

\_\_\_\_\_

**Name**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cabin**

WALKER CREEK RANCH

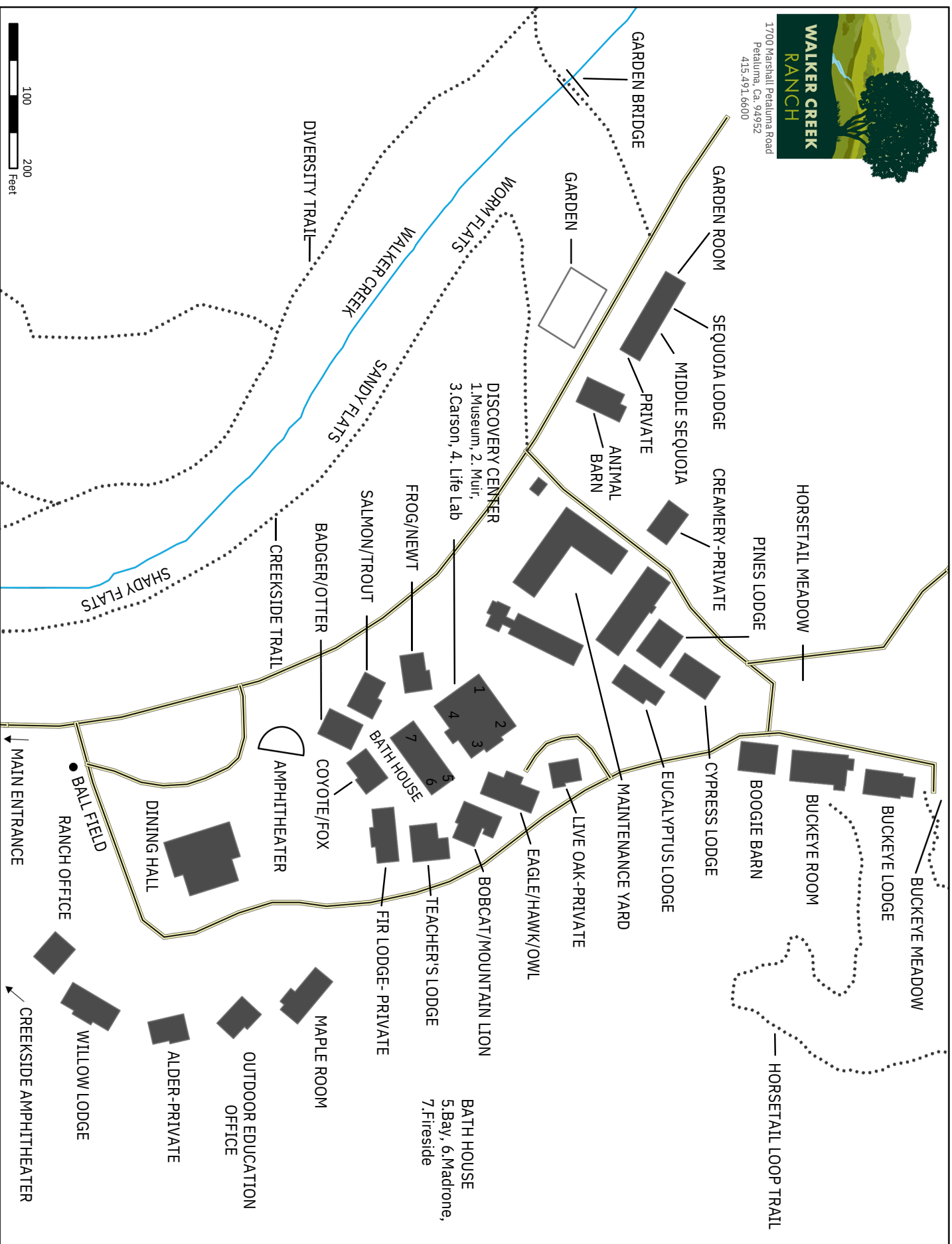
# CABIN LEADER POCKET GUIDE

.....





1700 Marshall Petaluma Road  
Petaluma, Ca. 94952  
415.491.6600





# TABLE OF CONTENT

WELCOME TO THE RANCH	1
RESPONSIBILITIES	2
GUIDELINES AND RULES	3
SHOWERS	5
POSITIVE DISCIPLINE	6
BREAKS	8
TICKS & POISON OAK	9
TIPS AND TRICKS	11
HOW TO BE A TEAMPLAYER	12
CABIN CONSTITUTION	13
DAILY CHECKLIST FOR SKITS	14





# WELCOME!

## THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING TO BE A CABIN LEADER

Our Outdoor School staff are dedicated to providing a hands-on science curriculum to fifth and sixth grade students that will “bring to life” what they are learning in the classroom. We are committed to delivering a well-rounded educational experience that will have a profound impact on the students’ view of the natural world and their place in it. As a Cabin Leader, you play a vital role in this process.

Being a Cabin Leader is a serious responsibility, and you will be expected to take on this responsibility with vigor. You are with your cabin group 22 hours per day, throughout which time, you are a role model. While students may idolize you or see you as a "buddy", it is important to balance this attention with your role as a responsible adult and authority figure. Leadership qualities such as assertiveness and confidence – coupled with developing skills as a positive disciplinarian and active listener – will be needed throughout the week. Daily meetings with the Cabin Leader Coordinator will be held to assist you in this learning experience.

By the end of the program, you will probably be a hero in the eyes of some of your students. Many of your students will remember you for the rest of their lives. Through this experience, you will have the opportunity to learn a great deal about yourself, and to develop new leadership skills that you use throughout your life.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

This handbook is designed to help you prepare for your Cabin Leader experience, outline your responsibilities, and acquaint you with the procedures of the Outdoor School. Please take the time to read through this handbook and use it as a reference during your stay.

# RESPONSIBILITIES

FIRST AND FOREMOST,  
STUDENT SAFETY!

## SAFETY

The safety of the students and you are the top priority this week, this includes the physical, mental, and emotional safety.

- Privacy- Students should not change in front of one another. They can change in the bathroom, behind the privacy screens, or in their sleeping bag.
- Bullying- Bullying will not be tolerated and should be reported to Naturalists or Classroom Teachers.
- Buddy System-When the students are solely under your supervision (during cabin time), you need, to be with them and/or know, their whereabouts at all times. If a student needs to go somewhere, they should ask you and bring a buddy

## ON TIME AND PREPARED

You are a part of a team with your Naturalist and one of your big roles is to ensure that students are on time and prepared for their next activity. At the beginning of each of the Naturalists Activities you should meet with your whole cabin in your meeting room. Students should have gone to the bathroom, filled up their water bottle, applied sunscreen, be wearing closed toed shoes, and have the proper layers for the weather.

## POSITIVE ROLE MODEL

We know that the role of Cabin Leader is a lot of hard work, but you have been chosen to be a positive role model to the students. This means following the rules, engaging in activities, and showing empathy as you support the students' experience here at Walker Creek Ranch.

# GUIDELINES & RULES

**BE SAFE, BE RESPONSIBLE, BE  
RESPECTFUL**

## **SCHOOL RULES APPLY**

Walker Creek Ranch is a school and all school rules apply.

## **CABIN RULES FOR STUDENTS**

- Stay with your cabin group. If your Naturalist, Cabin Leader, or Teacher authorizes you to leave the cabin group (to go to the health center, for example), use the buddy system.
- Be in bed and quiet by “lights out” time at 9:30 PM and remain in bed (except for emergencies) until 7:00 AM.
- No entering cabins that are not yours.
- No pillow fights, wrestling or roughhousing in the cabins. No sports equipment in the cabins.
- No frightening or scary stories.
- Food can only be kept in the Teacher’s lodge or Cabin Leader Kitchen
- No medications are allowed in the cabins, except EpiPens and inhalers.

## **CELLPHONES**

One of the major goals of the program is to have students disconnect from technology; by also disconnecting from technology, you are supporting this goal.

- The students should never see you on your phone or electronic device. This includes AirPods/earbuds.
- Please only use your phone during your free time away from the students. This includes texting!
- NEVER allow students to use your phone.

# SHOWERS

## SETTING UP YOUR CABIN FOR SUCCESS



Shower times will be indicated on your weekly schedule. Students get an opportunity to shower on every full day of program.

### THINGS TO HELP IT GO SMOOTHLY

<b>PREPARATION</b>	Have students prepared with their towel, soap, and change of clothes in the meeting rooms outside of the bathrooms prior your shower time. It is also important to talk to your cabin about timing and stucture of shower time.
<b>PRIVACY</b>	Students should shower with their bathing suits on to ensure privacy.
<b>TIMING</b>	You will have 15 minutes for your whole group to get through showers. It is your responsibility to help manage timing and supporting students with reminders.
<b>SUPERVISION</b>	Supervision is important in this space. You should stand in the area by the sinks to help support your students manage timing.
<b>POST-SHOWER</b>	When students are done with their shower, they can wait in the meeting rooms attached to the bathhouse until the rest of the group is done. You can then all head back to the cabin.

\*\*\*Cabin Leaders should shower during their break times



# POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

Approach your students with understanding and compassion. Your goal should be to guide and teach the students in your cabin. Remember mistakes are learning opportunities if we take advantage of communicating about them.

## 5 CHECK SYSTEM

<b>FIRST CHECK (REMINDER)</b>	Opportunity to remind student of the expectations presented during the opening ceremony. It is important to make sure the student understands why the expectation exists and why it should be followed. This is a great opportunity to answer any questions the student might have about the expectations.
<b>SECOND CHECK (WARNING)</b>	Serves as a second reminder of the expectations. Great opportunity to discuss impacts of behavior and provide student with a brief reflection time (5-10 minutes) if needed.
<b>THIRD CHECK (CONTRACT)</b>	At a third check, the student will be asked to meet with their classroom teacher and fill out a behavior contract. A third check may also result in the student missing part of or an entire activity block.
<b>FOURTH CHECK (CALL HOME)</b>	At a fourth check, students will call the student's guardian(s) to discuss behaviors, and positive steps to ensure the student can successfully participate the remainder of the week.
<b>FIFTH CHECK (GO HOME)</b>	If a fifth check is given, the guardian(s) will be asked to pick up their student.

- Cabin Leaders can give both first and second checks. It is important to tell your Naturalist or a Classroom Teacher if you give one of these out so it can be recorded.
- Students can have the opportunity to go through the Restorative Process with their Naturalist, Manager of Outdoor Ed, or their Classroom Teacher to have checks 1-2 removed. This can be done once.
- Some behaviors can result in more than one check given depending on severity.

# POSITIVE DISCIPLINE TOOLS

- **Respond, don't react:** Take a moment to figure out what is needed.
- **Come in with questions:** "I see you have a rock in your hand. What's your plan?" or "What do you need to do to be ready to go?" or "How do you think that makes her feel?"
- **Group jobs:** Group jobs or daily chores help with a sense of belonging.
- **Ask:** Ask the group questions related to the behavior you would like to see change. For example, "How many of you think the table is moving too much for you to be able to draw?"
- **Do Nothing:** Let some things go, and watch to see if the problem resolves itself.
- **Set time to check in with someone:** Sit down and have a conversation with someone.
- **Tone-setting:** Make a plan with your students before you come to a sensitive or exciting area. Two examples: Before reaching the turnip bed, stop and say, "We're going to pick some turnips; when we get there please wait so I can show you how to do it, and then we will each pick one turnip." Or, before approaching the animal barn, stop and ask, "How do you think we could act so the animals don't get scared?"
- **Say yes as often as you can:** Honor a student's ideas and try to meet the need in a way that also respects the situation. For example, "Yes, we can feed some worms to the chickens. I bet they would love that. But let's leave these worms in the worm bin to do their job, and instead let's dig up some worms from the ground. Where do you think we'll find the most?"
- **Say "no" with dignity and respect:** Sometimes "no" is what is needed, and you don't have to explain at length why; just say "no" kindly and firmly and stick with it.
- 

ASK FOR SUPPORT IF YOU NEED IT! WE  
ARE HERE TO HELP YOU

# BREAKS

We know that the role as Cabin Leader can be a tough job. There are several times throughout the week where you will have breaks. These breaks are for you to shower, rest, use your phone, or hang out with other Cabin Leaders.

## BREAK TIMES

Day 1 —→ Post Dinner-7pm

Day 2 or 3 —→ 12:45-1:15pm, & Post Dinner-7pm

\*If your group is on the All-Day Adventure, you will not get the afternoon break.

- For evening breaks, you should be at your cabin at 7pm to receive your students.
- For afternoon breaks, you should pick them up from the ballfield.

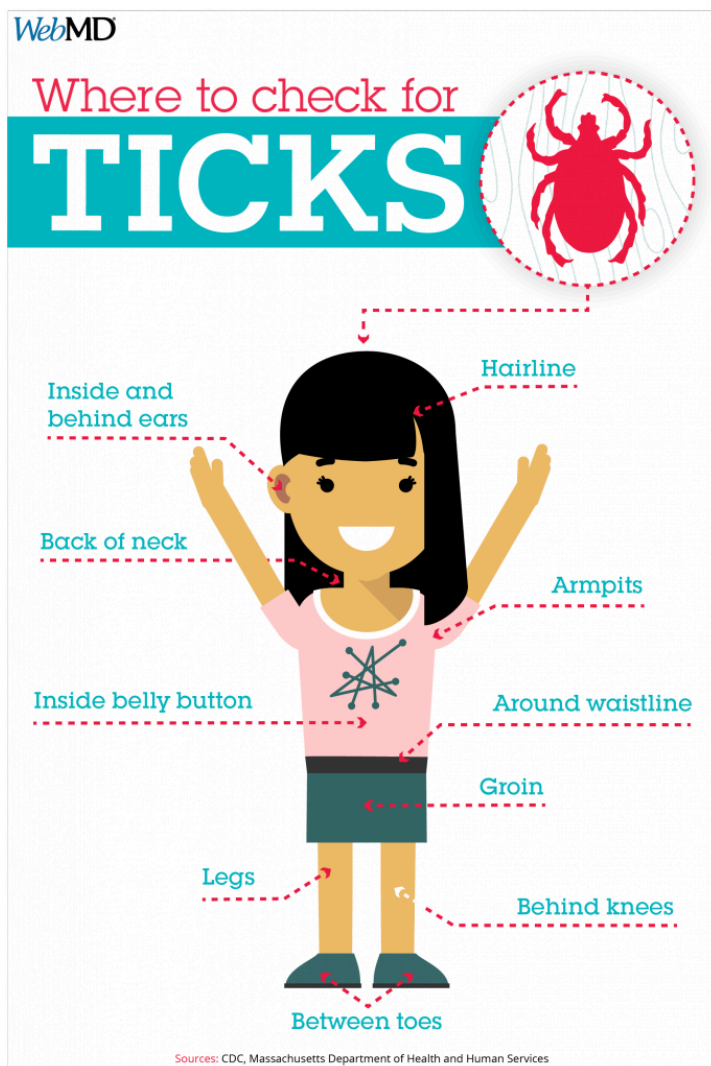
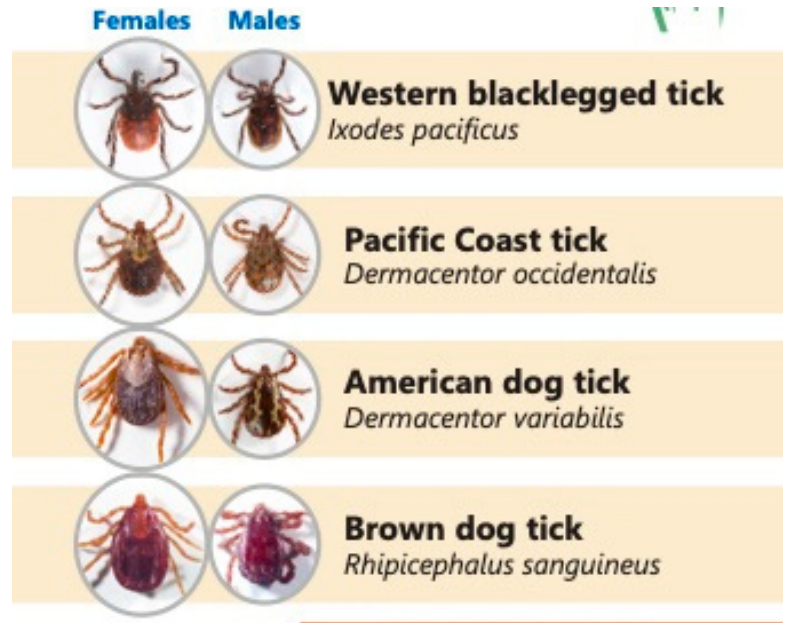
## GUIDELINES FOR BREAKS

1. You may spend time in the main part of the Ranch, including the dining hall patio, Cabin Leader Kitchen, ball field, or your cabin.
2. You should only go into your own cabin.
3. You may not go on any trails, to the creek, or the pond. There isn't service at the Ranch, and it is important we are able to connect with you in case of an emergency.

# TICKS

## Preventative measures:

- Stay on trail
- Wear long pants
- Do tick checks after coming back from trail

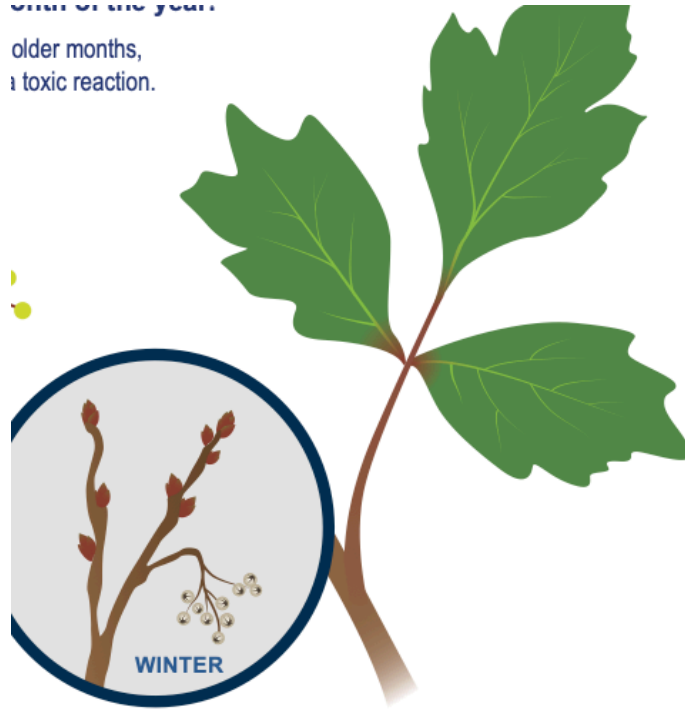


Make sure you have students do tick checks on themselves daily! A great time to do this is in the shower or when changing after an activity.

# POISON OAK

Summer of the year.

older months,  
a toxic reaction.



## Poison Oak

- Three leaflets connected to a single stem
- Leaves resemble oak tree leaves
- Grows as a vine or shrub
- In winter months, poison oak will lose its leaves and have fuzzy, reddish-brown sticks with alternating stubs
- Found on the West Coast and in Southeastern states

Important notes:

- Poison Oak spreads via the oils that exist on both the leaves and woody parts of the shrub. This means if it gets on your clothes it can continue to transfer to other parts of your body and belongings.

If a student touches poison oak, or you think they may have:

- Wash the part of the body with cold water and soap as soon as possible
- Change clothing so that the oils do not continue to spread

# TIPS AND TRICKS

## GOING TO BED

The Cabin Leader has half an hour to get the students into the bathroom, teeth brushed, dressed for bed, and read a story or play a quiet game. The lights go out by 9:30 p.m. and the cabin should be silent.

Getting the students into bed is a challenge. The teachers will be patrolling the cabin area after lights are out. If you are having a difficult time, ask the teacher to help you out by talking to your students.

- Give students time checks throughout the getting for bed process
- Go to the bathhouse with the group and brush your teeth with them to role model positive behavior.
- Have students reflect on their day by having them share a Rose (highlight from the day), Thorn (a challenge from the day), and Bud (something they are looking forward to).
- Read the students a bedtime story with the lights off to help them fall asleep.

## HOMESICKNESS

This may be a student's first time away from home, especially for an extended period of time. It is normal to experience homesickness.

Phase 1: Prevention

- The first 24 hours are important! Prevent homesickness from starting by setting an inclusive, fun and active tone early on.

Phase 2: Detect and Deflect

- Spotting Homesickness is usually easy, but it can look a lot of different ways for each individual. Help the student refocus on the current experience, instead of thoughts of home.

Phase 3: Long Term Solutions

- Keep encouraging! Remind the student of how strong and brave they have been so far during the week. Keep talking! It may take a lot of patience and time, but conversations will help build the support system between you and the student. Students can write letters home, but they cannot call home.

If you need additional support, let your Naturalist or Classroom Teacher know! They both have additional experiences to pull from.

# HOW TO BE A TEAMPLAYER



## SUPPORTING YOUR NATURALIST

Supporting your Naturalist is a big part of your role here at WCR!

When you are on trail and in the classroom remember to:

- Stay engaged! Get involved in the learning.
- Spread yourselves out during hikes and lessons.
- Correct and redirect behavior from students when it is needed knowing that ultimately the Naturalists set the tone and are in charge.

Stay connected and in communication with your Naturalists:

- Remember you are a team, let them know how things are going during check-ins
- Ask questions about how you can support
- Communicate when you give checks to students

-



# DAILY CHECKLIST FOR SKITS

PLEASE SPENT 15-20 MINUTES OF CABIN TIME  
ON SKIT PRACTICE EACH DAY!

## MONDAY: READ-THROUGH

- Let students know that you'll be working on skits each day this week and share the timeline
- Read through your skit 2-3 times (allow students to do a reading too)
- Read again as a pre-bedtime story

## TUESDAY: CHARACTERS, PLOT, & PRACTICE!

- Identify all characters that will be part of the skit
- Feel free to add characters or change existing characters
- Not every role needs to be a talking role
- Bring your skit to life!
- Think about movements and where people will be on stage
- Make sure everyone is always facing the audience and practices using loud voices
- See that students with talking parts know their lines
- Make sure that all language and acting is school appropriate

## WEDNESDAY NIGHT: PERFORM & HAVE FUN

### Remember

- Skits should be school appropriate
- If you need support coming up with one, ask your Naturalist for help!

