

## **Outdoor Education Information for Teachers and Group Leaders**

Hello Teachers!

We welcome you to our Outdoor Education Packet! Each year at Nebraska 4-H, we serve over 3,500 youth at one of our beautiful camp locations – Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center, located in Gretna, Nebraska and the Nebraska State 4-H Camp located in Halsey, Nebraska.

It's amazing to see children connecting with nature while at camp – the wonder of a butterfly, or kicking a stone to see how it bounces, or talking with a friend about something that happened earlier in the day without the distractions of our connected society. At 4-H Camp, we understand the value of simple and personal experiences for youth.

Whether you are coming to camp to implement your own curriculum or working with our 4-H staff to develop your unique program, 4-H is here to support you in your group's goals. Included in this package is information for you as the coordinator, including site information, Teacher responsibilities, packing list for overnight visits, and general guidelines.

If any point you have questions regarding your outdoor education experience or programming, please do not hesitate to contact one of our staff members. We look forward to your visit!

### **Camp Contact Information**

Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center  
21520 W HWY 31  
GRETNA, NE 68028

Phone: 402.332.4496  
Fax: 402.332.2580

Nebraska State 4-H Camp  
8322 4-H CAMP RD.  
HALSEY, NE 69142

Phone: 308.533.2224  
Fax: 308.533.2228

Happy Camping!

**Sean  
Gundersen**  
Director of Camps  
sgundersen2@unl.edu

## **Teacher /Group Leader Responsibilities**

### **Teacher/School Paperwork (please use this as a checklist)**

The lead teacher organizing a school group is responsible for providing the 4-H Camp with the following paperwork:

- Booking/Reservation Contract – done at time of booking and includes necessary deposit(s) and follow up deposit(s) outlined in contract.
- A copy of your event insurance – This insures you and us for any actions by your group while on site, it must be for minimum liability coverage of \$1M and the camp location that you are attending must be listed as additionally insured. Not to worry, your participation in our activities and the actions of our staff are all insured by Nebraska 4-H's insurance coverage, your event insurance does not need to cover our program areas, or actions.
- Student and Chaperone Roster – to be emailed to camp at least 2 weeks before arrival, including details about dietary needs.

*Please mail or email paperwork to the site of your outdoor education experience.*

### **Program design and requests**

Many Outdoor Education groups develop their own programming using their schools specific curriculum. We ask that all teacher developed program schedules be submitted to camp 3 weeks prior to arrival. If you are interested in working with 4-H to draft a program, please let us know! All schedules must be finalized 3 weeks prior to the group's arrival.

The 4-H Camp staff might also suggest some updates or changes to schedule closer to the date(s) of your 4-H Camp adventure! Please allow us time to coordinate changes in schedule as the days and week before your arrival will likely be filled with us leading another group on their adventure. In the couple months before your arrival, any program request changes can be made to any of our Camp Program Coordinators you have been emailing with or to the Camp Director.

### **Student Numbers**

Please contact us at least 1 month before arrival to let us know the # of students of each gender you'll be bringing. Having this information allows us time to ensure we've got the right number of staff available to lead your 4-H adventure! This can be simply emailing us the Student and Chaperone Roster mentioned above.

### **Student Groupings**

Please contact the Program Director that has been your main contact 2-3 weeks before your group's arrival to find out how you should divide your students into cabin and/or activity groups. Group sizes may vary depending on the total number of students, age of students, or program planned. Groupings for single day visits can range from 4-10 students depending on your program design. Typically, campers staying overnight are placed in single gender cabins of 8 with two counselors. Some program designs also include pairing two or more cabins together to form activity groups.

### **Emergency Procedures**

The 4-H Camp has emergency procedures in place to deal with fires, lost student and wildlife encounters. Teachers are responsible for transportation and evacuation if necessary. Students and teachers are told where to meet in the case of large-scale incidents during an opening community meeting.

### **Camper Health Care**

4-H Camp does not provide an on-site nurse for outdoor education programs. While most 4-H Camp staff are trained in first aid, teachers will be asked to coordinate non-emergency decisions (such as transportation), and to handle communication to principals and parent/guardians. Camp staff will gladly consult with teachers to make these important decisions as the need arises but the ultimate responsibility is with the teachers. Our goal is for students to either return quickly to the program, or access the support they need to feel safe and be comfortable. Teachers are responsible for ensuring they have copies of school/district health forms with them when they come to camp, in case of an emergency. Some school districts also require that a medical/first aid log is kept. If this is the case for your district, teachers are responsible for managing that log and keeping it on file for the district's designated amount of time. The dispensing of any medication is the sole responsibility of the teachers. Please collect and label all medications for the students in your school and create a recording system to track their administration. Students who carry "take-when-needed" medications such as inhalers, creams, or EpiPens may still do so at 4-h Camp but may NOT carry any other meds (even over the counter) with them at any time. Multi-vitamins are also included in items that must be kept locked away with the teachers and not in the student's possession.

### **Student Transportation**

Teachers are responsible for having one personal vehicle on site for their school. This car will be used to transport students for medical treatment in non-emergencies. In case of emergency, an ambulance will be called. The local emergency room is about 15-30

minute drive away and emergency services usually arrive on site in 10-15 minutes. Teachers are responsible for organizing student transportation to and from the 4-H Camp.

### **The 4-H Camp Kitchen**

Camp offers healthy, child friendly options for all meals and includes a vegetarian option as well as a well-stocked salad bar for lunch and dinner. Breakfast includes a hot entrée and a cereal bar with a variety of cereals and fruit. Meals are made predominantly from scratch using organic and local products when available. Coffee and tea are typically available only for staff and teachers. If you would like to make coffee and tea available for older students, please let us know so we can stock an adequate quantity and make our staff aware.

For our kitchen staff to support student food needs most effectively, it is important for us to know about any allergies at least 3 weeks in advance. For ordering and menu planning, please also let us know of any dietary restrictions (wheat/gluten free, lactose intolerance, vegan, etc.) as well as approximate numbers of vegetarians or vegans. Please provide us with this information at least three weeks prior to your group's arrival. Also note, due to frequent and often severe allergies, **we are a Nut Free Facility.**

### **Challenge by Choice – Nebraska 4-H Camps Program Philosophy**

*Challenge by Choice asks that participants challenge themselves and participate fully in the experience. Recognizing that any activity or goal may pose a different level and type of challenge for each group member and that authentic personal change comes from within, Challenge by Choice creates an environment where participants are asked to search for opportunities to stretch and grow during the experience. The determination of what kind of participation represents an optimal learning opportunity is the responsibility of each group member.*

What does this philosophy mean? Challenge by choice means that each child or adult sets their own goals and works to achieve them on their own terms. It means that parents or teachers are not setting goals for children, or vice versa. If someone chooses to make it half way up the climbing wall that is equally as valid as someone who wishes to go all the way. It is the participant's personal challenge and they do not need to share with others if they don't wish to. In this environment, we choose to give descriptive praise, (e.g. "You were very agile in how you reached for the yellow rock") and avoid any comments, which might minimize someone's efforts (e.g. "Good try", "You can do it!" or any count downs). Challenge by choice then creates a safe environment where people are challenged to push themselves as far as they want to go.

## **Guidelines and expectations**

We ask that you read through the following points and go through any relevant points with your students so they are as prepared as possible about what to expect before they get here.

- In addition to normal homesickness, campers arriving who didn't want to be here, were coerced into coming, or were expecting something other than what they found may encounter "rational homesickness." That form often ends up in "well, I guess I'll have to suck it up and deal with it." We encourage "challenge by choice" philosophy therefore we do not wish to force campers to be here if they do not want to be. If campers are coming here with that sort of attitude it will likely affect the experience of every other person they encounter.
- The number 1 reason why campers don't feel well at camp is often dehydration. **Every camper must bring a water bottle with them and keep it on them at all times.** All the water on site is perfectly fine to drink straight from the tap. Many people who have been to camp before prefer it to bottled water...it's that good and pure!
- It can get a little chilly at camp during the spring or fall, with temperatures as low as 35-40°F at night. Bring some warmer bedding and clothing in case we experience similar weather conditions. Note that the temperature rating on a sleeping bag is not the temperature at which you will be comfortable; it is the lowest temperature at which the sleeping bag will help sustain life. A sleeping bag should be rated at least 20-25°F lower than the air temperature to be comfortable.
- Overnight campers will be living in cabins with counselors to enhance the 4-H Camp adventure.
- Unless otherwise arranged, your staff will be running all the activities. Each specialized area may require 4-H Camp staff to facilitate.
- Parents and Teachers will be responsible for waking campers up, showering, getting campers to meals, leading activities, evening embers, down times, behavior management and bed time as well.
- For campers with special needs, parents will be helpful one-on-one and Camp Augusta needs to be notified in advance.
- A Camp Store will be available upon request, which has a limited amount of things. One of the items is a 4-H Camp T-Shirt, which usually costs \$10-15, which has been incredibly popular with previous groups. The cost is subject to change from year to year depending on cost of that year's design.
- At activities we love it when others give positive re-enforcement, please do not offer negative and discouraging remarks to campers.
- You can encourage campers, with the following examples.
  - A pat on the back
  - A high five (can include low fives, mini fives and big fives for good variety)

- We also ask others to refrain from offering suggestions or help to those participating in activities. Sometimes the purpose of the activity is to have campers work together to figure it out (even in moments of frustration), at other times it is confusing to have multiple people all giving suggestions. If you would like to help, please speak with the instructor of the activity prior to jumping in.
  - If you feel a student is not reaching their current potential, speak to their counselor about ways in which they can be supportively pushed.
- This adventure is a great chance to meet new people, learn new activities, enjoy the wonders of nature and make great new friends.
  - An open mind, willingness to learn and a great attitude can make your visit even better.
  - We do have ticks here. If you stay on the paths, you are less likely to get them. At night, please check yourself for any new bumps. If you have a tick, you can remove it with a set of tweezers. Place close to the head and pull straight out. After removal, apply antibiotic ointment and monitor for a couple days. Watch for signs of illness such as rash or fever, and see a health care provider if these develop. For fully detailed information about tick removal, see the CDC Web site (<http://www.cdc.gov/>). If it looks infected or you start experiencing flu like symptoms, seek medical attention. It is recommended to keep the tick in a Ziploc bag for testing in the event you get ill. As a precautionary measure you can have the tick tested for illness at your local health care provider once it is removed.
  - Our forest contains poison oak and poison ivy. If you stay on the paths, you are less likely to come in contact with it, however, please be cautious wherever you go. If you do come in contact with poison oak or ivy, wash the affected area well and apply rubbing alcohol. Put any clothes that may have come in contact in a separate bag for washing. The oil sticks to everything.
  - Most of our staff are First Aid and CPR trained and there are first aid kits all over camp if needed. They are located at: The office, by the High Ropes course, Archery, Riflery, Sports Court, and Health Center. There will also be basic medical supplies in the Health Center. Ask a staff member if you need to get something out of the cupboards, as they will be locked at all times.
  - For safety, 4-H has a “Rule of 3” requirement. This rule means that if campers are going anywhere where they are out of sight of staff, 3 campers need to go as a group. This rule applies to any adults/staff when with campers too.
  - If it is part of your program, campers may have the opportunity to do Tie-Dye as one of the activities during the Arts and Crafts period. Campers are more than welcome to bring ‘whites’ that they wish to tie-dye to camp with them. Please note that the more cotton is present in the article of clothing, the better. The dyes don’t take well to synthetic materials. Campers may bring a couple items to tie-dye, as there may be a couple of opportunities to do this fun activity. Examples include: pillow cases, t-shirts, socks, skirts, etc.

- Talent Show – Some programs include talent shows performed by you and the students. If your program is one of these, there are some guidelines to follow when thinking about your performances:
  - Songs, music, skits, instruments, kata's, dances, etc. are all great ideas (feel free to include your own too). Let your imagination flow!
  - A great focus that will be enjoyed by everyone is to try to avoid pop culture type acts. Outside of camp, we get bombarded by these in the media almost every day; we strive to focus on the more wholesome acts.
  - Please avoid violence and social cruelty of any form in any of your acts. We are exposed to this manner of interaction almost everyday of our lives on TV; let's enjoy the lighter and nicer side of life.
- There are usually many more of you than there are of us. If we ask for help, please do, you may learn even more than you thought you would by doing so.

### **Notes for Parents and Teachers coming to 4-H Camp during the trip**

- Parents and teachers: You can participate in the activities if time and space allow, but we ask that you do so with the enjoyment of being a camper again.
- There are some activities and certain times of the day that are cabin/group-bonding times. During these times please give the cabins/groups the space to carry out their activities. If you would like to spend time with your child's cabin/group, please speak with your schools staff beforehand.
- If at any point, parents and teachers are not with the groups, feel free to explore and get to know the land and see all the beauties on offer. We've got maps available in the office to help you find your way around
- In the unlikely event of trouble arising, have no fear; your 4-H Camp Staff are here to help out no matter what! All our staff are highly trained in behavior management, child development, most in first aid and CPR and so much more. They are the best of the best!
- Phone calls may be made in the office at anytime by teachers and parents.
- You can take pictures and video. We would love copies so we can remember you too!
- Please ensure that all adults attending 4-H Camp are aware of the medical agreement form signed by the school.
- We want loads of fun to be had by everyone!! 😊
- You are more than welcome to organize a time with us to come up to camp and have a look around to familiarize yourself with where your child will be coming.
- No smoking or Alcohol is allowed on the property. If, as an adult, you MUST smoke, we ask that you take a walk off our property and return not smelling of cigarettes so that students are not exposed to any sign of your walk. Also, please dispose of your butts responsibly and understand that you are standing in a dry forest that needs very little to ignite 😊

## Packing List

Essential items (Day trips or Overnights):

- One pair of hiking shoes. NOTE: To be allowed on our T.R.U.S.T. Course each camper must have at least one pair of "**closed toed and closed heeled**" shoes or boots. Tennis shoes are acceptable. "Crocks" and sandals are NOT.
- Water Bottle
- Backpack
- Hat or cap
- Rain Jacket or Poncho (as needed)
- Sweatshirt or coat (as needed)

Optional Items:

- Sunscreen/ Bug Spray
- Sunglasses
- Camera

Overnight Essentials:

- Shirts (T-shirts are fine) (daily change +1)
- Pants (Shorts, jeans, sweatpants are all OK) (daily change +1)
- Socks (daily change +1)
- Underwear (daily change +1)
- Sleeping Bag or sheets and blanket
- Pillow
- Towels (At least 2)
- Toiletries

- Sleep wear
- Wash Cloths
- Sweatshirts
- Flashlight
- Rain jacket or poncho
- Hat or cap
- Backpack
- Waterbottle
- Laundry bag or spare pillow case for laundry

### Do Not Bring to Camp

As you know, Camp is a special place. We intentionally try our best to setup the right camp atmosphere. The following items detract from this atmosphere and the spirit of camp. Please help us provide the best possible experience by ensuring these items are left at home:

- Firearms - includes BB and pellet guns
- Fireworks

If above items are found in camp, parents will be called immediately and the camper will be sent home.

- Radios, headsets, CD players, iPods, etc.
- Electronic games
- Knives and multi-tools
- Lighters/matches
- Expensive jewelry, watches, other valuables
- Cellphones



# Team Building and TRUST Course

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