

# TVS

A person wearing a grey hoodie and brown pants is seen from behind, standing on a rocky shore. They are in the middle of throwing a small, dark ball into the air. The shore is covered with many small, light-colored shells. In the background, there is a calm body of water, likely a lake or a wide river, with a forested hill on the right side. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

TROJAN  
OUTDOOR  
EXPERIENCE



THE OBJECTIVES OF THE TROJAN  
OUTDOOR EXPERIENCE (TOE)  
PROGRAM ARE TO INCREASE,  
PRIMARILY THROUGH OUTDOOR  
ADVENTURE-BASED ACTIVITIES, THE  
RESPECT STUDENTS HAVE FOR  
THEMSELVES, EACH OTHER, AND THE  
NATURAL WORLD, WHILE LEARNING  
THROUGH AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCES,  
AND THUS TO SUPPORT THE SCHOOL'S  
OVERALL MISSION.





# TOE CORE LOWER SCHOOL

## PRE-K-K

Students in small groups explore our 75-acre campus for day hikes throughout the year to familiarize the students with our wonderful environment and the natural spaces it offers. Students learn about local ecology, conservation and Leave-No-Trace principles.

## KINDERGARTEN

Students spend a half day on campus for their farm visit! We bring the animals and farmers to campus, and students interact with farm animals and have a picnic. Students also are engaged in team-building activities that reinforce effective communication skills with their peers.

## 1ST GRADE

Students spend an entire day at the Fort Worth Nature Center studying river, lake and pond ecology. The goal of the program is to build on their current class curriculum in an experiential way.

## 2ND GRADE

Our second-grade classes spend an entire day at Dinosaur Valley State Park. Here they learn, for the first time, about navigation and orienteering. Students also spend time learning about fossils and taking care of themselves in the outdoors.

## 3RD GRADE

Students spend the day at Cleburne State Park rotating through group games, arts/crafts, and continued orienteering experiences. Students then return to campus to spend the night in the courtyard and utilize the challenge course and other parts of campus for an on-campus adventure. The goals of the program include introducing students to our broader TOE programing and spending the night “away” but in a familiar place.

## 4TH GRADE

Students spend two days and one night at Mineral Wells State Park. They camp in screened shelters as a building block to prepare them for tent camping in 5th grade. A big component of our fourth-grade TOE Core trip is healthy risk taking. Students climb outdoors, kayak and swim on the lake, and participate in an adventure race. Many of these activities are presented to students for the first time during this Core event. The emphasis on pushing one's comfort zone is a primary goal of fourth-grade TOE Core trip.



4th Grade TOE Core  
Mineral Wells State Park, TX

# MIDDLE SCHOOL

## 5TH GRADE

Students spend two nights and three days at Camp El Tesoro. Goals of this trip include outdoor safety, Leave-No-Trace principles, and the introduction of specific outdoor skills. Students continue to participate in activities primarily focused on communication and challenge-by-choice activities.

## 6TH GRADE

Students spend four days and three nights at Buttermilk Creek Ranch near Salado, TX. We introduce wilderness medicine, student cooking, Texas bushcraft, and ancient tool making. Goals of this trip include deeper outdoor skills, group culture building, and introduction of archeology and ancient peoples.

## 7TH GRADE

Students spend five days on the road in a two part trip that includes 2.5 days of Texas history travel/study throughout Austin, San Antonio, and Fredericksburg. During this portion they stay in hotels and tour museums, the state capital, the Alamo, and other historical locations that tie into their current American Studies curriculum. The second portion includes three days and two nights at Enchanted Rock State Natural Area. Here they tent camp, navigate with GPS/compass, rock climb and rappel, and learn more advanced cooking skills. Goals of this program include obtaining a better understanding of our Texas history, front country tent camping, topographical map reading with GPS navigation skills, and improving at more technical and difficult rock-climbing skills.

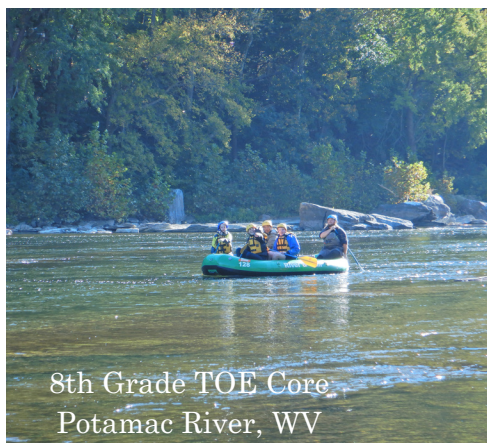
## 8TH GRADE

Students travel by airplane to the Washington, D.C. area for a two-part trip to study American history. The first three days are spent exploring museums, monuments, the Capitol, and the city to complement their American Studies curriculum. During this segment, the students stay in hotels and travel by coach bus. The second half of the event, students live in cabins in Maryland. From this location they canoe, raft, and hike in the Shenandoah Valley. The goals of this trip include learning about our nation's history through traditional means and also through exploration by watercraft and foot in the mountains where this history unfolded. Basic survival craft, paddling, and Class III rafting are taught during this course in MD, VA, and WV (there is an extra fee for this trip).





5th Grade TOE Core  
Glen Rose, TX



8th Grade TOE Core  
Potomac River, WV



6th Grade TOE Core  
Buttermilk Creek Ranch, TX



7th Grade TOE Core  
Enchanted Rock State Park

# UPPER SCHOOL

## 9TH GRADE

Students spend two days taking part in team-building activities that prepare them for their upcoming freshman year. The goals of this trip include building community and learning about the culture and expectations of the Upper School, learning how to navigate the TVS community service portal, and easing tensions about transitioning to the ninth grade.

## 10TH GRADE

Students spend three days and two nights at Camp El Tesoro. The purpose of the 10th-grade TOE Core trip is to spend time thinking, talking, and practicing self-care as they approach adulthood.

## 11TH GRADE

Students travel to Camp Carter for three days and two nights. This event is framed around and with our College Counseling department. Students rotate through college application prep courses and outdoor adventure-based group activities. The goals of this event include helping our students better understand all aspects of the college application process while continuing to nurture and improve class culture and community.

## 12TH GRADE

The Final TOE CORE TRIP! Students spend two nights and three days at Buttermilk Creek Ranch. Students participate in group games and an adventure race. More than any other TOE Core program, students are given lots of free time to spend their last couple of days together camping with their classmates.

## UPPER SCHOOL STUDENT LEADERS

All but one of our Lower School and Middle School TOE Core trips are staffed by Upper School Student Leaders. This is a critical component of our program and one of the most authentic places for students to learn, practice, and reflect on leadership skills. Number, roles, and responsibilities vary by event and students must apply each semester for the chance to become a staff member. Our most successful TOE events are often directly related to the impact of US Student Leaders. Our Lower School and Middle School students will ask our US Student Leaders questions about directions, navigation, outdoor skills, and general logistics, not to mention general life advice. We ask our teachers and chaperones to observe in the background and step in when needed, but we encourage the Student Leaders to run as much of the TOE Core program as possible. We do our best to set up TOE programming for the Student Leaders not only to be successful but also to be challenged. TOE Core programming, truly, would be neither as impactful nor as successful without the immense help of the Upper School Student Leaders.



# TOE on Campus

## Skills for Tomorrow

In collaboration with TVS Mind Makers staff, TOE meets weekly with 5th and 6th grade to work on skills including empathy, teamwork, listening and consensus building.



## The Challenge Course

Our challenge course is the perfect space for students to push their comfort zones in a controlled setting while also building leadership skills.

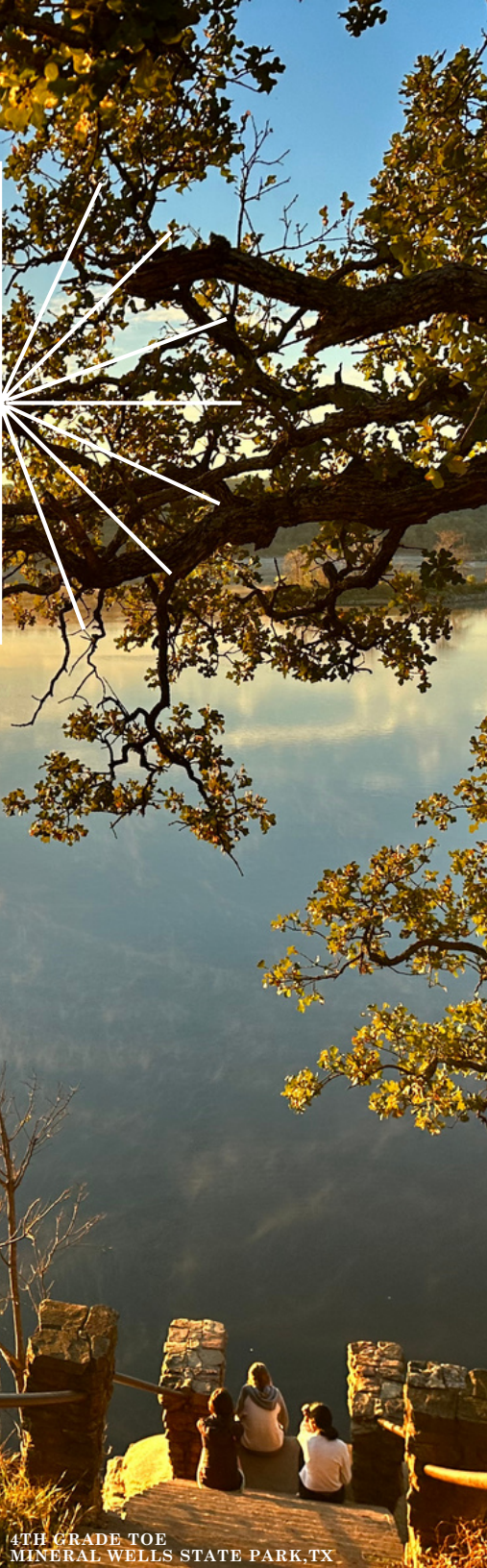


## Wyatt Donahue '12 Memorial Trail

The addition of our 2.5-mile trail around campus has given students a space to walk, jog, bike, and spend time outside together.







# BUILDING EMPATHY & CONNECTION

The learning that occurs within the TOE program is more than just outdoor skills. There are also deeply impactful social and emotional educational opportunities.

TOE trips provide a place for TVS students to push their comfort zones while creating authentic challenges. It is more than just the act of being challenged itself that is important. It is the kindness that a community can show through those challenges, whether by carrying someone's backpack, sharing your own water, or cheering on a classmate who makes it halfway up the rock wall. It is those moments that are vital to harnessing empathy. To be challenged and to see others be challenged creates a space where young people can respond with both strength and kindness.

It is impossible to quantify these moments, because for as many big moments that we see, there are just as many small acts of kindness that happen during our TOE programming.

At TOE, we seek to create authentic experiences and an education that extends beyond the classroom. Our continued goal is to create these moments frequently on campus through small-group learning and student-led community engagement. TOE is more than just a camping trip for TVS students: it is an essential component of building empathetic, community-minded, and ambitious young people.

# TOE BEYOND

Optional Summer Programming,  
Not Included in Tuition



## MIDDLE SCHOOL

These are optional trips anywhere in the continental US and are not a part of school tuition. The annual offerings are open to rising 6th-8th graders and typically explore our nation's national parks. Activities can include hiking, camping, rafting, climbing, and canyoneering. Previous locations have included Bryce, Glacier, Grand Teton, Yellowstone, and Zion National Parks. The goal of these trips includes giving the student a taste of what our national park system has to offer with the hope that it will foster an attitude of respect, enjoyment, and passion that participants continue to share with friends and family for a lifetime. Science and history components tie in with the annual academic curriculum the students have studied through hands-on experiences in the field.

## UPPER SCHOOL

Rising 9th-12th graders can elect to attend large expeditions that typically occur outside of the United States. These trips are not included in tuition and usually cap at 24 students. These events provide experiences that further allow our students to develop their own passions. The goals of these trips include learning how to travel abroad and safely enjoy new cultures while exploring adventure-based activities. Previous destinations have included Austria, Costa Rica, Germany, and Peru. These excursions range from one to three weeks in duration.

# TVS

## TROJAN OUTDOOR EXPERIENCE



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For more information  
please visit:  
[tvs.org/toe](https://tvs.org/toe)

