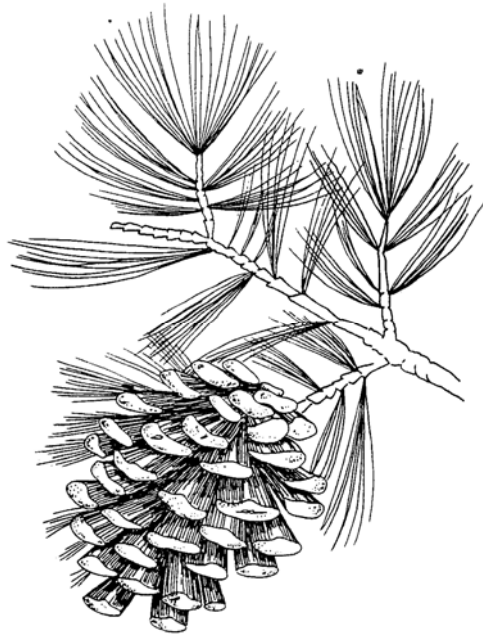


# The Environmental Education Center

at YMCA Camp Thunderbird



## Teacher Planning Packet

### Overnight Trip

[www.campthunderbird.org](http://www.campthunderbird.org)

1-800-732-3855



# Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the Environmental Education Center at YMCA Camp Thunderbird. We look forward to the experience that lies in store for you and your students as they get to fully explore their natural surroundings, and learn something about themselves, their classmates, and you. To better serve you we have developed this planning packet to help you prepare for your trip to our center. At any time please feel free to call us if you have any questions regarding your trip. Can't wait to see you and your students!!



*YMCA Mission:*

*To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.*

**Camp Thunderbird  
Environmental Education Center  
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## Why do we do this?

- ....to provide an interdisciplinary environmental education program where your students acquire practical knowledge and awareness so they may better appreciate, respect, and make their own decisions concerning their role in the environment.
- ....to help your students develop cooperative and leadership abilities through personal achievement, self-expression, and teamwork.
- ....to promote positive attitudes towards the wise use of natural resources.
- ....to break out of the four walls of the classroom and supplement your schools curriculum with engaging hands-on sensory learning in the outdoors.
- ....to foster an atmosphere and experience where your students experience feelings of competence, confidence, and satisfaction in learning, being outdoors, and helping others.
- ....to have fun!

**Camp Thunderbird  
Environmental Education Center  
History**

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## **Who are we and what's our story???**

In the early thirties, "Life Magazine" was promoting Fresh Air Camps for children of New York Slums. Observer Charities, Inc., a subsidiary of the Charlotte Observer, organized the Observer Fresh Air Camp in 1936 founded by C.B. Johnson. The camp enjoyed popularity in its beginning days due to its press exposure and appeal with the public. After three years the Observer decided it didn't quite know how to effectively manage a camp setting. The camp was leased to the Salvation Army in 1940 with hopes of increasing its effectiveness; however this was not the case and there was little improvement. The Observer still owners of the camp were disappointed and rumor of selling the property and tearing it down were in the air. Three individuals interested in the YMCA approached Mr. Johnson with the intent of turning over full control of the camp to the YMCA of Charlotte. Over time the Observer Charities, through various sources, have provided several buildings to compliment the gift of the camp and endowment. The YMCA took control in 1946 and in 1963 the name was changed to Camp Thunderbird and has been going strong since.

In the early 80's a few visionary teachers in the Charlotte area noticed Thunderbird as a great "School in the Woods", not just a special place during the summer. The first teachers that came out saw Camp Thunderbird as a place where they could interact with the environment through sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell which wasn't possible through their books or at their school. These were the pioneers of the environmental education program, and ever since, busses have been rolling through our gates ten months out of the year.

Today Camp Thunderbird is very dynamic with a variety of programs running throughout the year.

- **Environmental Education**
  - **Summer Day Camp**
  - **Summer Resident Camp**
  - **After-school Program**
- **Conference and Retreat/ Family Camp**

## Camp Thunderbird Environmental Education Center Staff

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Having a great site and great resources are one thing, but here at the Environmental Education Center we pride ourselves on our professional staff that will work with your students. Our staff is made up of adults that have received college degrees in areas such as; biology, conservation, forestry, education, and recreation to name a few. We also get a great opportunity each year to sponsor a few young adults from Europe and the United States that participate in an internship where they gain skills to take back to their countries or education. All in all, our staff is a very diverse group of instructors that enjoy working outside with children in a highly energetic and active environment that promote **respect, responsibility, caring, honesty** and **faith** for everybody and the environment.

Our staff must:

- As with many organizations that work with children pass a mandatory drug and background test before they are officially hired.
- complete a 2 week initial training before working with the kids.
- Participate in ongoing in-services on safety, science, and teambuilding
- Be periodically evaluated
- Certified in CPR, First Aid, AED, and Lifeguarding



**Camp Thunderbird  
Environmental Education Center  
Location**

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## **Where are we?**

Located in the heart of the Carolinas, our site is nestled on 106 acres along the banks of Lake Wylie. On the border of North and South Carolina just 17 miles from Charlotte, NC our site is very accessible from Interstates 77 and 85.

### **The Lake**

The 12,455 acres of Lake Wylie is one of our greatest classrooms as your students may find themselves determining the pH of the lake, digging in the bottom of the lake for aquatic insects, or sharpening their skills in a canoe in one of our protected coves. Lake Wylie also offers a great backdrop to your evening campfire, dining experience, and walks around the site.

### **The Land**

Our forest trails provide a path for discovery around each bend with many living and non-living components of the forest. Recreation fields provide ample space for group activities, as well as a place to recreate with your students.

### **Indoor Program Areas**

Although most of our programming occurs outdoors, our center is equipped with heated indoor classrooms, cabins, recreational halls, and dining facility. Our center also has an outdoor amphitheatre, two outdoor pavilions, challenge course, climbing tower and high ropes elements, wildlife room, pioneer cabin, Native American site, fish lab, and "Star Lab" planetarium.

### **Cabins**

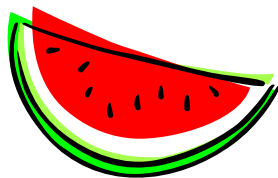
Should your group choose to spend the night, you will enjoy the accommodations of your cabins and your cabin mates. Cabins have bunk-style beds, and are equipped with heat, restrooms, and showers.

### **Dining Hall**

Overnight groups will also enjoy a full breakfast, lunch, and dinner meals in our spacious dining hall overlooking Lake Wylie.

**Camp Thunderbird  
Environmental Education Center  
Food Service**

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**Food Service**

If you are participating in an overnight experience, your meals at Camp Thunderbird will be served cafeteria style in our dining hall overlooking Lake Wylie. Students will sit with their assigned cabin. Upon entering the cafeteria students are encouraged to use the washrooms near the rear of the cafeteria. Once students are sitting down, a number of announcements will be made regarding the meal time procedures.

- If you have any students with severe **food allergies** please notify us in advance and we will do our best to accommodate your students. Another option is for students with specific diets to bring in their own meals and store them in our refrigerator.
- If you have any students that will be celebrating their Birthday while at camp let us know and we will take care of them at our meals.

To further educate your students about responsibility and the environment we have a zero food waste policy at Camp. Therefore, we will encourage the students to **“take what you need, but eat what you take.”** After each meal, each table will collect its food waste which is then weighed. Cabins and schools that have low or zero food waste at the end of the meal will be recognized in the cafeteria. This is **not** intended to be a competition between schools, but to educate the importance of being responsible citizens and consumers.

**Example of foods served:**

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Biscuits	Sub Sandwiches	Fried Chicken
Scrambled Eggs	Chips	Macaroni and Cheese
Sausage	Cookies	Lasagna
Grits	Chicken Patties	Spaghetti
Cereal	Pizza,	Fajitas
French Toast	Corn	Chicken Tenders
Fruit	Hotdogs, Chili Dogs	Salad, Bread
Hashbrowns	Tacos	Mixed Veggies
Toast	Hamburgers	Cake
Milk	Fries	Cobbler
Orange Juice	Juice, Water	Juice, Water
<b>Adult Extras:</b>	<b>Adult Extras:</b>	<b>Adult Extras:</b>
Bagel Bar, Cottage Cheese	Salad, Soup, Potato Bar	Salad Bar

**Camp Thunderbird  
Environmental Education Center  
Classes Offered**

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## **What can I do at Camp Thunderbird?**

Camp Thunderbird offers you and your students many unique opportunities that can't be done in the classroom. Choose from the existing list of curriculum or give us a call for any special curriculum needs that you may have and we'll do our best to meet those needs.

Choose from:

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| • Advanced Aquatic Ecology                    | Grades 5 and up -All Year  |
| • Astronomy                                   | All Year                   |
| • Aquatic Ecology                             | All Year                   |
| • Bird Study                                  | All Year                   |
| • Canoeing                                    | Grades 4 and up -All Year  |
| • Challenge Course - Low Elements             | All Year                   |
| • Compass                                     | All Year                   |
| • Creepy Crawlies                             | All Year                   |
| • Eco Challenge                               | Grades 5 and up - All Year |
| • Eco Heroes                                  | All Year                   |
| • Environmental Debate                        | Grades 5 and up - All Year |
| • Fiber History                               | All Year                   |
| • Fish Seining & Dissection                   | All Year                   |
| • Fishing & Fish ID                           | All Year                   |
| • Forest Ecology                              | All Year                   |
| • Garden Study                                | Sept, Oct, April, May      |
| • Group Dynamics                              | All Year                   |
| • High Ropes Challenge (\$7/student)          | Grades 3 and up-All Year   |
| • Living History                              | All year                   |
| • Meelewing - Character Development           | Grades 5 and up - All Year |
| • Meteorology                                 | Grades 4 - 7 - All Year    |
| • Native American Study                       | All Year                   |
| • Nature Art                                  | All Year                   |
| • Nature Journaling &<br>Wildlife Observation | All Year                   |
| • Pioneer Study                               | All Year                   |
| • Soil Study                                  | All Year                   |
| • Wildlife Ecology                            | All Year                   |

## Class Descriptions

### Advanced Aquatic Ecology

Your students will become "Lake Doctors" in this activity by giving Lake Wylie a "check-up". Your students will check a number of factors that affect the quality of the lake such as, temperature, pH, clarity, depth, plankton production, and other factors such as erosion. Upon reviewing their data the class will determine the health of the lake based on their observations and write a prescription for the lake.

### Astronomy

In this activity your students will be out of this world as they explore the universe. Students will look at the planets in our solar system and demonstrate their relative distances between each other and their rotation. Students will also look at the relationships of the Sun, Earth, and Moon. Students will get the opportunity to learn stories and constellations when they enter our inflatable "Star Lab."



### Aquatic Ecology

Roll up your sleeves as you and your students explore a cove or a pond. Many small discoveries await you as you explore a major component of the Lake Wylie food web. Upon exploring the water, students will define and discuss the different organisms found and look at the unique features that each of them have. Students will also define an adaptation, food web, and look at the importance of the water cycle.

### Bird Study

Your students turn into "bird brains" in this activity as they have the opportunity to simulate some bird behaviors. Students will discuss and demonstrate why there are birds of different feathers, beaks, feet, color, shapes, and sounds. Students discuss what "tools" each bird needs to live in different habitats before heading out with binoculars and field guide in hand to find the birds of Camp Thunderbird.



### Canoeing

Take to the lake in this activity as you and your students practice true teamwork as you navigate your canoe in one of our protected coves. After a brief introduction and history of canoeing, your students will discuss and demonstrate various paddling skills, safety techniques, and paddling terminology with one of our instructors before pushing off in the lake.

### Challenge Course

Want to push your students physically, mentally, and emotionally? This class will do just that. Starting simple, our instructor will give your group a number of initiatives for them to complete working as a group. After the instructions are given, both you and the instructor will sit back and watch the dynamics of the group evolve. As each initiative is completed, the instructor will process it before increasing the difficulty for the next challenge. Students will build and progress to the low elements if initiatives are being met and if safety of the group is not compromised.

### **Compass**

Which way do we go? Students in groups of 2-4 will be put to the test on one of our many compass courses that we have on site. After learning how and why a compass works and identifying the parts of a compass, students will take a bearing, find their pace and follow designated courses on camp.

### **Creepy Crawlies**

Bugs: Creepy, crawly and scary? Not necessarily. In this dynamic class students will discover the amazing world of bugs and the important role they play in the environment through games, observation and everyone's favorite...the bug hunt!



### **Eco Challenge**

Here's a new way to incorporate technology into your camp experience. Students will use handheld GPS units to navigate across camp. As a group they will work together and communicate to collect pieces and attempt a successful egg drop.

### **Eco Heroes**

What can I do to save the planet? Students will explore and discover sustainable energy sources and learn where their energy comes from today. By learning alternatives, the 3Rs and conservation students can become the Earth's next Eco Heroes.

### **Environmental Debate**

Students will role play a situation that is played out everyday in our country. Students will be given a scenario that will somehow affect the environment. Students will be broken into different players in the matter, from farmers, developers, environmentalists, community members, each expressing their values, beliefs, and feelings toward the scenario to a board made up of teachers and instructors. The board will make a decision based on each interest groups presentation and then debrief the experience.

### **Fish Seining and Dissection**

Using minnow traps and seining nets, your students become biologists in this activity sampling Lake Wylie for the different species and diversity of fish in the lake. Students will examine the catch for variations in size, shape, color, and role of each fish in the lake. Students will also get to see the form and function of the internal anatomy of a fish as our instructor will dissect a fish for your group.

### **Fishing and Fish ID**

Students become familiar with the external anatomy of a fish in this activity looking at the major identification characteristics of a fish. Students will be given a dichotomous key and a number of unmarked jars to identify some of the species of fish found in Lake Wylie. After this exercise, students will grab a cane pole, bait their hook, and test their skill and patience as they go after the "big one".

### **Forest Ecology**

Students will hit the trail in this class awakening their senses of sight, sound, smell, and maybe even taste. Your students will look at the relationships between plants and animals, as well as, the different cycles, and niches in the forest habitat through observations and games. Students will get the opportunity to sit down next to a tree and participate in a solo journaling activity to increase their understanding and appreciation of the forest before exiting the canopy of the forest.



### **Garden Study**

Where does that food you eat come from? The store, right? In this seasonal activity, students will trace where their food comes from as well as understanding which resources play a vital role in the production of crops. Students will get the chance to smell, feel, taste, and explore areas of our educational garden. This study area includes a vegetable garden, orchard, herb garden, butterfly garden, and composting station that the students will explore.

### **Group Dynamics**

Students test their patience, attention to detail, and communication skills in this exciting teambuilding activity. Students are divided into small working groups and one person from each team is allowed to see the "Beast." The "Beast" is a creation made up of various objects ranging from paper plates, pipe cleaners, Legos, just about anything!! The object of this activity is for each team to build an exact replica of the beast. The problem is only one person from each team will see it. That same person will not be able to build it but rather pass on the information about the various colors, materials, placement of object to create the beast. This person who observes it will tell a runner who tells a buyer who actually picks out the material, who gives them to another runner who ultimately gives them to the builder who is the only one who can physically see the object being built. No one else on the team will see the object until it is completed and time is up. Following the activity, students will debrief the activity offering solutions to situations that arose during their building process.

### **High Ropes Challenge**

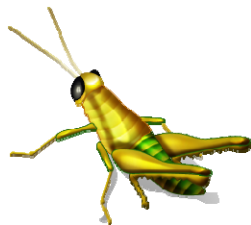
Want to give your students a chance to lift their self-esteem and self-confidence? We'll put them in a climbing harness and send them 40 feet in the air on the end of a rope. We offer a number of high rope initiative options for your school. From a climbing wall to a zip line. Want to do more? Talk to us about our Alpine Tower, Giant Swing, Charlie Chaplain and Stationary Log Traverse that students experience out of their comfort zone up in the air! These are challenge by choice activities where no student is made to do any of the elements. Each student, chooses his or her comfort level on each of these before attempting an element with certified staff. Our staff are there to assure the students safety, as well as encourage them to reach their goal. **There is an additional \$7 fee per student for this activity.**

### **Living History**

Find out what life was like on the American frontier. Your students are in for a real treat as they travel back to 1805 to meet a settler and his wife, school teacher, a wild frontiersman, and a prospector out on Thunderbirds trails. Students will get the opportunity to interact with these characters in first person and maybe even help them do some of the daily chores such as, making shingles, using a two person saw, drying herbs, digging graves, or practicing arithmetic.

### **Meelewing**

Pronounced (mia-lea-vung) this is our character development class examining the values of respect, caring, responsibility, and trust. The word comes from the Afrikaans language meaning "actively living together." In this activity, your group is split into two different cultures that will be role played. Each culture has its own language, set of social standards, government, and card game. Ambassadors are sent to each culture and this is where the fun starts. The ambassadors quickly find out that they are much different from the other culture and many feelings are quick to surface for the ambassadors. The lesson continues until students begin to compromise and communicate effectively until they feel that the group could actively live together. This lesson is wrapped up by tying in situations where this happens in everyday life. Maybe you moved to a new school, from a different country, lived in a culture where there was a major social, political, or religious problem. These are all examples that are tied into the lesson.



### **Native American Studies**

In this activity, students discuss the Catawba Culture, play traditional native games, try their hand at some storytelling, and use clay to make an animal charm. Students will discuss and observe native artifacts and what it means to be sustainable at our Native American site as well as discuss the importance of nature in native cultures.



### **Meteorology**

Prepare to be "blown away" by this hands-on class as your students become meteorologists and learn to make their own short-range weather forecast! Students will measure air temperature, atmospheric pressure, humidity, wind speed/direction and precipitation using a variety of tools including a thermometer, barometer, sling psychrometer, anemometer, wind vane and rain gauge. Students will also see how local observations from many places can be combined on a weather map to make longer-range forecasts, including the tracking of severe weather. Recommended for grades 4-7

### **Nature Art**

Using objects of nature, students will individually create their own artwork. Students will interpret their pieces through the use of objects from the field and provided art supplies. Students will appreciate nature through art, and art in nature.



### **Nature Journaling & Wildlife Observation**

"To see the world in a grain of sand" isn't just for poets -- keen observation is as vital in science as it is in art. This class offers students a change of pace, and a chance to slow down and observe the behaviors, adaptations and diversity of wild animals and plants that fill the ecosystems around us. Students will be encouraged to record their discoveries with field notes and sketches in their journals, just as field biologists (and artists) have for centuries. Whether you're watching cliff swallows building nests out of clay, a great blue heron stalking minnows in the shallows, or butterflies pollinating wildflowers while camouflaged crab spiders wait to catch the unwary, ecological concepts come to life all around us when we focus our senses on observing them.

### **Pioneer Study**

Students get to experience a taste of pioneer life in this activity, understanding what it means to live on the frontier and be a pioneer. This activity may find your students grinding corn to cook cornbread over an open fire, making apple cider, dipping candles, making corn husk dolls, or making bracelets using some of the same techniques that were used to make rope. Students will also visit the Pioneer Cabin discussing different pioneer tools, as well as, "loading up their wagons" and role playing the Piedmont Trail. Like the "Oregon Trail" game this role play gives students a limited amount of money to purchase pioneer goods that they feel will help them travel a long distance in this case, the Carolinas along the Great Philadelphia Wagon Road.

### **Soil Study**

It's time to get dirty in this activity! Students will investigate the importance of soil quality by analyzing soil properties through hands-on experiments. Students will determine some of the processes that form soil and find out why soil is important for human survival. Students will look at erosion, soil horizons, soil particle sizes, permeability and porosity; test the soil for temperature, pH, and moisture.

### **Wildlife Ecology**

What is wildlife? Students examine the difference between wild and domesticated animals. Students will participate in activities that simulate the hardships and adaptations of predators and prey in the animal world. Concepts such as ecology, adaptation, camouflage, and habitat will be presented and discussed. Students will then enter the wildlife room where they will be able to handle a number of our snakes, turtles, skulls, furs, bones, salamanders, and our "touch me" table.

**Is there something we can help you with??**

**Often schools will be focusing on a particular curriculum objective or subject area. We can tailor your trip to best fit your needs. Just give us a call and we'll be glad to help you build or create curriculum that we may not offer in one of our classes!!!**

**Camp Thunderbird  
Environmental Education Center  
Evening Activities**



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**Evening Programs at Camp Thunderbird**

YMCA Camp Thunderbird Staff can lead the following activities for you from 7:00-9:00 p.m. Each activity lasts 45 minutes long. Your school, if it wishes, may bring a snack to drink and eat, in between the two evening programs. Your entire school will be together during this time period.

It is also your option to bring in any guest speakers, DJ's, or run your very own evening programs. Just let us know.

**Choose from:**

- Campfire and Skits
- Night Hike (Only offered to schools with under 100 students)
- Wacky Olympics
- Liars Club
- Action Auction
- Nature Movie
- Dance
- Science Fair
- Predator Prey
- The Lorax
- Stargazing (Only offered to schools with under 75 students)

### **Campfire and Skits**

A camping tradition!! Enjoy stories, skits, and songs that your students will be singing all the way home. Each cabin will be given a skit card during dinner to present on stage in front of the school during the evening programs. Cabins may practice their skits from 6:30-7:00 with their cabin adult.

### **Night Hike**

Don't be left in the dark!!! Learn about the secrets of night in this sensory based activity. Learn what happens to our eyeballs in the dark and how wildlife survive and communicate in the dark. You and an instructor will hike the grounds at camp participating in a number of fun exercises in the dark.

### **Wacky Olympics**

Do you want to wear them out before they go to bed?? Well this is the perfect activity for that! Your students will be divided into small teams that compete against each other doing some of the wackiest relays on earth.

### **Liars Club**

It's you against them in this activity. Using some of the weirdest looking objects that you've ever seen, you and your distinguished panel of adults will try and fool the students. Only one adult will tell what or how the object is or how it functions, while the others will try to sell their theory to the students. If the students all agree on the right theory they get a point, if they pick one of the made-up stories you win.

### **Action Auction**

In this activity, students bring random objects from their cabin to be used as props. The object of this evening program is to dress up one of the adults in your cabin. You may find one of the adults in your group dressed up as a Christmas tree, pizza, stereo, the sky's the limit!

### **Science Fair**

Welcome to a night of science. Check out some weird, wild phenomenon in this rotation activity that looks at some of the laws of science in a hands-on manner.

### **Dance**

We'll fire up the disco ball and watch you cut a rug on the dance floor. We can DJ a dance in one of our recreation halls or outdoor pavilions for you and your students. Please bring any CD's and a list of songs you want played, otherwise we will provide the music that we have.

### **Environmental Movie/ Your own Movie**

We can pop in a video, such as, Fern Gully, The Crocodile Hunter, or Planet Earth. **OR** Bring in a popular release if there's something special you want to watch.

### **Predator/ Prey**

Students represent different species in a food chain in this energetic evening activity. This activity role plays the relationships and hardships of predators and prey. Students change species if they are eaten by those higher on the food chain. As with any species, in order to survive, each animal must find food, water, and shelter to survive. Students will discuss the hardships and successes of each species following the activity.

### **The Lorax**

Based on the children's book, The Lorax, by Dr. Seuss, this 20-30 minute dramatization takes a look at the importance of preserving our natural resources. This is a great choice for our younger students as well as those looking for a shorter program.

### **Stargazing**

Allow your group to enjoy the night sky while learning. Students will learn to identify constellations, stars and planets as well as hear stories about the constellations. Your groups will also have a chance to enjoy the night sky through one of our telescopes.

**YMCA Camp Thunderbird  
Environmental Education Center  
Additional Evening Program Resources**

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**Additional Resources to contact for possible evening programs:**

- **"Wild Wings"** The Carolina Raptor Center will bring in live Hawks, Owls, Falcons, and discuss these amazing raptors to your class. Contact them at 704-875-6521 if interested.
- **"Snakes Alive"** Ron Cromer will bring many of his reptilian friends for you and your students to hold including a python.
- **"Storyteller, Doug Bennett"** Contact Doug at 803-324-4004 or [dougbennet6@yahoo.com](mailto:dougbennet6@yahoo.com)
- **"Discover Native America"** with Daryll Bird, Winnebago-Chippewa, participate in song, dance, and learn about Daryll's culture. Contact Daryll at 704-504-3744 or [KunoBird@cs.com](mailto:KunoBird@cs.com)
- **"Sheree-Monti"** Professional DJ service. Call Sheree at 704-921-6460
- **Doctor Sluice-** Mine for Gems and crystals, make bath salts, and other geology activities. Call Tammy Middleton at 980-253-9138
- **Pamlico Joe** - Jim Swinson is amusician/ singer with a focus on environmental awareness. He can be reached at [pj@pamlicojoe.com](mailto:pj@pamlicojoe.com) or 252-975-1831.
- **Discovery Place Science Reach** The Discovery Place offers many different programs focusing on a variety of topics from animals to colors. Visit the Discovery Place website at [www.discoveryplace.org](http://www.discoveryplace.org) for more details or call 704-372-6261 x309.
- **PEAK Program** Offered by REI, PEAK stands for Promoting Environmental Awareness in Kids. This is a free program focusing on the 7 principles of "Leave No Trace." For more information contact Ching Fu at 704-341-7405.



**YMCA Camp Thunderbird  
Environmental Education Center  
Daily Schedules**

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**3 Day / 2 Night Program**

<b>Day 1</b>	<b>Day 1</b>
11:00	Arrival
11:30	Introduction to the Environmental Center
12:00	Sack Lunch
1:00	Journal Class
1:30	Class 1
2:55	Break
3:05	Class 2
4:30	Recreation Time / Camp Store (optional)
5:15	Dinner
6:30	Cabin Time
7:00	Evening Programs
9:00	Cabin Time
10:00	Lights Out

<b>Day 2</b>	
8:15	Breakfast
9:30	Class 3
10:55	Break
11:05	Class 4
12:30	Lunch
1:30	Class 5
2:55	Break
3:05	Class 6
4:30	Recreation Time / Camp Store (optional)
5:15	Dinner
6:30	Cabin Time
7:00	Evening Programs
9:00	Cabin Time
10:00	Lights Out

<b>Day 3</b>	
8:15	Breakfast
9:30	Class 7
11:00	Culmination
11:30	Lunch
12:30-1:00	Departure

**2 Day / 1 Night Program**

11:00	Arrival
11:30	Introduction
12:00	Sack Lunches
1:00	Journal Class
1:30	Class 1
2:55	Break
3:05	Class 2
4:30	Recreation Time / Store
5:15	Dinner
6:30	Cabin Time
7:00	Evening Programs
9:00	Cabin Time
10:00	Lights Out

<b>Day 2</b>	
8:00	Breakfast
9:00	Class 3
10:25	Break
10:35	Class 4
12:00	Culmination
12:30	Lunch
1:30	Departure

**YMCA Camp Thunderbird  
Environmental Education Center  
Fundraising**

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**Where can I get money for our trip?**

Although we find that our fees are very competitive with similar programs across our region, and the fee increases are simply a reflection of increases in operating costs, we know those increases can create a challenge for your students to attend the Center. Therefore, we've listed several suggestions for fund-raising efforts that many schools have success with.

**Tell another School About Us:** It's as easy as letting another school know about us. If that school signs a contract with us and comes out you'll receive a 10% discount on your student costs. (See referral sheet in your folder.)

**Trash-A-Thon:** For a fun fundraiser and environmental project, collect trash along the roads or streams. Students can get pledges per bag or pound.

**Community Garage Sales:** Encourage the re-use of items by sponsoring a garage sale in your school parking lot. You can rent parking spots to the sellers and sell food to the buyers. This works particularly well in rural areas and can be a fun community-building event.

**Local Businesses:** Solicit from local businesses, especially those who directly benefit from the environment (ie. Duke Power, paper companies, chemical companies, etc.)

**Krispy Kreme:** These guys are very good about working with schools to perform fund raisers. This is probably the #1 fund raiser for the schools that we polled. Depending on where you are located, Krispy Kreme will deliver the donuts directly to the school to be sold at PTA meetings or Open House.

**Create a Camp Thunderbird Fundraising Committee:** Invite parents, chaperones to get together to brainstorm different fundraising ideas to do in and out of school.

**Grants:** Contact your state Office of Environmental Education, Science Coordinators, or search the web for grant opportunities that exist out there.

Lastly, if you would like to set up a presentation or request a video for a potential sponsor, just give us a call. We would love to come out and meet with any of your local leaders or give a presentation.

# YMCA Camp Thunderbird

## Environmental Education Center

### Planning Your Trip

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#### Lead Teacher Planning Checklist

(The following is a "suggested" list of tasks to be completed prior to your trip to Camp Thunderbird.)

#### 4-6 Months Before Trip

- Environmental Education Date confirmed. Date Attending: \_\_\_\_\_
- Submit contract, "presentation postcard", and deposit to Camp Thunderbird.
- Inform students and parents of trip.
- Arrange for a school presentation with participating students, parents, chaperones, and teachers.
- Recruit chaperones - at least one for every 15 students.
- Arrange for transportation.
- Arrange for emergency transportation. Your school will be responsible for providing emergency transportation if necessary.
- Consult school administration regarding the need for a chaperone background check, policies related to student safety and abuse prevention, etc.

#### 1-2 Months Before Trip:

- Send a Chaperone Letter, What to Bring List, Parent Letter and Medical Form home with the students.
- Submit "Scheduling and Information Form" to Camp Thunderbird.
- Discuss trip goals and behavior with students
- Collect final payment from students.
- Host information meeting for parents, chaperones, and students.

#### 1 Week to 1 Month Before Trip:

- Finalize number of students and chaperones attending. Update this information with Directors at camp.
- Organize students into groups of 12-15 for Learning Groups and fax or mail to Thunderbird. Coordinate the group size with Directors at camp.
- Organize students into groups of 12-15 for Cabin Groups and fax or mail to Thunderbird. Coordinate the group size with Directors at camp.
- Hold chaperone meeting to review roles and responsibilities.
- Assign chaperones to each cabin group and learning group.
- Collect permission forms and medical forms from students.
- Review with students the What to Bring List. Remind the students to label all of their belongings - clothes, camera, etc.
- Remind students to bring sack lunch the first day at camp.
- Make name tags for every student, chaperone, and teacher. Place Name, Learning Group number, and Cabin Group number on nametag.
- Review Tentative Schedule sent from Thunderbird. Contact Directors for any questions or changes that need to be made.
- Organize first aid kits for trip.

### **The Day of the Trip:**

- Collect medicines.
- Take a head count.
- Call Thunderbird to verify time of departure from school. You may leave this information with the office. (1-800-732-3855)
- Confirm times with busses for return trip.
- Make schedules for ALL adults.
- Bring copy of Learning Groups and Cabin Groups for your usage.
- Bring medical forms to be turned into liaison upon arrival at camp.
- Bring map to Camp Thunderbird.
- **SIT BACK, RELAX, AND HAVE A GREAT TIME!!!**





## "The Birds Nest"- Camp Store

Both day and overnight experiences are welcome to access the Birds Nest.

**One Day Experience-** If you are participating in a one day experience, we want you to be able to spend as much time as possible in the field, therefore, we will not schedule a time for your school to access the store. You are able to fill out a pre-order, in which your purchases will be prepared and packaged the day you arrive at camp. In the back of your folder you will find a T-Shirt pre-order form if you wish to order t-shirts or hats.

**Overnight Experiences-** If you are participating in an overnight experience, the store will be open from 4:30-5:30 during your stay. Please check your schedule that we send to you to see which day your school is scheduled. You also have the option of filling out a pre-order so the children can take full advantage of their recreation time. Please see our price list below for pre-order information. In the back of your folder you will find a T-Shirt pre-order form if you wish to order t-shirts or hats.

**YMCA Camp Thunderbird  
Environmental Education Center  
Helpful Hints**

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To make your first transitions smooth at camp please have students divided into their cabin and learning groups. Use of name tags will help out tremendously.

<b>Lake Wylie Middle School</b>	
<b>David Yuhaus Jr.</b>	
<b>Cabin 34</b>	<b>Trail Group # 3</b>

Also if you collect lunches at school and place them with your homeroom teacher in can make lunch a smooth transition.

<b>Mrs. Krimminger - Lunches</b>
<small>(example of label on box of lunches, could also break down Krimminger boys, Krimminger girls)</small>

**YMCA Camp Thunderbird**  
**Environmental Education Center**  
**Policies / Procedure**

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- The Environmental Education Center's Program is a "school experience" - learning is the main focus of all aspects of the program and students should be prepared for this. Please share these same goals with the chaperones.
- The school is responsible for supervision and discipline at all times, including meals, recreation time, and evening cabin time.
- Students are not allowed in or near the lodging of other schools.
- Buildings must be cleaned and swept by breakfast on the day of departure. Schools will be charged for any new damages to buildings and for excessive cleaning needs.
- Pets may not be brought to or housed on camp grounds or in camp facilities.
- Alcohol or drugs in any form are not permitted on the premises unless prescribed by a licensed physician.
- Groups or individuals are not allowed on the docks at any time.
- Smoking is not allowed in any camp building. Please dispose of cigarette butts properly.
- Firearms, ammunition, flammable liquids, explosive and poisonous substances are not allowed on camp property.
- Students must provide their own linens for overnight use.
- Groups must bring a first aid kit for minor medical problems. For emergency assistance dial 911 or refer to Medical Facilities Sheet.
- Thunderbird does not provide accident or medical insurance for visiting groups.
- Quiet hours are between 10:00 pm and 7:00 am. All students must be in their own cabin during quiet hours.
- A minimum of one adult per 15 students is required on site.
- The school is responsible for bringing signed permission forms for every student.
- The school is responsible for breaking the students up into their cabin groups and learning groups before arrival at camp.
- It is very helpful to have each student wear a name tag with their name, cabin number and learning group number.
- Camp Thunderbird will provide coffee and tea as well as various other food items in the dining hall that are specifically for the adults.
- Immediately report any maintenance problems in your cabin to the director.
- No candy or food in the cabins as it tends to "invite" the wildlife around camp into your cabin.
- **User groups must provide certificate of insurance six weeks prior to visit.**



**Camp Thunderbird  
Environmental Education Center  
Scheduling and Information Form**

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This form must be completed and faxed/mailed to Camp Thunderbird no less than **6 weeks** prior to your confirmed date. **Your deadline is:** \_\_\_\_\_

Name of school \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

School Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax # \_\_\_\_\_

Trip Leader \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

What is the best time of day to contact the trip leader? \_\_\_\_\_

Will the trip leader be at Camp Thunderbird? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ If not, who will be the lead person on the trip? \_\_\_\_\_

School's arrival time at camp? day \_\_\_\_\_, date \_\_\_\_\_, time \_\_\_\_\_  
(between 10:00 am and 11:00 is best)

Will your students be bringing a bag lunch for the first day? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ (please make arrangements with director if your students are not planning on bag lunches)

School's departure time? day \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_ time \_\_\_\_\_  
(between 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm is best)

No. of boys attending \_\_\_\_\_

No. of men \_\_\_\_\_

No. of girls attending \_\_\_\_\_

No. of women \_\_\_\_\_

Grade / Age \_\_\_\_\_

Grand total attending (students + adults) \_\_\_\_\_

Will you be bringing an evening snack for your students? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

The Bird's Nest is our Camp Store. The store has things like t-shirts, sweatshirts, stuffed animals, flashlights, pencils, etc... for the students to take home. The store is open from 4:30 pm - 5:30 pm daily. Do you want your students to access the Bird's Nest? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

We provide a personalized birthday cookie for those who have a birthday while here (at no extra charge). Please list the first names and dates of students with birthdays while at Camp Thunderbird. **Also, please indicate which cabin they are in.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Cabin: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Cabin: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Cabin: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Cabin: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Cabin: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list the names and conditions of any students in your group with special needs including physical, cognitive, or emotional disabilities of which our instructors should be made aware. (please include instructional group # that child will be placed in)

Name / instructional group #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Nature of disability: \_\_\_\_\_

If any of your students have any *dietary restrictions* such as allergies or vegetarian meals, please list them here:

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We would like to help you celebrate important anniversaries. Please the number of years your school has attended The Environmental Education Center at Camp Thunderbird. \_\_\_\_\_

To help us better prepare for your school's visit, please list the goals you would like for your students to achieve from the Camp Thunderbird experience. \_\_\_\_\_

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**Choices for Classes and Evening Programs:**

On the following page, please select the activities that most closely compliment your curriculum and goals. Three day programs select 7 activities and Two day programs select 4 activities.

Also, please select your evening program choices. Three day programs select 4 evening programs and Two day programs select 2 evening programs. Each program is approximately 45 minutes.

**YMCA Camp Thunderbird  
Environmental Education Center  
Class Choices for Daytime Programming**

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- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Astronomy   | <input type="checkbox"/> Aquatic Ecology            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bird Study  | <input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife Ecology           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compass   | <input type="checkbox"/> Fiber History              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fish Seining/Dissection   | <input type="checkbox"/> Low Challenge Course       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing & Fish ID   | <input type="checkbox"/> Forest Ecology             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Group Dynamics  | <input type="checkbox"/> Living History             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Native American Study   | <input type="checkbox"/> Nature Art                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pioneer Study   | <input type="checkbox"/> Soil Study                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meteorology (Grades 4-7)  | <input type="checkbox"/> Canoeing (Grades 3 and up) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creepy Crawlies   | <input type="checkbox"/> Eco Heroes                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eco Challenge (Grades 5 and up)                                   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nature Journaling & Wildlife Observation                          |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced Aquatic Ecology (Grades 5 and up)                        |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Debate (Grades 5 and up)                            |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Garden Study (September, October, April and May)                  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High Ropes Challenge: <b>\$7.00 per student</b> (Grades 3 and up) |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meelewing: Character Development (Grades 5 and up)                |   |

**You can find descriptions for each of these activities on pages 11 - 15**

**Evening Program Choices**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Campfire and Skits                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Wacky Olympics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Liars Club  | <input type="checkbox"/> Action Auction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nature Movie  | <input type="checkbox"/> Dance          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Science Fair  | <input type="checkbox"/> Predator/Prey  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Lorax   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Night Hike (offered to schools with under 100 students) |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stargazing (offered to schools with under 75 students)  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Our school will provide evening programs                |   |

**You can find descriptions for each of these activities on page 17**



**YMCA Camp Thunderbird  
Environmental Education Center  
Learning Group List**

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Use this list to assign adults and students to the learning groups. You are required to have at least one adult with each learning group. A representative from camp will contact you regarding how many groups your school will be broken down into. Please fax / send a list prior to your scheduled date.

Group	Group	Group	Group
Adult	Adult	Adult	Adult
1.	1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.	4.
5.	5.	5.	5.
6.	6.	6.	6.
7.	7.	7.	7.
8.	8.	8.	8.
9.	9.	9.	9.
10.	10.	10.	10.
11.	11.	11.	11.
12.	12.	12.	12.
13.	13.	13.	13.
14.	14.	14.	14.
15.	15.	15.	15.
(16.)	(16.)	(16.)	(16.)
(17.)	(17.)	(17.)	(17.)
(18.)	(18.)	(18.)	(18.)

**YMCA Camp Thunderbird  
Environmental Education Center  
Cabin Assignments**

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Use this form to help you organize cabins. Cabins vary in size so be sure to check the box below to see how many beds are in your cabin. You are responsible for having at least one adult in each cabin. Please fax in prior to your reserved date at 704-716-4101.

<b>Cabin #</b>	<b>Cabin #</b>
1. Adult	1. Adult
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.
8.	8.
9.	9.
10.	10.
11.	11.
12.	12.
13.	13.
14.	14.
15.	15.
16.	16.
17.	17.
18.	18.
(Cabins 26 & 27)	(Cabins 26 & 27)
19.	19.
20.	20.
21.	21.
22.	22.
Extra Adult	Extra Adult

Cabins 1-10 are located on the cafeteria side of camp and are situated in a row in the forest.

Cabin 1 = 18 beds  
Cabin 2 = 18 beds  
Cabin 3 = 18 beds  
Cabin 4 = 18 beds  
Cabin 5 = 16 beds  
Cabin 6 = 16 beds  
Cabin 7 = 12 beds  
Cabin 8 = 12 beds  
Cabin 9 = 14 beds  
Cabin 10 = 14 beds

Cabins 11-T2 are located on the east side of camp and are located near the challenge course.

Cabin 11 = 16 beds  
Cabin 12 = 16 beds  
Cabin 13 = 16 beds  
Cabin 14 = 16 beds  
Cabin 15 = 16 beds  
Cabin 16 = 16 beds  
Cabin T1 = 16 beds  
Cabin T2 = 16 beds

Cabins 23-35 are located next to the recreation field located centrally on camp.

Cabin 23a = 8 beds  
Cabin 23b = 8 beds  
Cabin 24 = 16 beds  
Cabin 25 = 16 beds  
Cabin 26 = 22 beds  
Cabin 27 = 22 beds  
Cabin 29 = 16 beds  
Cabin 30 = 16 beds  
Cabin 31 = 16 beds  
Cabin 32 = 16 beds  
Cabin 33 = 16 beds  
Cabin 34 = 16 beds  
Cabin 35 = 14 beds

# YMCA Camp Thunderbird

## Environmental Education Center

### Parent Forms

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Dear Parent,

It is with excitement and enthusiasm that we await the arrival of your child's school! Very soon your child will have the opportunity to experience hands-on learning in our outdoor school. It is our goal to be an extension of the classroom by applying tangible experiences to knowledge gained in the classroom.

Whether the "classroom" at the Environmental Education Center is located along the banks of Lake Wylie, on a forest trail, or in the open fields, we believe that your child may participate in some of the most memorable days of their school career!

The Environmental Education Center at Camp Thunderbird is located approximately 15 miles south of Charlotte, NC off of highway 49. The Education Center has been in existence since 1985, while the camp itself began in 1936. Last year the Environmental Education Center hosted close to 12,000 students from North and South Carolina as well as Georgia. However, we take pride in the fact that each school and each child is treated as an individual and with great courtesy and respect.

Most instructors at Camp Thunderbird have a college degree or are working toward a degree and are trained in an experiential approach to environmental education. A 1:15 instructor to student ratio ensures plenty of personal interaction as well as a safe teaching environment. In addition to our instructors, each cabin group and instructional group will also have a minimum of one adult chaperone assigned from your child's school. With this in mind, know that the health and safety of your child is of utmost importance to us. We guarantee that your child will have adult supervision 24 hours a day!

During their stay, the students are immersed in the environment with most classes being held outdoors. Rain or shine, the fun continues. However, if inclement weather does cause need for indoor teaching, Camp Thunderbird has ample indoor spaces including lodges, classrooms, dining hall, and labs.

Speaking of dining halls, ours is located on the shore of Lake Wylie with a beautiful view of the water. Students will bring a sack lunch on the first day with the remaining meals being hot and delicious! If your child has any special dietary needs, please communicate those needs to your teacher prior to the trip. Our Food Service Director will be happy to accommodate those needs.

To ensure your child's well being, please complete the Student Medical Form and return it to your child's teacher as soon as possible. **Any student without a completed and signed medical form may not participate in the program.** Please communicate any needs that your child may have with their teacher. A designated teacher from your school will dispense all medications. Medications sent with your child, must be in the original container, clearly labeled with your child's name, the name of the medicine, and the directions for use. All medications, prescription or non prescription, will be kept by a teacher from your school.

Finally, we are looking forward to an incredible experience with your school! If you have any questions regarding the program, personnel or facilities, or participating as a chaperone, please contact your child's teacher or feel free to call us at the Environmental Education Center.

Mail that you would like to send to your student can be sent to the following address:

**[Students Name and School]**

**1 Thunderbird Lane**

**Lake Wylie, SC 29710**

**Or**

**[campers@campthunderbird.org](mailto:campers@campthunderbird.org) (include child's name and school on subject line)**

Best Regards,

Maura Davis, Director  
704-716-4124

# YMCA Camp Thunderbird

## Environmental Education Center

### What to Bring List

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We suggest that children bring old, but clean clothing. New clothing may look like old clothing when children get home. Clothing should be marked with the student's name.

#### Recommended List:

- Sleeping bag or blanket and sheet
- Pillow
- Sleepwear
- One or two pairs of close-toed shoes
- Daily changes of socks and underwear
- Heavy and light shirts
- Shorts for warm weather
- Handkerchief, Kleenex, or bandana
- Rainwear
- Hat - a must in winter
- Two or three pair of trousers or jeans
- Gloves or mittens in cold weather
- Plastic bag for dirty clothes
- Toothpaste and toothbrush
- Soap
- Bath towel and wash cloth
- Chapstick and sunscreen (year-round)
- Comb or brush
- Shampoo
- Shower shoes
- Water bottle

#### Optional List:

- Binoculars
- Flashlight
- Book or reading material
- Bathrobe
- Fishing equipment
- Tennis racquet and tennis balls
- Disposable camera
- Alarm clock
- Insect repellent (non spray type)
- Chaperone: Travel Coffee Mug

#### Do Not Bring List:

- Money (unless coordinated with your teacher)
- iPods, MP3 players, electronic games
- Cell phone
- Knives
- Food (including soda and candy)
- Chewing gum
- Firearms, and archery equipment
- Matches
- Jewelry or valuables

**BE SURE THAT ALL STUDENTS BRING A SACK LUNCH WITH BEVERAGE FOR THE FIRST DAY.**

# Camp Thunderbird

## Environmental Education Center

### Chaperone Guidelines

---

Thank you for being part of our Residential Environmental Education experience. We welcome you to our team and hope you will find your role as a chaperone enjoyable and rewarding. Please read this letter carefully before your trip. If you have questions feel free to call Camp Thunderbird or speak to the lead teacher from your school.

The Environmental Education Center is an exciting place to learn. We strive to provide students with a unique environment where they can gain skills in cooperation and critical thinking and develop a sense of appreciation for the natural world. It is a great place for students to get to know each other in new ways and build stronger relationships. It is also a great place for students to have positive interactions with adults. As a parent or teacher, chaperones have extremely worthwhile backgrounds and life experiences for helping children to grow and learn. Take this opportunity to use your skills and wisdom and make this a truly rewarding experience for all involved.

Your primary role as a chaperone is supervision. As a supervisor it is important that safety is always in the forefront of your mind and that you are available to the students in case any problems come up. You can also expand your role and make it more meaningful by getting as involved as possible with the students and the program. Supervision responsibilities for the various times of the day are outlined below along with suggestions for ways to make the most of your role.

**Classes:** The Camp Thunderbird staff will lead all the classes and activities, but a second adult must be present with each teaching group. Please be available at the start of classes to join a group and stay with your group for the entire class period.

Your role during classes is as follows:

- Encourage participation and enthusiasm by being a positive role model. Enthusiasm is contagious, and students who often know you better than the instructor, will follow your example.
- Adhere to and help enforce any rules, guidelines or safety measures set down by the instructor.
- Assist with discipline as requested by the instructor. If one student is being particularly disruptive, take him or her aside so the class may continue uninterrupted.

Here are some suggestions to make class times as beneficial as possible for all involved:

- Allow the instructor of the group to be in charge. If you disagree with the instructor about something, speak to him or her privately or bring your concerns to the lead teacher or program coordinator. Please do not contradict the instructor in front of the students.
- Participate and get involved in the activity. Enjoy yourself, but keep in mind that the classes are designed to provide learning experiences for the students-try to not be overbearing or dominating during an activity. The students need leadership, but often one of the goals of an activity is for the students to find their own leadership within the group. Allow them to do this. If you are unsure what is best, please communicate with the instructor.
- We value and welcome your contribution to classes. Let us know if there are certain topics you would like to see discussed. We will try to honor your requests but it is not always possible. Feel free to keep the group together after class to continue debriefing the experience or discuss related topics.
- Please refrain from smoking, using cell phones, or having personal conversations during classtimes.

**Meals:** Supervision during meals is very important to maintain a smooth and pleasant dining hall experience. There should be one adult at each table who actively supervises the table. Please

support the rules and procedures of the dining hall by enforcing and role-modeling them. Mealtimes can be a learning experience for students as well. Cooperation, responsibility, courtesy, food appreciation and resource recovery are all valuable lessons that are emphasized in the dining hall. You can help to facilitate the learning experience by acting as the leader of the table and involving yourself in all aspects of the meal.

Follow these guidelines to keep mealtimes pleasant for all:

- Make sure that all students stay seated until the meal is completely over (table is clean and announcements have been made.)
- Encourage students to take pride in their eating space by keeping the table in order throughout the meal.
- Only one student is allowed to get up from the table at a time to re-fill the juice pitcher.

**Freetime:** The schedule at Camp Thunderbird is a busy one but there are times throughout the day when the students can relax and recreate. These times are before and after each meal. **Thunderbird staff do not supervise students during free time, this is the responsibility of the school.** Accidents are most likely to occur during unstructured time so it is very important to make sure the students are supervised.

Please follow these guidelines:

- With most of the group together, free time is often seen as a chance for adults to take a break away from the students;
- Please first make sure the students have some adult coverage if you decide to slip away. This works best if all the adults communicate and take turns supervising.
- Get the students involved in something fun-organize a soccer or kickball game, take some of them on a hike or play a game.
- Remind students to get a drink of water or use the restroom between classes.

**Cabins:** Supervision in cabins is one of your most important roles. "Cabin-time" can be a very significant and special time for students. Often their experiences in the cabin are remembered long beyond the academic lessons. Get to know the students in your cabin and help them process and learn from their experiences.

Here are some guidelines and suggestions for making the most of "cabin-time".

- Students are not allowed in any building without an adult. Please make sure there is at least one adult in your cabin whenever students will be there.
- As soon as possible after you arrive at Thunderbird, (often not until after dinner), sit down with your students you will be living with and discuss rules and guidelines for the cabin. Make sure the students understand the reasoning behind the rules they must follow. Allow them to ask questions and encourage them to contribute their ideas. Living in a group requires communication, cooperation and compromise.
- Do things together as a group-play a game, make a collage, write poems or stories about your experiences, organize a formal sharing time each night.
- Help the students to feel comfortable and show them that you really care; it's well worth the effort!

The job of a chaperone is a challenging one, but also a rewarding one. It requires a great deal of effort and energy, but when you realize how much you've done for the students it will definitely seem worthwhile. After reading this letter, you may feel overwhelmed. Try to remember that you have lots of support. You are not the only chaperone, there are others to share responsibilities. Communicate with other chaperones and the leader of the trip and build a team together. Work as a group to help create the best possible Thunderbird experience.

**Thanks for all your help!!!!**

# YMCA Camp Thunderbird Environmental Education Center

*“Request for a Presentation”*



Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Please schedule a teacher planning meeting for the following

Date / Time \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Please schedule an informational meeting for the following:

Parents / Chaperones Date / Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Students Date / Time: \_\_\_\_\_

I will present an informational meeting on my own

***\*\*Please return this with your Contract\*\****