by the counselors and advisors. If they do interact it is for the purpose of a project only with an adult present.

Do counselors sleep in the cabins/tents with the youth?

Yes they do.

Do they make sure that the kids don't wander at night, while the counselors are sleeping?

Youth are monitored and many times the counselors sleep near the doors to avoid this problem.

Are the kids' night trips to the bathroom supervised (if the bathrooms are outside)?

Youth are required to stay with their groups at all times. If they do go somewhere without the counselors (which is very rarely) they are told to use the Buddy System and go in groups of 2 or more, but to report back with the counselor immediately.

Is there an enforced bedtime "lights out" policy, to make sure that kids don't stay up all night talking?

There is an enforced lights out, especially with the counselors in the cabin they are usually very tired and want to sleep.

Are all of the kids strictly accounted for during the day? (Do the counselors always know where the children are, at all times?)

Counselors are required to remain with their campers at all times during the day and activities.

Do the counselors make sure that all of the children pray on time (including fajr) and follow all Islamic rules?

All campers are required to pray at the same time in a group, even during Fajr.

Do the boys and girls have separate sports activities?

Recreational activities are separate.

If boys and girls are mixed in any type of activity, what would those activities be?

They will eat in the same dining hall but on separate sides. They will be in lectures and workshops together but again are on separate sides and if in groups are monitored by adults who are facilitating the workshops.

My child has a potentially fatal allergy, and she/he would need to bring a pre-loaded injection of epinephrine ("epi-pen") with her/him to camp, just as a precaution.

Could the camp assure me that the staff will be informed of this allergy?

We have had youth attend before with allergies. This should be noted on the health information of the registration form and we make note to inform the campground staff and all of our adult advisors.

Is all the meat/chicken served at the camp ZABIHA halal?

Zabiha meat is purchased for the meals.

Does someone make sure that ALL the served food contains only halal ingredients (including potentially non-obvious items such as cheeses, yogurts, and marshmallows)?

The camp administrator works with the staff of the campground if they prepare the meals to know which ingredients are allowed and what is not. There are times when we will also prepare the meals and that ensures the ingredients are appropriate. We always bring our own marshmallows purchased at international shops.

How will the children be transported to camp?

Transportation is the responsibility of the family. If registration allows and the need arises we do try to help in making arrangements.

Are the children prevented from bringing in ipods, dvd/cd players, cell phones, etc.?

No electronic device are allowed. We do allow cell phones however they are turned into the counselor and may only be used during free time in order to contact the parents.

Is the children's reading material monitored?

Many times the youth do not have time for personal reading. Each group is given a time to give a lesson to the rest of camp and the group uses reference materials (Quran, hadith, Seerah, etc.) to look at topics for this.

If there is swimming, does the camp insist on Islamic swimwear?

Some camps do allow swimming. Girls and boys are on separate times/days and girls are required to wear Islamically appropriate clothing. Also, any campgrounds that have had swimming have been very helpful in being sure the fence around the pool is covered with tarps to help in the privacy of the girls.

Is there a professional life guard on duty?

Campground liability requires a life guard be used.

What is the ratio of counselors to children?

The ratio is usually 1 counselor for each 5-6 campers.

Does the camp have a nurse or doctor on site?

Not onsite but we have doctors visiting or on call for us. We are also sure to have the closest medical facility information available to all our adults onsite.

What activities will the children engage in?

Depends on the campground and what they offer.

If the camp includes riflery and/or archery, are trained supervisors provided and always with the children?

Campground liability requires their staff be present for these activities.

If bike or horseback riding are included, does the camp provide helmets?

The accredited campsites follow all safety rules in accordance with the insurance liability regulations.

Do you have a packing list of what the children should bring with them?

One is provided when a camper registers.

Are most of the children who attend the camp observant Muslims who pray, wear hijab, have memorized Quran, etc.?

Everyone is required to pray or attend prayer even if they are unable to pray (girls). Hijab is required and boys are required to follow modest dress rules as well. We have had many Hafiz attendees. We have also had many youth attend who were not strong in their deen but after a weeklong camp seem refocused and reenergized toward understanding what it means to be a Muslim.