



ASPEN CREEK OUTDOOR SCHOOL PROGRAM PLANNING GUIDE

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About this Planning Guide

The Aspen Creek Planning Guide is designed to address your questions about your school's upcoming trip to participate in our outdoor science program. Please call us with any additional questions you might have and we'll be glad to help. Phone us at (887) 445-3499. Office hours are from 8am to 5pm Monday-Friday.

Aspen Creek Outdoor School Program Philosophy

Aspen Creek Outdoor School is a special place in the out-of-doors where we learn about:

- ✓ the natural world - Having an understanding of and a sense of wonder about nature inspires environmental responsibility
- ✓ our impact on the environment - Our actions can have positive impacts on natural ecosystems
- ✓ ourselves and our relationships with others - Living and working in community are important life skills

Guidelines for Teachers

Getting Your Students Ready for their Learning Experience: Aspen Creek is an outdoor learning center, but for many students it may be their only chance to go to camp. Teachers should go over the rules and expectations they have for students in the group living and learning situation. A list of our expectations for campers can be found elsewhere in this packet.

Journals: The Journal page masters will be emailed to you by Chapel Rock about a month ahead of your visit. It is the responsibility of the school to print and bind these journals. The student experience will be greatly diminished without a journal to record the data they collect and to reflect upon their camp experience.

Mandatory Pages for Students and Parents to Sign: All students taking part in the Challenge Course and/or Climbing Wall activities must bring a Participant Information and Permission Form signed by their parent or guardian. A copy of this form for duplication will be emailed to you.

Getting the School and Chaperones Ready for their Camping Experience: As the group contact person it is important that you have several things in order prior to your arrival.

1. Dividing Students into Groups: There are a number of factors to consider when dividing students into the two groupings – Activity Groups and Cabin Groups. You may want to take into account gender, cliques, rowdiness, and whether there will be the opportunity for the groups to get together as working groups back at school, etc. Activity Groups spend the most time together -- about 7 hours per full day together (13 hours per three-day session). Cabin Groups will spend about three waking hours per day together, depending upon how quickly they go to sleep!

Activity Groups: The Aspen Creek staff will contact you about the number of Activity Groups you should create. Activity groups should have from 12-15 students. It is our preference that these groups be heterogeneous, e.g.; no all boy or all girl groups. An Activity Groups list should be emailed to us about a week before arrival.

Cabin Groups: Assign your students and chaperones to cabins for sleeping. The capacities and arrangements of our cabins are listed below. Make sure there is at least one chaperone in each sleeping room. You do not need to send these cabin assignments to us, but please let us know two weeks ahead of time which buildings you will be using.

Cox Hall (42 total)

Bedroom A: 12 beds
Bedroom B: 10 beds
Bedroom C: 10 beds
Bedroom D: 10 beds

Kleindienst Hall (44 total)

Bedroom A: 10 beds
Bedroom B: 12 beds
Bedroom C: 12 beds
Bedroom D: 10 beds

St Matthews Hall (40 total)

Bedroom A: 8 beds
Bedroom B: 4 beds
Bedroom C: 8 beds
Bedroom D: 8 beds
Bedroom E: 4 beds
Bedroom F: 8 beds

Pritzlaff Hall (16 total)

Upper: 8 beds
Lower: 8 beds

Taylor Hall (16 total)

Upper: 8 beds
Lower: 8 beds

Luke Cabin*: 10 beds

Lucking Cabin*: 10 beds

Creekside Cabin*: 10 beds

*served by central bathhouse

2. Chaperone Meeting: It is advised that you have a chaperone meeting before your Aspen Creek program. You can use the “Information for Chaperones” pages to help make the chaperones aware of the school and camp discipline policies before they arrive. This will also help them understand their roles and duties while they are here at Chapel Rock. To protect your adults from allegations of impropriety we strongly urge you to provide one adult for every 6 students.

3. Medical Preparation for the Trip: Chapel Rock will not provide any major medical service or medication administration for participants in attendance at Aspen Creek programs. Our instructors will have First Aid training but will not treat any first aid issues beyond soap and water and band aids unless it is an emergency. School chaperones will be responsible for administering medication students bring from home and minor first aid issues.

4. Emergencies: Schools should bring at least one cell phone to be used in case of emergency. On out of town cell phones, dialing 1-928-445-6811 will connect you with Prescott emergency services. The local hospital is Yavapai Regional Medical Center.

5. Special Dietary Needs: Every effort within reason will be made to accommodate students and adults with special dietary needs or restrictions. Please provide details as soon as possible

Planning Timeline

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| 6 months - 1 year | Reserve your date for the next school year. School receives contract and sends it back to Chapel Rock with deposit and certificate of insurance. Aspen Creek staff sends out Program Planning Guide |
| 3-6 months | Teacher team begins planning program. Complete the Program Planning Sheet to select your activities and send to Aspen Creek staff. |
| 2-3 months | Schedule and hold meeting with chaperones, students and parents, as needed. Aspen Creek staff would be happy to attend to answer questions. |
| 90 days | Begin collecting Participant Information and Permission forms. A copy of the form signed by the parent or guardian must be brought for each student taking part in the Challenge Course and/or Climbing Wall activities. |
| 30 days | Divide students into Activity Groups of 12-15 and Cabin Groups. Email a copy of the Activity Groups to the Aspen Creek staff. Confirm your final numbers of students and adults. These numbers will be used for billing. You will be responsible for paying for 90% of this total or actual attendance, whichever is greater. Print and bind journals. |
| 7 days | Review Cabin and Activity Groups with students. Review schedule, procedures, behavior expectations and guidelines. Make sure you have a signed Participant Information and Permission form for each student. |

Information for Teachers and Chaperones

The Aspen Creek Outdoor School program is designed to benefit all participants – teachers, chaperones and students. The time you spend here should be pleasant and valuable. The residential living situation, mealtimes and recreation times affect the degree of impact the entire experience has on the group. Teachers and chaperones play an important role by supporting and participating in this growth process. Please read the following paragraphs carefully so that you fully understand your roles and responsibilities in the Aspen Creek community.

Responsibilities

Students should not be alone at any time while at Chapel Rock. When students are in classes they will always be in eyesight and earshot of an Aspen Creek Instructor. Teachers and chaperones are responsible for students at all other times: during meals, in cabins, and during recreation/free time. There must always be a teacher or adult chaperone in the cabins when students are there.

Mealtimes and the Dining Room

In order for us all to enjoy a relaxing meal, it would be helpful if teachers and chaperones could help us enforce our **Dining Room Rules** which include the following:

- Please talk only with folks at your table (to keep the noise level down)
- Please take only what you will eat and make sure there is enough for everyone.
- Please be polite by staying quiet during the announcements before and after the meal.

Teachers and chaperones should plan on supervising students during and after meals. The Aspen Creek staff will be preparing for the next set of activities during this time.

Class Supervision

While we want teachers and chaperones to be involved in our classes, we suggest that just one or two teachers or chaperones accompany each Activity Group to their learning experiences at any one time. We have found that larger groups of adults tend to interact with one another and can distract the students. **Adults should turn off their cell phones during lessons.**

Chaperones accompanying Activity Groups play an important role in support of the Aspen Creek Instructors, making sure that school and camp rules are followed, and, when necessary, spending a few minutes with students whose behavior is causing problems for the group. Aspen Creek staff will speak with teachers as soon as possible to seek guidance and support in addressing behavior problems.

Being on Time

It is very important that the students be on time to classes and meals. You are a role model for the students in this area. If your students tend to run late because of shower times, you can help them make a shower schedule and help them get going early. Each Aspen Creek Instructor will wait for all the students before starting class, so if one student is late, all will lose class time.

Community-Living

One of your main responsibilities is that of cabin supervision. You will be in charge of as many as ten boys or girls in a cabin bedroom.

At the first opportunity, you should sit down with your cabin group and discuss various procedures. The more involved the students get in policy-making, the more willing they will be to abide by them. Some topics of discussion could include:

- ✧ Introductions -- Everyone should know everyone else's name in the cabin.
- ✧ Personal Belongings -- How should they be arranged in the cabin? What if students want to borrow items from each other?
- ✧ Group Behavior -- What is a responsible time to turn the lights out at night? What time should we stop talking? What if someone wants to go to sleep early or stay asleep as long as possible in the morning? Establish a Sleepers' Rights Policy.
- ✧ Responsibilities -- How will the group take care of cabin cleaning each day? Since there are only two showers in each cabin, what kind of fair shower schedule can we arrange?

Some cabin policies at Chapel Rock that should be abided by all:

- ✧ Students should not go into any cabins other than their own.
- ✧ No food, candy, or gum in the cabins. They attract animals and produce litter.
- ✧ No radios, electronic games, or similar devices. Part of the Aspen Creek experience is to spend time with classmates and teachers instead of your iPod or video game.
- ✧ Please be conscious of conservation. Turn lights off, keep doors closed (and the heat down), turn the water off when brushing teeth or hands, and keep shower time to a minimum.
- ✧ Please leave natural items that you found where you find them!
- ✧ It is mandatory that every cabin be supervised by an adult throughout the night.

At various times during the day, it will be necessary for the teachers and chaperones to supervise in the cabins: between classes; before and after each meal; and at recreation time. The safety and well-being of the students at these times is your responsibility. Chaperones should also make sure that students get to and from their cabins and other activities safely. In the morning, we ask that students not wander beyond the cabin area before breakfast.

Quiet Times

Evening programs end around 8:30 pm. At this time, students and chaperones are to go back to their cabins and get ready for bed. There are enforced Quiet Hours for Chapel Rock Camp and Conference Center from 10:00 pm until 7:00 am. Quiet time in the cabin gets at 10:30pm and lights out by 11:30pm. Keep in mind that these times are extremes and we strongly suggest that you set earlier times with your students.

Recreation Time

You are responsible for the students during recreation time. Chapel Rock has gaga ball, frisbees, basketballs, kickballs and volleyballs available during recreation time. You also might want to think about recreation time activities in case of rain.

School groups are not allowed to use Aspen Creek's Challenge Course during recreation time.

Students should not be on the Challenge Course unless they are accompanied by an Aspen Creek Instructor.

Key Points For Teachers and Chaperones:

- ✗ Aspen Creek is an outdoor recreation and educational center
- ✗ Aspen Creek sessions are based on national and state science standards
- ✗ It is the school's responsibility to download and print student journals prior to the event
- ✗ The top priority at Aspen Creek is participant safety
- ✗ Participants are under constant supervision
- ✗ The school (and not camp) is responsible for the administration of medication to students
- ✗ With advanced notice, most special dietary needs can be accommodated in our dining hall
- ✗ Each student must have a signed Participant Information and Permission Form if you have selected the Challenge Course and/or Climbing Wall activity.

On the following pages are samples of letters that can be given to the students and sent home to the parents. Feel free to make use of them, modify them by adding your own information, or use them in any other way that will help your students and their families prepare for the trip.

Sample Letter to Students

Dear Student,

In just a few weeks, you will be attending the Aspen Creek Outdoor School – Chapel Rock Camp and Conference Center’s Outdoor Science Program in Prescott, AZ. By now, you have probably heard a great deal about our program and the camp, but here are some things that you should understand before you come.

During your stay with us, you, your classmates, your teachers and chaperones, and the Aspen Creek staff will be a community -- a group of people living and working together. Your biggest responsibility during your stay will be cooperation with others -- doing things to help your group and not just yourself.

You will be living in a cabin with as many as eleven other people in the same room, including an adult. Your Cabin Group will need to discuss what will be the best way to keep everyone happy. The Cabin Group will need to set up some rules: What time should we turn out the lights at night so that everyone gets enough sleep to be able to fully participate in the next day's activities? When will people take showers? Where will we put dirty clothes or wet, sandy shoes? How will we clean up our cabin in the morning?

During the mornings and afternoons, you will be part of another group – your Activity Group -- with other students, chaperones, and an Aspen Creek Instructor. In your Activity Group you will explore the natural world, learn more about how to enjoy your time in the out-of-doors, and gain skills in the areas of communication, cooperation, and leadership.

The other very important members of our Aspen Creek community are the plants and animals that you'll see from the creek bed to the forest! Remember, they live and grow here all year round and we are going to be joining their habitats, so let's treat them with respect.

This is not just a vacation; you will be learning every moment that you are here. Be assured, though, that all of our activities are designed to be fun and adventurous as well as educational. The Aspen Creek staff is really looking forward to having you and your classmates visit our program. We can't wait to meet you.

Sincerely,

The Aspen Creek Outdoor School Staff

Letter to Parents

Dear Parents,

The attached sheets provide information about your child's school trip to the Aspen Creek Outdoor School Program at the Chapel Rock Camp and Conference Center in Prescott.

Dates: _____

Cost: _____

Checks should be made payable to: _____

Please have Participant Information and Permission Form and money in to school by:

We would like to call your attention to the following important items:

- ⊗ If there are activities that you would prefer that your child not participate in, please send us a note. We will see that he/she is excused from the activity and is supervised in some other activity.
- ⊗ If your child is taking medication, please notify his/her teacher and provide them with the medicine in its original container with instructions to dispense. Your school personnel, not the Aspen Creek staff, will be dispensing medications while your student is here at the program.
- ⊗ If your child has special dietary allergies, needs vegetarian meals or has religious restrictions, please provide us with written instructions.
- ⊗ Students will not be allowed to leave the designated center area without permission and supervision.
- ⊗ Any student not complying with the regulations and expectations of those in charge of supervision will not be permitted to continue participating in the program. Parents or guardians are responsible for picking up their children in the case of discipline problems or medical problems requiring the child to be returned home.

The Aspen Creek Outdoor School offers a residential school program in an outdoor, Arizona Central Highlands environment. Your child will be visiting the center with classmates and teachers and participating in a variety of outdoor classes dealing with topics such as natural cycles, energy flow, soil, water, and weather, and teamwork skills. In addition, Aspen Creek offers a social learning experience in which your child will be living and working in a close community atmosphere.

Although the center is located in a camp setting (using the site of the Chapel Rock Camp and Conference Center), it is important to note that this is not primarily a camping program. The emphasis at Aspen Creek is on education, not recreation. Your child's class is participating in the program as a valuable extension of its classroom work. All major subject areas will be dealt

with, including science, social studies, math and language arts. A full-time college-educated trained teaching staff will be instructing the students in a discovery and activity-oriented curriculum.

During your child's stay, supervision will be provided 24 hours a day. The cabins (with central heat and air) provide housing for students and adults -- teachers and/or other chaperones.

It is required that you complete and return to school the Participant Information and Permission Form if your child will be taking part in the Challenge Course and/or Climbing Wall activities.

Please understand that your child's participation in the Aspen Creek Program and its associated games, activities and events will expose your child to certain risks common to being in the out-of-doors. Most events are held in outdoor areas where your child will be walking in wooded terrain on uneven surfaces. They may be exposed to insect bites and hot/humid or cold/windy weather. The Aspen Creek Program has taken the utmost precautions to provide a safe program (including indoor classrooms in case of thunderstorms), proper equipment and qualified instructors for your child.

A carefully planned, well-balanced menu will be provided by an experienced food service staff. Any special dietary needs (diabetes, religious restrictions, food allergies, etc.) can be accommodated with advance notice.

It is important that your child come to Aspen Creek with the proper clothes and equipment. To help you pack, an equipment list will be provided. You are urged to follow the suggestions on the list closely for the benefit and comfort of your child. Remember that too much gear will be a burden, but too little gear can create hardships.

Keep in mind that old clothes are by far preferred over new clothes since most activities will be held outside. Some kind of rain gear is absolutely essential for every child. Please do not ignore the list of "do not bring" items. Children will have no opportunity while at Aspen Creek to spend money. They can only lose it.

We ask that parents not visit the center while their child is participating. This is an opportunity for him or her to learn to function away from the home environment; plus we are not equipped to provide for visitors. Children are not permitted to use the telephone under normal circumstances; please refrain from calling your child except in the event of an emergency. The number is (877) 445-3499 (toll free).

Aspen Creek reserves the right to send any child home for illness, destruction of property, aggressive behavior or any other acts judged detrimental to functioning of the program.

Please feel free to contact Aspen Creek or your child's school to obtain any more information about the program.

Preparing for the Trip

- ☼ Students should be at the school on _____ by _____ with one medium size suitcase or duffel bag, and a sleeping bag or bed roll. Please label all suitcases/duffel bags.
- ☼ Please pack only the things on the list or that have been assigned. Other items must be cleared through the teacher.
- ☼ Label all your child's belongings that are packed for the trip. A laundry marker can be used on clothes.
- ☼ Students will not need money while participating in Aspen Creek program.
- ☼ Please pack a plastic bag for packing wet and/or dirty clothing on the return trip.
- ☼ **Please check appropriateness of what your child has packed.** Remember that layers of clothing are warmer and can be removed if needed. Pack for all kinds of weather...warm, cold, or wet. Be sure your child has selected clothes that are designed to get dirty.
- ☼ Students are responsible for making sure they have packed all their belongings for their return trip home. Although we have a designated "Lost and Found" area, Aspen Creek cannot be held responsible for articles left behind.
- ☼ **Bring sun block and a hat during warmer months**
- ☼ **Students should bring a refillable water bottle to the program to prevent dehydration.**

The following items are recommended for the residential program:

Clothing

Jeans or slacks
T-shirts, shirts or blouses
Sweat shirts or sweaters
Jacket
Underclothes
2 pairs of shoes (flat, close-toed walking shoes or sneakers)
Pajamas
Shorts
Socks
A raincoat
Plastic bag for damp clothes

Linens

Twin bed sheets and blanket or a sleeping bag
Towels and washcloth
Pillow case and Pillow

Wash Kit

Toothbrush
Toothpaste
Brush and comb
Deodorant
Soap
Shampoo
(other needed personal items)

You May Bring: Camera and film, pen, pencil and notebook, good book for reading

Please Do NOT Bring: Radio, tape player, iPod, video game, cell phone, expensive jewelry, knives, food, gum