

National Youth Leadership Training Pack & Paddle 2026

What is National Youth Leadership Training (NYLT) ?

National Youth Leadership Training is an exciting, action-packed program designed to provide youth members of Scouting America with leadership skills and experience that they can apply within their home units and in other situations demanding leadership of self and others.

NYLT delivers leadership skills through a combination of formal youth-to-youth presentations and hands-on, experiential learning by modeling a month in the life of a Scouts BSA troop. Youth who function in leadership roles in their troop, crews, or ships will benefit from the experiences developed in this course.

What are the course objectives?

The National Youth Leadership Training course will empower participants:

- to be tomorrow's leaders today.
- to lead themselves; that they may serve others by leading them.
- with the confidence and knowledge to run the unit program.
- with a working knowledge of the skills needed for leadership.
- by preparing them to relay skills learned to others in their home unit and beyond.
- by providing the opportunity to share ideas and experiences with youth from other units.
- by creating a model troop for the participants to experience the BSA at its very best.

What is Bay-Lakes Council National Youth Leadership Training Pack & Paddle?

Pack & Paddle takes the traditional syllabus and places it in the environment of a wilderness-style backpacking and canoeing trek. Participants complete the entire intensive, effective leadership training from the national standardized syllabus, with immediate and additional meaning due to the demands of completing a wilderness trek as a team. Teamwork, goal setting, and leadership lessons are applied in real time to the challenges of working with their team to pack up their campsite, navigate to their new location, and set up again each day.

Who is qualified to attend?

The NYLT course trains youth from Scouts BSA Troops, Venture Crews, and Sea Scout Ships. The Course is co-educational. Male and female Scouts, Venturers, and Sea Scouts are all eligible and encouraged to attend. Participants must be at least 13 years of age by August 8, 2026.

- Participants do not have to be serving currently in a leadership role but should have the skills and abilities to do so in the future.
- Certain outdoor skills are needed to attend the course: tent set-up and takedown, preparing and eating meals out of doors, and general camping procedures. The participant should have slept overnight in a tent prior to attending NYLT.
- Participants must have sufficient maturity to function in a team or patrol of individuals they have not previously met, and to function in an adventure-based, wilderness-style camping, backpacking, hiking and canoe travel environment.
- Participants must have passed the Swimmer's Test within the calendar year or be prepared to do so upon checking in at Camp Hiawatha. Proof of ability could be a participant's swim tag from summer camp within the calendar year, or a letter from their unit leader.



How is the Course set up?

The Pack & Paddle Course is set up like a troop “in the field” on a wilderness backpacking and canoe trek. Volunteer adults and youth hold troop leadership positions such as Scoutmaster, Assistant Scoutmaster, Senior Patrol Leader, etc. Participants are formed into 6-8 person patrols. They take turns performing the leadership functions necessary for them to successfully work as a team, in order to complete both their trek and the intensive NYLT syllabus. Behavior expectations adhere rigidly to the Scout Oath, Scout Law, and Outdoor Code.

The Patrol Method

The patrol method is used exclusively during the course. Patrols are on their own to set up campsites, cook meals, construct team projects and plan and carry out other activities without direct adult supervision. Patrol leadership changes daily to give all youth a chance to be a Patrol Leader and other vital roles. This provides hands-on opportunities for each youth to grow in leadership. It does require that each youth be mature enough to handle the independence given.

Tenting

Each participant will buddy up with someone in their patrol for tenting. One tent should be set up at base camp to store unneeded trek gear while the other is taken on the trek to be used by the buddies. Tents should be as lightweight as possible and a minimum size that will sleep two comfortably with room for little gear. Half-dome tents with two doors and vestibules are ideal. Pack covers, as noted in the participant’s equipment checklist, work well for outside storage of gear not kept in the tents.

Uniform Requirements

One full Official uniform shirt, and appropriate colored Scouts BSA, Sea Scout, or Venturing pants or shorts for the type of unit of which you are a member, is required at base camp and for opening and closing activities. Most of the time, the uniform of the day will be an activity uniform of Scouting or NYLT T-shirts (2 to be supplied by course) and the above appropriate colored pants/shorts.

The Unit Leader’s Role (Troop Scoutmaster, Crew Advisor, or Ship Skipper)

We expect the Unit Leader to work with participants prior to the course to provide them with an understanding of the basics of leadership. “Introduction to Leadership Skills” training, conducted at the unit level, is a prerequisite for NYLT. The Unit Leader must sign the “Unit Leader’s Approval” form certifying the participant’s preparedness for this course.

Pre-Camp Orientation

Periodic communications by email will be sent out. A virtual pre-camp meeting will be scheduled no later than July to help you prepare your Scout or Venturer for the Course.

Registration Information

Register online at www.baylakesbsa.org. Deposits and payments are transferable but not refundable. The fee includes all meals for the course, 2 T-shirts, Council Shoulder Patch, “NYLT Trained” patch, other course and training materials, loads of challenges and lots of fun. Space is limited to the first 30 participants. History shows us that our NYLT courses fill up FAST, so register as soon as you are able, to avoid the waiting list.

Other Questions?

For more information on the program, please contact the 2026 Course Director **Tom Hemr**, tomhemr@gmail.com or the Bay-Lakes Council Center for Scouting at (920) 734-5705.



What do I do next?

START PREPARING

If you have not already done so, complete the on-line registration and pay the deposit per participant. Please also complete the 3 pages at the end of this document, along with a BSA health form, and return to:

Tom Hemr, 609 Park Crest Drive, Thiensville WI 53092 no later than July 1, 2026.

Make sure you have updated Annual Health & Medical Record **Parts A, B & C, with all signatures dated August 2025 or later**. As a reminder, please include ALL information asked for. The care of your son's or daughter's health and welfare are our priority; the adult leadership and Health Officer need to know this information to properly care for them. Make sure to include a medicine list, all necessary signatures, and copies of the front and back of your insurance card. It is a good idea to make a copy of these documents for your records as well. The Health & Medical Record can be found at:

https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/HealthSafety/pdf/680-001_ABC.pdf

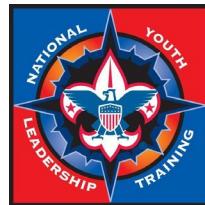
Staff starts preparing for your Scout in March. They will spend the next 6 months working to make this unique training experience the best it can be. We thought it would be good to give you time to help your Scout to also **"Be Prepared"**.

Review this checklist carefully before you begin your preparations. If you need some of the listed equipment, talk with your unit's quartermaster about borrowing from the troop, crew, or ship. If at any time you have questions, comments, or concerns, please contact us.

A few more tips:

- Internal-frame or external-frame backpacks must be used for trekking of all gear throughout the course, from the moment of check-in to departure. Talk with your local sporting goods shop about which style may be best suited for your son or daughter's Scouting adventures.
- A duffle or small pack may also be brought for the small number of items we leave at base camp.
- No luggage carriers or suitcases are permitted.
- Additional Pack & Paddle prescribed patrol equipment will be issued for the trek. Each participant will be required to add a portion of this to their load. After the shared patrol equipment and food are packed, participants' backpacks can easily weigh over 30 pounds - so pack smart, and pack light.
- Review the checklist often throughout your preparations and packing.
- Practice hiking with your loaded pack to ensure a good fit and to acclimate yourself to carrying weight.

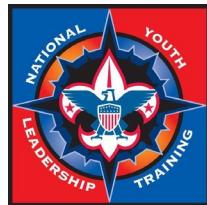
All participants must arrive at Camp Hiawatha at 11:00 AM *Eastern Daylight Time* on Saturday, August 8. Wear your official Scout field uniform shirt for your home unit, with appropriate-colored pants/shorts. Please eat beforehand or pack a lunch as the first meal provided on course will be Saturday evening's dinner.



Pack & Paddle Personal Equipment Checklist

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| ANNUAL HEALTH & MEDICAL RECORD (<i>Parts A, B & C, all signatures within 1 year</i>) | 2-PERSON BACKPACKING or LIGHTWEIGHT TENT |
| REQUIRED/PRESCRIBED MEDICATION (<i>in original labeled containers</i>) | WATERPROOF GROUND CLOTH (<i>can be a thin tarp or 6 mil plastic, cut 3" larger than tent floor, to form a bathtub inside your tent</i>) |
| SCOUT HANDBOOK | SLEEPING BAG (<i>recommend lightweight 40 degree bag</i>) |
| SMALL NOTEBOOK | SLEEPING PAD (<i>closed-cell foam pad or self-inflating pad suitable for backpacking</i>) |
| BALLPOINT PEN and/or PENCIL | HIKING BACKPACK (<i>properly sized and fitted</i>) |
| OFFICIAL SCOUT FIELD UNIFORM SHIRT (<i>with your usual rank badge, unit numerals, etc.</i>) | PACK RAIN COVER |
| PANTS or SHORTS in the appropriate color for your uniform type (<i>zip-off or quick dry are ideal</i>) | WATERPROOF PACKING BAGS for organization of all items (<i>gallon size freezer bags; reinforce with clear strapping tape</i>) |
| ACTIVITY UNIFORM SHIRTS - 2 NYLT quick dry shirts will be provided | THREE (3) 1-LITER WATER BOTTLES |
| BELT and BUCKLE (<i>as needed</i>) | MESS KIT : only need CUP for hot beverages & LONG-HANDED SPOON for backpacking |
| WOOL HIKING SOCKS (<i>4 pair minimum; avoid cotton</i>) | SMALL CAMP TOWEL |
| SOCK LINERS (<i>optional</i>) | REGULAR TOWEL for showers at base camp |
| HIKING SHOES / BOOTS (<i>Most important</i>) | TOOTHBRUSH AND SMALL TOOTHPASTE |
| FOOTWEAR FOR TENT SITE / WATER (<i>such as old pair of tennis shoes</i>) | CAMP SUDS (<i>very small bottle</i>) |
| BASE CAMP DUFFEL BAG | DEODORANT (<i>optional – base camp only</i>) |
| CHANGES OF CLOTHING (<i>base camp</i>) | OTHER TOILETRIES / SHOWER ITEMS (<i>base camp only</i>) |
| SLEEPWEAR (<i>separate shorts, t-shirt, etc.</i>) | PERSONAL FIRST AID KIT (<i>include Mole-Pad and Moleskin</i>) |
| UNDERCLOTHING (<i>3 sets min; avoid cotton</i>) | FOOT POWDER (<i>travel size</i>) |
| FLEECE JACKET (<i>avoid cotton</i>) | SUNSCREEN (<i>travel size</i>) |
| RAINGEAR (PANTS & JACKET) (<i>not a poncho or single-use item</i>) | INSECT REPELLENT (<i>travel size, no aerosol</i>) |
| GLOVES | FLASHLIGHT |
| HAT (<i>wide soft-brimmed recommended</i>) | POCKETKNIFE (<i>limit 1, no sheath knives</i>) |
| SUNGASSES (<i>optional</i>) | WATCH |
| EXTRA EYEGLASSES/CONTACTS (<i>as needed</i>) | COMPASS |
| | SEWING KIT with SAFETY PINS |

- **RADIOS, MUSIC PLAYERS, CELL PHONES, VIDEO GAMES, ELECTRONIC TOYS, etc. are NOT NEEDED.**
- NYLT, Camp Hiawatha, and Bay-Lakes Council are not responsible for any lost, damaged or misplaced personal equipment.
- Mark your clothing and personal gear with your name so you can identify it. When selecting equipment, keep in mind that all of it can get wet, muddy and/or damaged during these types of treks.



National Youth Leadership Training Pack & Paddle 2026

Please print and complete the following 3 pages, along with the BSA Annual Health & Medical Record including Parts A, B and C, and the front & back of insurance card. Forms should be mailed by July 1, 2026 to:

Tom Hemr, 609 Park Crest Drive, Thiensville WI 53092

NYLT Participant:

Printed Name: _____
First _____ Middle _____ Last _____

Unit Leader's Approval

My signature below indicates my certification that this participant is a potential future youth leader, that he/she has been familiarized with the concepts of leadership put forth in the "Introduction to Leadership Skills", that, if a Scout, has attained the rank of First Class or higher, that he/she will be comfortable camping in a patrol setting, and that he/she will be a positive influence within his/her course patrol. My signature also indicates my certification that this participant demonstrates sufficient maturity, physically and mentally, to function in an adventure-based, wilderness-style camping, hiking, backpacking and canoeing trek, and has passed the Swimmer's Test within this calendar year, or that I reasonably expect them to be able to do so upon arrival at the course.

Unit Leader: (Please Print Clearly)

Unit type: _____ Unit number: _____ District: _____

Print Name _____ Signature _____

Phone (_____) _____ E-mail _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Parent or Guardian's Approval:

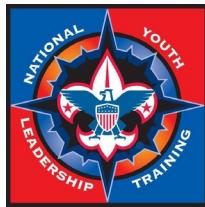
I approve the attendance of my son/daughter named above, as a participant at the Bay-Lakes Council National Youth Leadership Training Pack & Paddle Course to be held at Camp Hiawatha on August 2-10, 2025. I certify that he/she meets the necessary participation requirements. I will ensure that he/she has the necessary equipment and uniforms to meet the requirements for the course.

Parent/Guardian: (Please Print Clearly)

Print Name _____ Signature _____

Phone (_____) _____ E-mail _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____



Information About You, the Participant

Name _____ Troop/Crew/Ship Number _____

Rank _____ Positions Held _____

Preferred Name to be called / shown on name tag _____

Why do you want to attend NYLT and what do you expect to learn?

Code of Conduct

The Scout Oath, Scout Law and Outdoor Code form the basis for all behavior at NYLT. The Participant should read each item and sign to indicate their pledge and agreement to conduct themselves in accordance with these standards.

Scout Oath: On my honor, I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; to help other people at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight.

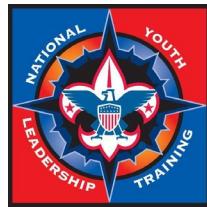
Scout Law: A Scout is Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave, Clean, and Reverent.

Outdoor Code: As an American, I will do my best to: Be clean in my outdoor manners. Be careful with fire. Be considerate in the outdoors. Be conservation minded.

STANDARDS

- I agree to exhibit conduct and behavior that is consistent with the Scout Oath, Scout Law, and Outdoor Code.
- I agree to follow all directions of NYLT staff members, Camp Hiawatha staff, or their agents.
- I agree to use Scouting equipment safely and appropriately. If I damage or lose Scouting equipment due to neglect or misuse, I may be required to pay for repair or replacement of the equipment.
- I understand that serious or repeated failure to live up to this pledge may result in the necessity that I return home prior to the end of the stated activity. Further, I understand that if my conduct requires return home, I will not be eligible for any refund of fees paid, and my parent or guardian will be financially liable for any and all transportation costs.

Participant Signature _____ Date _____



Participant Name _____ Troop/Crew/Ship Number _____

Parents - please answer the following questions to the fullest of your ability. It is our intention to support the learning of every NYLT participant the best that we can. We can only support those needs that we are aware of. Our course utilizes troop setting and classroom formats for some of the learning, and energetic group activities at times. Understanding if a young person has difficulty with attention, note-taking, comprehension, or has a physical limitation will help us provide the best environment possible for them to succeed. This information will be kept strictly confidential and will only be shared with select staff if concerns arise.

Does your child have difficulty in school?

If yes, please explain the difficulty and how it is addressed.

Does your child have an IEP, 504 plan, or other educational or emotional accommodation at school?

If yes, please explain what accommodations are provided and situations you expect we may need to provide additional support.

Is this your child's first time away from home without a parent or usual adult leaders?

If your child regularly takes medication for ADD/ADHD or other emotional concern, will this medication be continued during our course?

Understanding that our program is challenging, fast-paced, and in a rustic camp setting, is there anything else you feel we should know to be able to best support your child?