

## PARENT'S GUIDE TO OUTDOOR SCIENCE CAMP

### Frequently Asked Questions:

#### What are the Mile High Pines facilities like?

The California OutDoor Education and Science School (or C.O.D.E.S. School) program is run at Mile High Pines camp. The camp facilities have been in operation since 1945. The facilities have continuously been updated and modernized throughout the years. There are two separate camp facilities that can be used in conjunction or separately of one another for the outdoor education program.

The camp has several meeting rooms, many with fireplaces. It also provides a dining hall where all your child's meals will be served and prepared by a talented kitchen team of cooks and chefs. The activities at Mile High Pines varies depending on the outdoor education program deemed appropriate by your child's school or due to weather conditions. On site, there are two outdoor basketball and volleyball courts, and one full sized basketball and volleyball court inside of the Activities and Recreation Center (A.R.C.). The camp facility is walking distance to Jenks Lake and has a swimming pool on site. Also located on site is a rock climbing tower and zipline, archery practice, game tables, amphitheaters, horseshoes, and relaxation areas with picnic tables or under gazebos.

Most cabins are furnished with solid pine bunk beds and all mattresses are clean and comfortable. Cabins on Lower Pines have restrooms indoors, cabins on Upper Pines have large shared bath houses just steps away from each cabin. Cabins are chosen by your child's school.

#### How will my child be supervised and by whom?

Much of the hour-to-hour supervision will be done by the outdoor education cabin counselors that will be provided by the CODES Program. They will sleep in the cabins with students, lead students from activity to activity, and supervise them throughout the day. Every cabin counselor undergoes thorough interviews, training, and background checks before your child arrives. The counselors may be high school graduates, college students, or college graduates. Many outdoor education camp counselors return year after year because they enjoy their experience so much.

#### What is the disciplinary system like?

Different teachers and staff members have different disciplinary styles. Our outdoor education naturalists are instructed on the disciplinary "do's" and "don'ts." We usually begin with some sort of verbal warning. "Christina, it is not OK to do that here." If the student continues the behavior, a timeout is usually given. Five minutes of sitting out of rec. time while 100 other students have their fun is not a 6th grader's idea of a good time. If a timeout is not effective, we may increase the timeout to ten or fifteen minutes. The teachers will be involved by this time, also.

If the behavior continues, a call home is in order, and you would need to pick up your child. We do not like to send students home, however, simply because the ones that will benefit most from the outdoor education program are those who may have problems working with other students or as a team in the cabins. Besides that, we understand that parents are busy with their daily routines and taking time to pick up a student can be very difficult.

The following breaches of discipline are grounds for immediate dismissal from the California OutDoor Education and Science School program:

1. Fighting
2. Any activity that is inherently dangerous to self or others.
3. Stealing
4. Outright defiance.
5. Intentionally destroying property.
6. Unauthorized leaving of cabin
7. Possession of illegal substances.
8. Possession of any weapon.
9. Other behaviors at the discretion of the Director of the California OutDoor Education & Science School.

#### What is the Daily Schedule like?

We try to keep the students busy with activities that are productive and positive--classes, recreation time, evening activities, songs and s'mores, skit night, meals, and cabin clean-up time. Students come to learn primarily life science, but also geology, orienteering, team building, and social skills. All of this happens mostly in outdoor education classes with our trail teachers, but also in all of the activities simply because they are in a new situation learning new skills and dealing with new people. There is rest time scheduled in the day, as well as recreation time. We strongly believe that students need "down time"-- time to play and be themselves so that they will have energy to put into more structured activities such as outdoor education classes and skit night.

## PARENT'S GUIDE TO OUTDOOR SCIENCE CAMP CONTINUED...

### **What is the dining experience like? And, what if my child has special dietary needs?**

The professional food service team at Mile High Pines serves home style meals appropriate for youth during the week. We try to serve meals that most students would be familiar with. All meals are nutritious, plentiful and delicious. While student's are encouraged not to waste, we also ensure that seconds are made available so that each student eats a filling amount. No additional food is needed whatsoever, unless a medical condition exists which would require it. Gum is simply not allowed.

**Vegetarians or Vegans:** Please indicate to your child's school in advance (at least two weeks) if your child is a vegetarian/vegan etc... This will allow the kitchen staff ample time when creating and ordering food for the menu. Vegetarian students will be given an alternative at meals where there is no other protein substitute. For example: if we are serving hamburgers, a vegi-burger will be provided as an alternative. However, if we are serving pancakes, sausage, oatmeal, cottage cheese, cereal, and fruit (a typical breakfast), the sausage will not have an alternative as there are other protein options already provided.

**Gluten Free or Other Dietary Restrictions:** Please indicate to your child's school in advance (at least two weeks) if your child has any dietary restrictions... This will allow the kitchen staff ample time when creating and ordering food for the menu. We will try to accommodate your child's needs and supplement the menu when necessary. However, in special cases you may have to supplement the menu by sending your student with food that we will keep and serve during meal times. If you would like to supplement the menu yourself, you can call 909.794.2824 or/and ask to speak with the food service manager to get the menu during your child's stay.

**Allergies:** Please disclose all other allergies on health forms, and to your child's school prior to arrival.

### **Will I be allowed to call my child or have my child call me?**

What we have found during our outdoor education program (and this is true of most programs) is that when children are allowed to call home, this compounds the problem of homesickness and the next thing that happens is that the student is on their way home. We strongly believe that we have a valuable outdoor educational experience to offer and that to cut short a student's week is robbing them of that opportunity. Of course, not every call home will cause a domino effect leading to a trip home. But calls from parents or to home will pull students out of their outdoor education programmed activities, which are disrupting and ends up being a problem when several students need to call home using the office lines.

What, then, are your options? Send a letter or postcard the week before your child plans to attend, to ensure it arrives on time. We will deliver mail to the students daily, if you would like to have the letters delivered on separate days please indicate on the envelope (i.e., "Give to Jane on Tuesday"). Please write letters as follows:

Your child's name, Your child's school,  
CODES School at Mile High Pines  
P.O. Box 397  
Angelus Oaks, CA 92305

If you would like you may call, (909) 794-2824 to speak with an outdoor education naturalist or your child's counselor to see how your child is doing. Please keep calls to a minimum. In the event of an emergency you may call to speak with your child.

### **What about illness and medications?**

All medications and health concerns should be listed on the forms provided by the teachers (which they will receive from us). Any medications are dispensed by our medical monitor, who is available throughout the day or by a teacher when medication is needed before bedtime. All of our outdoor education naturalists have a minimum of Red Cross CPR, and First Aid certificates.

### **What curriculum is provided for the students?**

Dr. Rick Oliver, our superintendent, has a Ph.D. in biological sciences. When developing the outdoor education program in 1993, he wrote curriculum for 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grade according to the California Science Standards and Framework, which sets out what sort of material each grade level should be learning. The curriculum was originally developed for the Outdoor Science School at Mount Hermon in northern California. The curriculum has been updated and modified several times as appropriate or as scientific knowledge grows and to fit the ecosystem at Mile High Pines camp.

Our outdoor education naturalists use the curriculum that is appropriate for the grade(s) the schools bring. If your child is in the 6th grade, you can expect to see 6th grade curriculum being used. Sometimes grades are mixed-- 5th and 6th or 7th and 8th. We usually challenge them to go with the higher level curriculum in that case.