

River Way Ranch Camp

Memories and friendships to last a lifetime.



PARENT ORIENTATION PACKET



Western Camps, Inc.
River Way Ranch Camp
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www.RiverWayRanchCamp.com

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Memories and friendships to last a lifetime.

Dear River Way Ranch Camp Parents,

It is with great pleasure that we welcome your child to River Way Ranch Camp for the summer of 2011. Our community is a place where your child can take healthy steps towards fostering personal growth.

River Way staff treat their campers as though they were their own family and younger brothers and sisters. These relationships are why River Way Ranch Camp is so highly regarded in the industry. Our staff provides the safety nets for your child to discover new interests, new hobbies, and to form new friendships.

While your child is in our care, we will help him/her learn life skills that encourage wellness and personal growth. We will create opportunities for decision making, responsibility, resourcefulness and teamwork. The camp experience revolves around making friendships and establishing a sense of place for each and every camper.

We take pride in our efforts to give your child an invaluable experience while creating memories and friendships that will last a lifetime.

We appreciate the confidence you have placed in us by sending your child(ren) to River Way Ranch Camp. We would like to remind our returning families, and inform our new families, that if you feel some anxiety during your child's stay at camp, please do not hesitate to contact us to find out how your child is doing.

Sincerely,



Jerry Reid
Camp Director



6450 Elwood Road * Sanger, California 93657 * (559) 787-2551 * Fax: (559) 787-3851
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General Information

DEPARTURE FROM SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA: Charter busses will depart from Taft High School (5461 Winnetka Avenue, Woodland Hills) south of the Ventura Freeway on Winnetka Avenue at **8:30a.m. sharp**. Campers must check-in between **7:15a.m. and 8:00a.m.** The roundtrip transportation fee is \$80.00 and must be paid prior to departure.

DEPARTURE FROM NORTHERN CALIFORNIA: Charter busses or vans will depart from the Best Western Grosvenor Hotel (380 S. Airport Blvd., South San Francisco) at **8:30a.m. sharp**. Campers must check-in by **8:00a.m.**. The roundtrip transportation fee is \$80.00 round-trip and must be paid prior to departure.

CAMPERS' RETURN: PARENTS ARE TO PICK UP THEIR CHILDREN ON THE LAST DAY OF THE SESSION AS FOLLOWS:

Taft High School: 1:15p.m.
Best Western: 1:00p.m.
River Way Ranch Camp: 9:00a.m.

VISITATION: Parents whose child is enrolled for **more than two sessions** may contact us to obtain permission to visit on July 16, 2011 or July 30, 2011. We have no camp visitation days for stays of 2 to 4 weeks as we have found it can be a difficult experience for a child away from home to see other parents and relatives visiting. This, in turn, can cause morale problems throughout the camp. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in this matter as it will be a great help to your child in their adjustment to camp life. All parents are welcome to visit the facility prior to the opening of camp or during any session your child is not attending. Some families take advantage of Mother's Day weekend to join us for a Bed and Breakfast, incredible Mother's Day brunch, horseback riding, and a tour of the camp - call our office for details.

SMOKING, ALCOHOL, AND DRUGS: Use or possession of cigarettes, alcohol, or non-prescription drugs by any camper will result in dismissal, in which case there will be ***no refund of any amount of the camp tuition.***

ILLNESS: A resident physician and nurse are employed and living on the premises at all times. Parents will be notified if their children are confined to the Infirmary for longer than a 48-hour period. Should a condition arise of a serious nature, the Camp Director, Assistant Camp Director, or Camp Mom will immediately contact the parents or guardians, or your personal physician if necessary, by telephone. ***If your child is to take any medication while at camp, please do not pack your child's medication in their luggage, but present it to the staff at the check-in table at the departure location.***

NEW: HEAD LICE POLICY – Each camper will be examined for head lice upon arrival on the first day of each camp session. If nits or lice are present, the Camp Director will decide if the camper must return home. Camp is not responsible for the expenses incurred for the transportation of the camper. Campers may have the option of being treated at camp. Costs incurred for treatment are at parent's/guardian's expense. We encourage you to check your child's head for lice several weeks

prior to, and the days leading up to, camp to ensure that they are lice free. Below we have provided some helpful information about head lice and how to identify it.

WHAT IS HEAD LICE? Head lice are small grayish-white insects, which are found in the hair, behind the ears, and on the nape of the neck. They live on human blood and their bites cause itching and scratching. These bites can lead to infection.

HOW CAN THEY BE RECOGNIZED? The adult louse is about the size of a sesame seed. They attach their eggs (called nits) to strands of hair close to the scalp. Nits are tiny, pearl gray, oval shaped specks that are attached firmly to the hair. Nits look much like spots of dandruff, but cannot be easily removed from the hair strand to which they are attached. Nits normally hatch in 7-10 days. Frequent scratching of the head is usually the first clue of an infestation.

LAUNDRY: Laundry is available once a week, or as needed. The fee of \$4 per week is automatically deducted from your child's Canteen account.

EXTRA MONEY: DO NOT send money with your child. They have no need for it at camp and it may get lost. Children are also requested **NOT** to bring valuables such as expensive watches, jewelry, cameras, and video games. **Cell phones are not permitted.** The camp cannot take responsibility for these lost items.

Canteen money, transportation, and yearbook have all been included in your billing.

CAMP FEES: The balance of all camp fees **is due by June 1st**. Please make checks payable to River Way Ranch Camp, 6450 Elwood Road, Sanger, CA 93657.

River Way Ranch Camp reserves the right to resell any reservations that have not been paid in full by June 1st. Any calls regarding payment should be directed to the Camp Bookkeeper, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:00a.m. and 4:30p.m. Telephone: 800.821.2801 x360.

PACKAGES: Please do not mail care packages containing *food or candy* to campers. We carry a large selection of snack items in our Canteen and serve three ample and well-balanced meals each day. Any food items that are sent will be held and used for special camp activities. We appreciate your cooperation.

Please mail packages to:
Camper's Name
6450 Elwood Road
Sanger, CA 93657

PHONE CALLS: Please do not expect phone calls from your child. Our camp property extends over many acres and our camp program includes many outcamp activities off the ranch. This makes it impossible to call campers to the telephone. News of friends speaking to their parents on the telephone can cause problems with other campers and make their adjustment to camp life more difficult. You should be receiving letters on a regular basis. You are welcome to discuss your child's

progress with our Camp Moms, who will return all incoming calls the same day. Please do not send cell phones as they are **not permitted** at camp.

PACKING SUGGESTIONS: Clothing may be packed in duffel bags, suitcases or trunks. PARENTS ARE URGED NOT TO SEND EXCESS CLOTHING. A suggested packing list is enclosed.

IMPORTANT: Be sure that **every** item is marked with your camper's name in indelible ink, or printed name tags securely sewn or ironed onto the articles. Nametags may be purchased from our online store, www.RiverWayRanchCamp.com/Online-Store. Please click one of the supported business banners at the bottom of the page to access this item or care packages.

Children should be told to assume responsibility for their own belongings, as the **CAMP IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST ARTICLES**. However, if you contact us immediately after your camper returns home, we will try to locate lost articles. **New this summer, visit our Lost and Found site on Facebook to identify your child's lost and found items. More information will be provided at drop-off.** All returned items are shipped via credit card on file.

MAIL: Campers are required to write home three times in a two-week period and cannot get into dinner on letter meal days without depositing a letter. Sometimes they outsmart us and send letters to friends, dogs, etc. If you are not receiving letters, send us an e-mail at CampMom@RiverWayRanchCamp.com, and we will look into it. Your child also expects letters from home. Twice a week is sufficient. To help them adjust to being away from home, please do not write any distressing news.

If you are leaving the country, you may send prepared mail for your child and we will be happy to issue a letter 2 or 3 times a week. Just let us know.

E-MAIL: River Way has set up a special arrangement with BUNK1.com to process camper e-mail. Please register with BUNK1 using the link on our website. You will need to set up an account with them to have access to the full range of services they provide, including the Camp Photo Albums. Instructions for setting up this account will be mailed to you March 1st. Camper e-mail is downloaded multiple times each day and printed for distribution with regular mail call at 5:00p.m.

FAX MACHINE: Our FAX machine is intended for *business use only*. We must keep it available for business transactions. For this reason, we must insist that campers continue to receive letters by mail and NOT by FAX. Children attending camp from other countries will be allowed to have their letters scanned and e-mailed to their families. Campers may receive unlimited e-mail, but unless a camper is from overseas, campers cannot reply to e-mails.

HOMESICKNESS: If your child writes distressing letters, which homesick children commonly do, do not become unduly alarmed. We have found that some children may write their first letter on the bus, before they arrive at camp. You receive the letter two days later, and while you are reading it, your child has fully adjusted and is having a wonderful time on a waverunner or horseback riding. Be assured that we are deeply concerned about the welfare of your child, and that he or she will always have our full attention. Should you have any anxiety in this regard, please feel free to call or e-mail our camp moms. Camp Moms are happy to discuss your child's progress. *To help your child*

successfully transition to being away from home, we strongly encourage parents not to give them the option of returning home in three days. Children who have this in mind prepare for a three-day stay and never allow themselves the chance to have fun. We assure you, we will let you know if your child is having a more difficult time adjusting than the average camper.

SPENDING MONEY (CANTEEN ACCOUNT): The amount of money charged to your account for the Canteen Fund will be deposited in your child's name in our camp store. Items such as toothpaste, camp T-shirts, mugs, flashlights, souvenir items, snacks, drinks, etc. may be purchased. There will also be a small selection of camper clothing available for purchase that will not be available online. We have found \$98.00 to be an adequate amount for the first two weeks your child attends, and \$50.00 for each additional two weeks. We suggest \$68.00 for the one-week fourth session. Your child will be advised of his/her balance after each purchase. Entrance fees for Outcamp activities will also be deducted from your child's Canteen Fund.

Please choose one of two options for any remaining amount of your child's canteen balance. You may choose to 'opt-in' to our Scholarship Fund and any balance left in your child's account will be sent to the American Camp Association (ACA) in care of the River Way Scholarship Fund. Or you may choose to 'opt-out' and any balance left in the account will be returned to your child in cash just before leaving camp. (Balances of \$50.00 or more will be credited to the credit card on file.) Please notify the camp if you prefer lower balances to be mailed.

WHAT IS THE AMERICAN CAMP ASSOCIATION RIVER WAY SCHORLASHIP FUND?

In the fall of 2009, River Way Ranch Camp entered into a partnership with the American Camp Association to create a scholarship program to assist as many children as possible in experiencing the enjoyment of summer camp.

The partnership was created as part of ACA's 20/20 Vision – 20 million children in the United States attending summer camp by 2020. Today, less than 10 million children attend summer camp and only 3 million of those children attend an accredited camp like River Way.

In addition, River Way recognizes the unstable global economic times and wants to ensure that as many children as possible can experience the power of a residential summer camp program. Camp is a place for children to take healthy risks to foster human growth by trying new activities and meeting new friends. Camp has proven to improve decision making, responsibility, resourcefulness, and leadership capabilities. River Way would like to give this opportunity to as many children as possible and, thanks to a partnership with ACA, we are well on our way to achieving their mission and ours.

MERCHANDISE: Each year River Way has camp clothing available for purchase on our website located at www.RiverWayRanchCamp.com/Online-Store . Beginning March 1st, you may purchase items to be either mailed home to you to send with your child to camp or you have the option of surprising them with the items waiting for them when they arrive in camp. For more information, please visit our online store.

YEARBOOK: An 80+ page color yearbook is produced from pictures taken during the entire camp season, featuring the campers, activities, and memories that last a lifetime. A \$50.00 charge on your

invoice covers the purchase of our full-color yearbook. If you do not wish to purchase a yearbook, please contact the camp office no later than July 1st, or write a note on your invoice. Because it takes time to design and publish them, the yearbook will not be mailed until December.

SESSION SLIDESHOW: After much support and positive response, we will be selling the end of session slideshow. This is a slideshow of a culmination of pictures throughout the session(s) your child attended. To get your copy, please check the box on the Canteen Form that says, 'Session Video – Sign Me Up' – and it will be given to campers on the final morning of camp. The cost is \$20.00.

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT PACKING LIST

(Based on a Two-Week Session)

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| 5 PAIR PLAY SHORTS | 2 SET OF HORSEBACK RIDING ATTIRE |
| 2 PAIR JEANS | (FOR HORSE CAMPERS) |
| 10 T-SHIRTS | 10 PAIR OF SOCKS |
| 1 HAT | 10 PAIR OF UNDERWEAR |
| 1 SWEAT SHIRT | 1 BATHROBE <i>(optional)</i> |
| 1 PAIR OF SWEAT PANTS | 2 PAIR PAJAMAS |
| 1 PAIR OF TENNIS SHOES | 2 SWIM SUITS <i>(no extreme bikinis)</i> |
| 2 PAIR OF SANDALS | 1 SET OF NICE CLOTHES FOR DANCE <i>(optional)</i> |

ANY SPECIAL COSTUMES FOR DRESS-UP EVENTS (OPTIONAL)

**** BE SURE TO MARK ALL ITEMS WITH INDELIBLE INK OR NAME TAGS ****

PLEASE DO NOT SEND CLOTHING THAT REQUIRES SPECIAL CARE SUCH AS DRY-CLEANING, HAND WASHING, OR IRONING.

CAMPERS ENROLLED IN HORSE CAMP MUST BRING RIDING BOOTS

BEDDING AND LINENS REQUIRED

- | | |
|---|--|
| 2 PILLOW SLIPS | 1 SINGLE SHEET TO COVER MATTRESS |
| 1 PILLOW | 2 BATH TOWELS |
| 3 WASH CLOTHS | 1 SLEEPING BAG (IF YOU PLAN ON GOING ON AN OUTCAMP, YOU WILL NEED A WARM SLEEPING BAG) |
| 1 LAUNDRY BAG (PILLOW SLIP MAY BE USED) | 1 BLANKET, 1 SINGLE SHEET (IF USING LINENS) |
| 2 BEACH TOWELS | |

TOILETRIES

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| SOAP | TISSUE |
| SOAP BOX | PLASTIC DRINKING CUP |
| COMB-HAIRBRUSH | BAG OR SMALL BOX FOR ITEMS |
| TOOTHBRUSH AND TOOTHPASTE | SUNSCREEN AND CHAPSTICK |
| SHAMPOO AND CONDITIONER | |

MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT

- | | |
|--|---|
| FLASHLIGHT AND BATTERIES | SMALL QUIET INDOOR GAMES (I.E CARDS) |
| STATIONARY AND STAMPS | CAMERA |
| (ADDRESSED AND STAMPED ENVELOPES FOR THE YOUNGER ONES) | WATER BOTTLE |
| POSTCARDS | SUNGLASSES |
| PEN OR PENCIL | SKATEBOARD, KNEE PADS, ELBOW PADS, HELMET <i>(OPTIONAL)</i> |

BRING A BAG OR SHOEBOX FOR SMALL ARTICLES. MOST OF THE ITEMS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE CANTEEN; HOWEVER, IT WOULD BE BEST TO PACK YOUR OWN.

***** IF YOUR CHILD PLAYS A SMALL MUSICAL INSTRUMENT, WE ADVISE THEM TO BRING IT *****

PACKING SUGGESTIONS: CLOTHING MAY BE PACKED IN DUFFEL BAGS, SUITCASES OR TRUNKS. PLEASE USE STANDARD SIZE TRUNKS (16X16X30). DO NOT USE OVERSIZED TRUNKS AS THESE TEND TO CAUSE SAFETY HAZARDS IN THE CABINS. TRUNKS SHOULD BE ABLE TO FIT UNDER THE BED.

No water balloons, water funs, fireworks, cell phones, pocket knives, or inappropriate music, logos, or magazines will be allowed. Please make sure that all clothing is camp appropriate (i.e. clothing should fit appropriately and not be revealing).