



COMMON ADAPTATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH BEHAVIOR NEEDS

The following information will be helpful for Paras, Parent Shadows, Teachers and other staff who work with children with behavioral needs at Foothill Horizons Outdoor School. Please discuss with your naturalist the best accommodations for each child.

Foothill Horizons offers students a fun-filled week in which they can spend time with their friends and are kept active while hiking and participating in activities. For most students, this high paced schedule works very well, but we do have students who can easily become overwhelmed.

If you are working with a student who easily becomes overwhelmed by social situations, loud environments, or a fast-paced schedule, we would like to help you set these students up for success. Such students may need to have time and space to step out of the program and renew.

Refer to [PLANNING FOR STUDENTS WITH ACCOMMODATIONS](#) for more information on what we can accommodate and what we cannot.

Questions to consider are:

1. How does the student behave during recess, on campus assemblies, or other loud school events?
2. Will the student let adults know when they are overwhelmed and need a break or quiet time?
3. What happens if the student does not get any “down” time during the day?
4. What does an outburst look like?
 - a. When was the last outburst at school? What were the consequences?

Common adaptations:

- Share routine with students
- Give students a daily schedule
- Give quiet space in dorm room
- Provide quiet time in the activity rooms (must be supervised, and have min 3 people)
- Give a student buddy—caution on undulling burdening another student empowering another student
- Removing student from dorm time to sit in HO, assist other staff with meal set up, folding laundry... (must be supervised, and have min. 3 people or public space)

Note: All children are held to the same behavior expectations. An aide, para or Parent Shadow may prevent inappropriate behavior. All behavior that jeopardizes student safety will result in the same consequences as a general education student.

Program area	Description	Students affected	Common Accommodations
Meals in the Dining Hall	Approx. 200 people eat and talk in our Dining Hall. Staff make announcements over the loud speakers. During meals, the space can be loud. Meals last avg of 45 min.	Students overwhelmed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social situations • loud environments • feeling rushed • situations that feel chaotic 	Students can eat their meals in the Health Office or Staff Office.
Games/Dance	Approx. 100 people are led through team building games and group dances. Students can be excited, active, and boisterous as they encourage their teammates. Staff play music in the Dining Hall during games and dance, and announce the directions over the loud speaker. During relay races and group challenges, the students have high energy levels and are rushing around. This is a 2 hour period 7-9 pm	Students overwhelmed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social situations • loud environments • feeling rushed • situations that feel chaotic • conflict over rules in games • reduced personal space 	Students can sit in the Health Office, where they can read, color or rest
Showers	Students change for showers in their dorm rooms while supervised by the counselors. Then teachers dismiss students one dorm at a time to come into the bathroom for showers. The students go into private stalls with their towels. Showers are three minutes, timed by teachers.	Students overwhelmed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social situations • feeling rushed • situations that feel chaotic • anxiety over showering 	Students can shower: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at the end of everyone else in the regular showers • in the handicapped shower stall in the dorms • in the Health Office.
Freeplay	On average, 180 students engage in recess actives in an area the size of a football field. Although adults are supervising, students are expected to choose their own activities and cooperate with other students and stay within boundaries. Freeplay is 45 min long.	Students overwhelmed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social situations • situations that feel chaotic • conflict over rules in games Students who may wander off will need extra assistance.	Students can self-isolate on the Freeplay field or sit out from Freeplay in the Health Office.
Indoor Freeplay	When it is raining Freeplay may be indoors. Approx 180 students are in the Dining Hall with board games on tables, gymnastic mats, twister games. It is very loud and has an energetic chaotic feeling	Students overwhelmed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social situations • loud environments • situations that feel chaotic • conflict over rules in games 	Students can sit in the Health Office.

Dorm time	Students get ready for the day, clean their dorm room, use the restroom, take showers, and get ready for bed as together as a dorm. There can be anywhere from 15-21 students in a dorm and they are supervised by 1 or 2 high school counselors. Students are expected to follow rules and take personal responsibility for themselves in the dorms. During the time in the dorms, students can feel excited and the energy level may feel high. Dorm time is for 15-45 minutes scattered throughout the day.	Students overwhelmed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social situations • loud environments • situations that feel chaotic • conflict with others over rules 	Students can sit in the counselor area of the dorms during dorm time with a book or activity. Aides and Paras can provide alternative activities.
Menu	While we accommodate students with food allergies and special diets within our standard menu, some students have additional food sensitivities or aversions. Refer to Student with Special Diets for our policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with aversions to certain textures. • Students with a limited range of acceptable foods • Picky eaters 	Often children come to Foothill and eat what is provided. Just in case, some parents send up extra food of their choice that is easy to prepare and relatively healthy (i.e. no junk food or fast food). Contact the Kitchen beforehand. If the student has food that would be distracting to others, we would ask them to eat in the health office to protect them from unnecessary comments or questions.
Routine	The routine is different. While we have a weekly schedule, changes in weather can cause surprises.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in routine • New routine • New places with unexpected rules 	We can give the child a copy of the daily schedule, before attending review information on the student page. Review behavior expectations rules and consequences.