

# Camp Handbook



## CONTACT US

[Info@whitepinesranch.com](mailto:Info@whitepinesranch.com) – this email gets checked multiple times per day.

### Office:

815-732-7923 – we answer this phone and check voicemails from 7:00 am until 8:00 pm.

White Pines Ranch  
3581 W. Pines Road  
Oregon, IL 61061

Please keep in mind that our office staff/camp directors wear many hats and are not always available to answer phone calls or emails. We appreciate you referring to this handbook before calling or emailing. If you have a question or concern not addressed here, PLEASE feel free to call or email.

## **ARRIVAL DAY (Sunday)**

- Families will not have use of our facilities. Please make any restroom stops before arriving.
- Our staff will meet you at the entrance to the ranch and direct you where to go.
- Please do not get out of your car. Families won't be allowed to get out of their vehicles on check-in day.
- After all of the administrative facets of check-in are over, one of our staff members will take your camper to their dorm, and you can head home.
- Campers coming to camp with friends can save beds if they check in later.

## **DEPARTURE DAY (Saturday)**

Our campers will be ready for a great big hug  
after a week at camp!

Pick up time is at 11:00, AND you can get out of your cars!  
Campers can show their families around and introduce you to their awesome counselors, their favorite horse, and Chubs the donkey. Our souvenir counter will be open with the chance to purchase merchandise and order the week's slideshow (just in case you didn't order it while registering).

## HEALTH SCREENING

Should your camper arrive to camp with obvious signs of illness or lice., we will ask that your child be kept in your care until the illness resolves and/or lice treatment has been administered.

## ILLNESS & INJURY

You will be called (at the primary number given on the enrollment form: if your child stays overnight in the infirmary or leaves camp for treatment (x-rays, testing, etc.). Many of our staff are Red Cross First Aid Certified, and one of the managers of the camp is on call 24-hours per day. In case of emergency, we can contact the Oregon Ambulance Service or KSB Hospital in Dixon, IL (a 15-minute drive).

## DIETARY NEEDS

In the WPR kitchen, we are committed to nutritious wholesome meals. While we make sure there is always a vegetarian option available, we can't accommodate all dietary needs. Campers with special dietary needs are welcome to bring meals with them. Please contact us to discuss the camper's needs BEFORE ARRIVAL AT CAMP.

## MEDICATIONS

All medications are turned in upon arrival. Medications are then given at each meal or before bedtime, as required by the physician. WPR keeps a daily written record, in order to make sure your camper received his or her medication as prescribed.

Please do not send over-the-counter (OTC) medications that are NOT taken daily, as these are already stocked at camp. **If your camper takes OTC regularly, such as allergy or pain relief, please send them with the preferred product.**

**We will not accept dosed medicines in unlabeled pill dividers, they MUST be allocated and packaged by a pharmacy.**

## **ACTIVITY GROUP REQUESTS**

Our campers are divided into activity groups each week. The age of the campers enrolled that week defines these groups. If your child is coming to camp with a friend that is very close in age, you can request that they be in the same activity group and dormitory. We will do everything we can to honor your request. There are rare times when we cannot honor your requests. **If we have any questions or concerns, we will contact you. If you are not contacted, that means that your request is honored.**

## **PACKING**

Please have your child participate in packing for camp so they know where to find what they need.

## **LUGGAGE**

Suitcases are not allowed. All items (including toiletries) must be packed in clean, washable canvas or mesh laundry bags. Bags with wheels will not be allowed in dorms.

Bring a list of everything that you brought to camp to make sure you don't forget anything.

## **LAUNDRY**

WPR does not provide laundry services. If your camper is staying for more than 1 week, please send enough clothes for their stay. Some families send enough for one week and visit their camper on Saturday or Sunday. This is a great opportunity to catch up over laundry and lunch. There is a laundromat located in Oregon.

**A PRINTABLE PACKING LIST IS PROVIDED AS A SEPARATE ATTACHMENT.**

## **BEDDING**

All campers have a single bunk and we provide one pillow. What you choose to send with your camper for sleeping is totally up to their comfort needs. A sleeping bag might be all they need or maybe they need more comfort so they bring sheets, a blanket, and an extra pillow.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Help reduce the amount of lost and found by labeling all of your camper's belongings. We are not responsible for items lost when left behind. Anything not called for will be donated one week after each session

## **TECHNOLOGY FREE**

### **PLEASE LEAVE ALL TECH DEVICES AT HOME**

There is one rule that we strictly enforce at camp. While we embrace technology when it comes to safety, we do ask that campers leave their cell phones at home. Research has shown that kids need minimal screen time each day. Without a cell phone, kids turn to other activities to fill their time. Any tech devices found during a session will be held until the end of camp.

## **SPENDING MONEY**

Campers are welcome to bring money to spend at our souvenir/candy counter. We have set up a bank account system to keep spending money safe and sound. Any leftover money will be returned to campers on departure day.

## **HOMESICKNESS**

NOT a sickness at all, but an emotion that most campers feel to some degree during their time at camp. A successful camp experience starts at home. Here are a couple tips to help prepare your camper!

### **3 WAYS TO PREPARE**

1. **TALK ABOUT IT** – Acknowledging with your camper the potential for homesickness can be a great first step in preparing for it. Like other feelings, once we acknowledge their existence, they can become a lot less scary and more manageable to cope with.
2. **STAY POSITIVE** – Keep the focus on how much FUN camp will be! Let them know how proud you are of them for practicing their independence. Your child needs to know that you think they will be a great camper. Encourage them to write letters and journal.
3. **DON'T DOUBT** – Expressing a lack of confidence in your camper's ability to be away from home, either directly to them or in front of others, undermines your child's budding confidence. Don't make any "deals" with your camper about coming to get them if they get homesick. For a homesick camper these promises become the focus, instead of learning to cope with their feeling.

## **HOW WE CARE FOR HOMESICKNESS**

Staff members are trained to care for homesickness. Our staff will do the following to help guide your camper through the normal adjustment period of being away from home:

1. Give your child time and attention. Empathize with their feelings and let them know they are totally normal.
2. Do things that make camp more "homey", such as reading a bedtime story, tucking them into their sleeping bag, etc.
3. Encourage your child to use the coping strategies below that have worked for other campers.

## **COPING STRATEGIES FOR CAMP**

Talk with your camper about these and other tools they can take to camp:

- **PLAY.** Keep busy and hold on to a positive attitude. Practice gratitude when feeling sad and focus on fully participating in the moment. Enjoy all that camp has to offer. Remember, it's not forever!

- **TALK.** Acknowledge your feelings and reach out to a counselor for a listening ear or a hug, but be ready to jump back into the fun!
- **WRITE.** Keep a journal about what you're doing at camp and your feelings. Better
- yet! Write a letter home to a friend or family member.
- **SERVE.** Focus on making sure those around you are having a good time!

### **WHEN SHOULD YOU CALL?**

If you receive a sad letter from your child, call or email us so that we can closely observe your child and talk with their counselors. We will call or email you back with detailed information about your child's attitude and behavior. We will contact you within 24 hours.

### **WHEN WILL WE CALL?**

If your child is visibly upset (crying frequently, not participating, having trouble eating or sleeping) and not adjusting after two full camp days, we will call you to let you know what is happening and discuss a plan for helping your child adjust.

## **KIDSICKNESS!**

Because we have found that this period of separation can be more difficult for you than it is for your camper, we offer these tips:

1. **KEEP IN TOUCH** One of the unique things about camp is that it's one of the only opportunities for children and parents to exchange hand-written letters. Campers LOVE receiving letters and postcards from home, so be sure to keep a steady stream of mail coming to your camper. Let friends and relatives know your camper's camp address, so they can send mail too! While it is difficult for parents to go for a week without hearing their child's voice on the phone, remember that the

independence your child is gaining is invaluable. The letters your child writes while they are at camp may be some of the best, written memories from their childhood!

2. BE MINDFUL OF THE BENEFITS – Remember that you are giving your child a gift that will follow them throughout their life...

- a) a week to just be a kid in the great outdoors, enjoying a much-needed break from the stresses of school, and a busy schedule
- b) the opportunity to live technology-free and focus on building face-to-face social skills!!
- c) Overcoming challenges independently allows them to build confidence, adaptability, resiliency, critical thinking, and leadership skills. Among a host of other valuable character traits!

## HOW TO CONNECT WITH YOU CHILD WHILE THEY ARE AT CAMP

**SNAIL MAIL** – Campers love to get REAL mail. We're talking about the real thing: pen on paper, maybe some doodles or sticker, in envelopes, with stamps. Parents and family members should send campers mail regularly to offer support and encouragement.

Campers are encouraged and given time to write letters daily, but as you can imagine it is nearly impossible to make this happen. Mail goes out from the camp mailbox daily.

If you don't want to use the U.S.P.S. you can write letters to your camper before camp and we can hand them out daily.

**Please address camper mail to:**

WHITE PINES RANCH  
3581 W PINES ROAD  
OREGON IL 61061

Campers name:

Group name:

**NO CARE PACKAGES.** If you need to send something forgotten at home, we will gladly accept your package! Please contact us with info on contents of the package, and we will make sure your camper receives it!

**EMAIL** – Send an email to [info@whitepinesranch.com](mailto:info@whitepinesranch.com) with your camper's full name in the subject field. These notes are printed out daily and handed out at mealtimes.

- Limit your emails to one each day or every few days.
- Emails with pictures or attachments will not be delivered
- Only emails from family will be delivered
- Campers are not able to reply

**SOCIAL MEDIA** – Once in a while our counselors will take an internet break and post pictures of daily activities. It might not happen every day since we encourage our staff to unplug too. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

## STANDARDS

Please review with your child before camp.

### BEHAVIOR

Campers are expected to treat other campers and staff with respect at all times, and value each other's right to have a positive experience. WPR is not equipped and cannot accommodate campers requiring repetitive 1-on-1 attention from a staff member, and or repetitive calls for a director/manager.

The following behaviors are not permitted at White Pines Ranch and will result in dismissal from camp, without refund, and at the Directors/Managers sole discretion:

1. Violence of any kind; any verbal communication or discussion of harm to oneself or others, real or imagined.
2. Threatening, harassment, or discriminating comments of any kind.
3. Use of foul language or discussion of inappropriate topics as determined by the Camp Directors/Managers.
4. Possession or use of tobacco, alcohol, drugs or weapons
5. Sexual or intimate behavior, relationships, or conversation.
6. Unauthorized absence from dormitory or activity.
7. Abusive or disrespectful behavior towards any member of the camp community.
8. Inappropriate appearance or attire (see below).

If a camper engages in any of the behaviors above, the staff will immediately separate the camper from the group and seek Director/Managers support to phone home. The severity of the situation and the degree to which your child's negative behavior affects the camp family determines if they will need to be sent home, at the Director/Managers sole discretion. The goal is to protect our camp family so that the whole group is able to function in a safe and healthy environment.

## **APPEARANCE**

Campers should pack clothing that is appropriate for an outdoor, active camp life. Wearing expensive clothing is discouraged while at camp.

The following are not allowed at camp:

Clothing with any logos or graphics depicting violence, bands that play violent music, drugs, alcohol, or inappropriate language or topics.

Jewelry that includes collars, chains, and excessive face or body piercings (ear and nose piercings are okay) as these may be unsafe for certain activities.

Clothing that does not cover underwear (clothing should fully cover stomach, lower back, chest, and bottom).

Any extra tight or extra loose clothing – unsafe for certain activities. In the case of swimsuits – two pieces are allowed as long as they are appropriate.

## **CALL HOME POLICY**

Should a camper's behavior not align with our standards, our staff will handle the situation according to this process:

A staff member will encourage positive behavior by asking your camper to engage in the appropriate task at hand. If your camper is unresponsive, or ignores the counselor's request the first time, they will move to step two.

1. Your camper will be given the choice to a) engage in appropriate behavior or b) have a time-out away from the group (but still in view of the counselor). If your camper continues to display negative behavior, the counselor will move to step three
2. A Manager will come to meet your camper to discuss their misbehavior. When a manager is called to assist with a behavioral issue, this is when you will receive a first phone call.
3. If you receive a second phone call, this will be to share that your camper has continued their misbehavior and has been told this is their last opportunity to express remorse, repair any damaged relationships and experience emotional and social growth past said incident. Your camper will be informed if a third phone call has to be made, it is to go home.
4. If a third phone call home needs to be made, this is the point you will need to make arrangements for pick up/travel home.