

Adventure Frequently Asked Questions for Website

What is Adventure

Q: *What is the Adventure Program about? What are the goals for the students?*

A: Adventure is a core practice of the EL curriculum ([EL Core Practice 26](#)). The Adventure program creates opportunities for students, staff, and parents to engage in outdoor activities and experience nature through participation in overnight and day programming. The goals of the program are to provide an introduction to a wide variety of adventure activities while also developing a stronger sense of purpose, building community and strengthening our crew. Odyssey Adventure galvanizes self-discovery and instills students' personal growth through a focus on Crew, Habits, and a growth mindset. Not only are lifelong activities being cultivated, but also perseverance and resilience, just like the motto states "leap in, get stuck, push through" with a goal of being in challenging situations, but pushing through them and learning from them.

Q: *What is the difference between Expeditionary Learning and Adventure?*

A: Expeditionary Learning or Expeditions as they are called at Odyssey are units of study that are designed by the crew lead and provide an in depth and hands on analysis of a topic with field sessions and outside presenters. Adventure on the other hand is focused on outdoor education / adventure education. These adventure skills based outings are focused on skill acquisition and crew building and can be day or overnight trips. Often times Adventure Days or trips have tie-ins to the Expedition curriculum, but this is not always the case or a requirement.

Q: *When does the trip start and end?*

A: Trips typically start at normal school drop off time and end at regular school dismissal on the final day of the trip.

Q: *How do meals on the trips work, and what if my child has a dietary restriction?*

A: All meals are provided except for the first days lunch. Parents also typically prepare and donate the food for the first nights dinner if it is a multi-night

trip. Regarding dietary restrictions, we ask that they are reported through the form sent out during trip season and we can typically accommodate these. In certain circumstances we may ask you to provide some of the food or assist us with obtaining it.

Q: *What does an overnight trip look like?*

A: A typical overnight trip starts out with a gear check about a week prior to the trip, making sure that every student has the required equipment for the trip. Students missing items will check them out from the gear closet at this time. On the trip departure day students arrive at school during the normal arrival time, complete crew and some last minute checks and then load their equipment on the bus. We then travel to the trip location and set-up camp. We will do some type of afternoon activity such as a hike and then complete our evening tasks and the cook team will cook dinner. We will then have an evening activity before wrapping up the evening with a closing circle. The next day will start out with everyone getting up at wake-up time and breakfast crew will get started cooking while everyone else starts the morning crew circle. After breakfast and morning tasks are complete we will head out for a day of adventure participating in the activities aligned with the trip and will return before dinner. When time allows there is typically some free time in the afternoon to explore and play games. Trips usually return before the end of the school day and students are dismissed once all of the post-trip tasks are completed and a final closing circle has taken place.

Q: *What does adventure look like from year to year, what will my child be doing during certain years?*

A: The adventure team has developed a scope and sequence that accounts for age appropriate activities that can be built upon from year to year with a goal of introducing students to a wide range of activities while developing skills during their tenure at Odyssey. Detailed information can be found in the Adventure Scope and Sequence

Q: Who chaperones the trip and how are they selected?

A: Chaperones on the trips are family members of crew members who are at least 18 years of age. They must apply for the role and then complete a background check and a chaperone training. Here is the

[Overnight Trip Chaperone Job Description](#) which details the selection process.

New to Odyssey and Adventure

Q: *How can my student be prepared for this program?*

A: Crew leads will review campcraft skills (setting up a tent, dishes) with their entire crew before a trip. If a technical skill like mountain biking or climbing is the key activity for the trip the adventure team will attempt to have at least one pre-trip session with the crew to work on developing skills. Activities are usually scaffolded so that instruction and the activity can be scaled to meet the student where they are at and built into the the planning process and group making decisions if splitting into smaller groups. The most important part is to have them help you with packing their pack so they know what they have and where it is and so during gear check they know what they need to borrow and can help the process run more smoothly.

Q: I'm scared to let them be with strangers in strange places?

A: The Crew Lead will be on the trip with your student, along with at least one of the adventure staff team and another staff member. Students will have typically interacted with these staff members prior to the trip. The adventure team has scouted out the locations and have risk management systems in place and are prepared for any situation. Chaperones are parents of other students in the crew and must complete a background check before being selected.

Q: What if there is bad weather?

A: This is where the gear list and gear checks really count. Everyone should be adequately prepared for most weather conditions that we might encounter. In the event the weather is worse than predicted we will follow our protocols and either return to campus or look into indoor options. Very rarely are trips canceled or rescheduled and an alternative location will be sought out in most circumstances.

Q: What if they get hurt in the wilderness?

A: Our adventure team is trained in wilderness medicine and will always have a first aid kit and cell phone with them. In the event there is not

service they will have an inReach communication device that they can call for more advanced support or communicate with administrators at Odyssey. If it is a minor injury it will be treated and your student will stay on the trip and we will communicate the injury with you at pick-up. In the event it is a more serious injury and medical attention is required you will be contacted by an administrator or Adventure staff member to inform you of the situation and next steps in the process.

Q: What if I cannot afford the equipment on the gear list?

A: We are fortunate in that we have a community closet full of items used on adventure that students can borrow for trips. All of the items are clean and well kept. We also provide the tents, cooking items and stoves, and activity specific equipment.

Q: How do you address my kids' learning or physical disabilities?

A: All pertinent information is shared with the adventure team prior to outings and they will work with our school specialists and parents in order to ensure proper accommodations are able to be made so that your student can fully participate in the trip.

Expectations for students and parents - Participation and tasks

Q: What are the expectations for attending day and overnight trips?

A: Attendance on all day and overnight trips is expected and is a required component of the curriculum. Our adventure program helps students develop critical thinking skills and risk-taking, as well as learn to hike, climb, bike, raft, and camp. This program is critical to developing students' character as well as building their crews and establishing a sense of belonging. For more information on parent and student expectations please see the [policy](#).

Q: How are parents Involved and what commitment is expected?

A: There are various roles parents can take on when it comes to adventure. They can be the adventure parent for their crew (think room parent, but only helping with adventure stuff), you can be a chaperone on a day or overnight trip, and if those do not fit your schedule you can sign up for a pre or post trip task and donate food during the food drive for the Spring Trip Season. More info can be found under the volunteer tabs on the adventure portion of the website. Adventure requires the support and assistance of the parents in several ways: 1) helping the

student prepare for the trip both mentally and by packing and being at school for important parts of the pre-trip process. We also ask that you support in one of the ways mentioned earlier in this paragraph.

Communication

Q: How do I go about finding out more about the upcoming trips and how is that communicated?

A: There are three channels that specific information regarding Adventure happens along with the more general information on the website. 1) Thursday folder email - this is where information coming from the adventure team will be provided and will include notices and general information about programming. 2) Weekly emails from Crew Leads - the crew lead will send home a weekly email and will include any pertinent information regarding upcoming adventure outings with detailed information. 3) Adventure Parent Emails - Adventure parents will send out emails pertaining to adventure for your specific crew which includes upcoming overnight and day trip tasks and needs and reminders.

Q: What information about the trip will I receive and when will I get it?

A: You'll receive a basic overview of the trip. For overnight trips the dates, location, activities and other basic information will be shared by the crew lead. For day trips, the locations are often more flexible, however the activity will be shared. Gear list for specific trip (and Odyssey maintains a robust community closet, most gear may be borrowed). You will not get a detailed itinerary for two reasons: These trips are often subject to weather and other conditions out of our control. The Adventure Team works hard to have viable Plan A, Plan B ...Plan Z in place and remain flexible to provide the best experience possible. Security reasons: Student and staff safety is our first priority. Student groupings such as tent groups, these can change up to the point of departure or while on the trip due to logistical issues.

Q: Will I be able to communicate with my student or get updates while they are out on their overnight adventure trip?

A: We know for many families, sending their child away from home is a big ask. Part of students fully experiencing Adventure is to do so on their

own, with the support of their crew and Odyssey staff. Communication on Adventure Overnights will be limited due to availability of cell phone signals and staff capacity. Odyssey staff will communicate with families when the crew arrives at their destination, and for trips 4 days or more will communicate mid-trip with an update. All families will be notified of arrival time on scheduled return day. If any issues arise or there is need for further communication, that will occur as well. It is our policy that students are not allowed to have cell phones on trips.

Q: Can chaperones and staff send me pictures and updates?

A: No, see previous question and answer for what communication on trips will be.

Risk Management

Q: What does Odyssey do to keep my child safe while out on adventure?

A: The health and welfare of students, staff, and volunteers is a high priority at Odyssey. At the same time, engaging in adventure activities involves inherent and other risks that cannot be controlled. We seek to minimize these risks through Odyssey's Adventure Risk Management Plan (RMP). The RMP takes a broad perspective of risk management and encompasses quality staff and volunteers, informed students, support services (transportation, equipment, etc.), a culture of awareness, and guidelines for adventure activities. Odyssey cannot guarantee the safety of students, staff, volunteers, or any other person involved. For the activities in which we participate, we can only strive to manage the associated risks and inform students of those risks. While risk is an inherent part of all Odyssey adventure programs, Odyssey does not seek to replace good judgment and sound practices with an undue acceptance of risk.

Q: What if my child needs medication while on the trip?

A: [DPS policy](#) for which we follow requires the [Medication Administration Agreement forms](#) be completed by your physician for both prescription and non-prescription medications. The forms along with the medication for the trip need to be submitted to the office no later than 2 weeks prior to the trip.

Q: What medical training does the Adventure Staff have?

A: The Adventure staff is required to have a valid Wilderness First Responder (WFR) certification. This is an 80 hour training that prepares outdoor professionals to be able to assess, treat, and make evacuation decisions for medical situations more than an hour from care.

Q: What protocols are followed for the more adventurous activities like climbing and rafting.

A: Industry standards are followed with all activities and are explicitly detailed in Odyssey's Adventure Risk Management Plan (RMP). Climbing and Rappelling sites will be run in accordance with the American Mountain Guide Association (AMGA) or Professional Climbers Instructor Association (PCIA). We typically outsource a guide service for white water rafting and follow American Canoe Association/ guidelines for flat water rafting, and other watercraft.

Q: What do you do for drinking water on trips?

A: Every effort is made to have a campsite that has potable water available. There are times when the only accessible campsites do not have water and we plan ahead and bring in extra water and pre-plan water refills. On backpacking trips water is filtered using a pump or chemicals such as chlorine or iodine purchased from a reputable source for water treatment purposes.

Q: What policies are in place for Inclement Weather?

A: We have a [lightning procedure](#) in the event we encounter a lightning storm. We check the weather prior to trips and plan accordingly with equipment, tarps etc. We do live in Colorado, so as you know weather forecasts can be wrong. Staff will use their best judgment when it comes to hot and cold weather and alterations will be made as necessary.

Q: Should we be worried about bears or other wild animals?

A: There is potential for a wild animal encounter. Here is our [Bear Habitat Policy](#). We will also be aware and inform/train students what to do in the event they encounter another type of wildlife if we are adventuring in their habitat.