

# Keewaydin Environmental Education Center

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL TEACHERS AND CHAPERONES**

Congratulations! You are now an honored member of the Keewaydin Environmental Educational Team. You are very important to our success as an educational community. The hours are long but the rewards of a smooth and successful program for the students are well worth it. Please read the following; it will give you a clear idea of your responsibilities.

**CABINS:** There will be a KEEC instructor and at least one other adult living in each cabin. With certain exceptions, the KEEC instructor and the other adults staying in the cabin will share the duties described below. It's important that communication between the adults in each cabin be initiated early so that the cabin runs smoothly. Students are not allowed access to the cabin without adult supervision. The most important parts of the day as they relate to cabin life are the following:

**Wake-up:** The first gong of the morning signals get-out-of-bed time. No one should be out of bed beforehand unless they are going to the bathroom. Books and stationery by the bed are helpful for early risers. Once the gong sounds, it is important to encourage students to get dressed and prepare for the morning activities, as they will only have about 15 minutes.

**Inspection:** Students are in charge of cleaning their cabins **daily after breakfast**. You and the Cabin Leader will supervise this. There will be a list of duties on the wall. The "Inspectors" will grade the cabin as a group and announce the score before we begin the morning investigation.

**Journal/Quiet Time:** This occurs **daily after lunch** and is supervised by you in your cabin. This is a quiet time; everyone should be on his/her own bed and refrain from chatting with others. Students have four options for quiet time; students can read, write or draw, sleep, or daydream. Five minutes before the gong sounds to signal quiet time is over, you should make sure that everyone is prepared for the afternoon investigation.

**Bedtime:** All adults should return to the cabin with students at bedtime. The students have about 15 minutes to get ready for bed before lights out. Please help to ensure that all students have brushed their teeth. After lights out, one adult will remain in each cabin with the students who will read or tell a story for 20-30 minutes. If you have an appropriate book that you'd like to share with the students, please bring it along. We have a good selection in the Keewaydin Library. On occasion the KEEC staff will need to leave the cabin shortly after lights out. Please communicate your desire to leave if necessary so we can provide adequate coverage of the cabin.

**Wood stoves:** Adults will be responsible for maintaining wood stoves. Safety rules will be thoroughly discussed during the first cabin meeting. If you are not familiar with the proper use of the stove please inform the KEEC instructor in your cabin.

**INVESTIGATIONS & EVENING PROGRAMS:** Our investigations are done in study groups of 7-9 students. In general, we require one teacher or chaperone to accompany the KEEC instructor whenever a group leaves our main campus. There are 2-hour investigations twice a day (except for arrival and departure days). We investigate various natural communities in 4 main categories: natural history, local history, land-use, and human impact. Our investigations are child-based explorations that are active and encourage students to think laterally, critically, and creatively to discover information from the world around them. Some investigations are more physically demanding than others. Please take this into consideration when selecting an investigation. The KEEC director and staff will inform you of the physical demand of each investigation.

**Discipline:** The KEEC instructor is in charge of handling the discipline in their study groups. They will discuss behavioral expectations with the group before the investigation begins so everyone has a clear understanding of expectations. Adult chaperones and teachers are there for reinforcement, assistance in the event of accidents, and to share in the enthusiasm of discovering and learning in a new classroom. Though the KEEC instructor is in charge of leading investigations, we all work together to create a safe, learning experience that all students can enjoy. Please feel free to communicate your suggestions, opinions, compliments, and concerns to the director and instructors. If during an investigation, you feel a student's behavior is unsafe, please communicate with the KEEC instructor before personally taking action.

**Evening Programs & Night Walks:** KEEC instructors will run all evening programs. Chaperones are encouraged to attend all evening activities, i.e. town meeting, skit practice and night walks. Night walks are done without flashlights in a very quiet manner. In addition to the KEEC instructor, we must have an adult accompany all night walks.

**MEALS:** We eat „family-style“ with 1 or 2 adults and 6-7 students per table. There is a student waiter who brings food and dishes to and from the table. The adults serve all the food to the students. If you are heading a table, there will be instructions on each table. We have a „no-thank-you“ portion that ensures all students receive at least a taste of each item served. We also have “Waste Watch”. This is to promote awareness of how much food is wasted and what this means in regards to energy consumption. It is intended to help students understand the positive impact of taking only what they need; it is not intended to make students overstuff themselves with food and feel guilty. We leave the labeling of „good or bad“ up to the students. Your understanding and support of our goal will help the students understand it as well. The Waste Watch has a huge impact on students and we want it to be positive. Please try to encourage listening skills during this time and help the students to develop conversation of this topic amongst the others at the table.

## **FREE TIME:**

**Student Recreation Time:** This time is indicated on the schedule as “**Rec Time**”. It directly follows the morning and afternoon investigations. Free time is entirely supervised by the teachers and chaperones. There are three general areas to supervise: cabins, playing fields including the basketball court and showers. During the tour on Monday, students learn free time boundaries. Showers are available for students during this time only and it must be supervised by at least one adult. We ask that every student shower at least once during the week. Free time is a very important time for supervision. Please discuss among yourselves who will be where so all bases are covered.

**Adult Free Time:** In general chaperones and teachers are “on-duty” during **all** cabin times and free time. There are a few opportunities for chaperones and teachers to take personal time. These opportunities are limited to blocks of time that comprise of investigation periods and evening activities. The KEEC director and staff will help to coordinate when you can take off a block of time. Chaperones and teachers may shower before the wake up bell and after lights out, given ample coverage of the cabin (i.e. another adult or KEEC instructor is in the cabin). Please note we would like it if you could be back in the cabin before the wake up bell goes off. This will help the students to feel more comfortable while away from home.

## **MISCELLANEOUS:**

**Medical:** the KEEC medical staff should handle all medical situations unless it is an emergency situation and paramedics need to be called. A RN is present daily. The nurse, KEEC director or an adult designated by the nurse at other times, will dispense all routine medications. A nearby physician is on call for other problems. It is helpful for teachers to read the students medical forms before arriving at KEEC. We discuss all medical situations that staff should be aware of in our Monday meeting before dinner.

**Homesickness:** We will also discuss potential homesick students and solutions in our Monday meeting so we are all aware and consistent with these situations. Communication with the director and KEEC instructors is best before any definitive action concerning homesickness is taken.

**Teacher Time:** This is a time to check in with your students. It can happen 1-3 times during the week, depending on the teacher’s wishes, for about 15 minutes. It is a great time to touch base and discuss how things are going. Starting the session off on a positive note is always very helpful.

**Tobacco Free Campus:** Keewaydin maintains a tobacco free campus at all times. If you must smoke please refrain from doing so on our campus. There are a couple of smoking spots you can walk to a short distance from campus.

**Cell Phones:** A week at KEEC is a time for students to remove themselves from the accessories of everyday life. We believe that the use of cell phones inhibits this ability. For this reason we ask that you refrain from using your cell phone in front of the students. If you absolutely need to make a call we would prefer you use our office phone or discreetly remove yourself from the view of students. **Thank You!**

**We appreciate your willingness to volunteer your time. There will always be someone to help guide you should you have any questions during your stay with us. Thank you for taking the time to ensure a fantastic week for the students. Please read through the “Equipment List” to make sure you are well prepared for any weather changes.**