

Snake Education With A Twist, Inc.

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www.snakeeducation.com



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A.C.F. PARENT MANUAL

Snake Education With A Twist, Inc. would like to invite your child to participate in the A.C.F. (Adventure Camping Fun) program. It's an adventure program for grades 6th (10/11 year olds) to 12th (17/18 years old) grade boys. A Program where young boys/teens can come together and learn about the wilderness and all it has to offer. Safe, exciting and adventurous. Created by Todd "Chief" Rowley President of Snake Education With A Twist, Inc. January 1998.

MISSION:

Our Mission of the A.C.F. Club is to allow boys to learn about nature and how to co-exist with what the wilderness has to offer. In this club the Adventure Campers will learn self-respect, responsibility and much more that will help them to prosper and achieve their individual potential.

GOAL:

The goal of this Club is to give them a chance to experience the outdoors in such a way that they will continue to enjoy and look forward to such adventures. A Club that is safe, supervised, adventurous and values based.

CAMPING TRIP:

Over night camping trips throughout Central Florida including Ocala National Forest at times are done more often than Out of State Trips. These trips are from 1 night to 2 nights during the weekends. Holidays are also great opportunities for trips. Out of State trips to TN, GA, AL, SC and more are possible too for those campers that have shown enough responsibility in the ACF program.

CAMP GROUNDS:

This popular spots usually have picnic tables, trash containers and restroom facilities. *These are camping spots that we will NOT be camping in.* Our spots will be the Primitive Sites. Areas that nature reigns supreme. Where nature has control. These areas have greater risks and challenges: fallen trees, wild animals, and further away from any help. We like to camp where we are not disturbed by other campers. During out of state trip we are more likely to camp and designated campgrounds.

CAMPING GEAR:

All campers will need the following: flashlight, long pants, shorts, sleeping bag/blanket & sheets, rain gear, hiking/play shoes, underwear, socks, towel, toiletries (comb, tooth brush, tooth paste, soap, deodorant), hat, bandanna, pocket knife (must go through training before allowed), insect spray, sun block, extra batteries.... (please refer to Gear list for detailed information)

CANOEING:

Canoes will be required on trips that the only access to the camp spot is over water. All gear will be packed for water transport and in the canoes and taken over the water to the desired camping spot. Life vests are worn.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS:

It's simple, this program is a privilege and camping in the wilderness is too. If you can't follow the rules and values of this program then you will be asked to leave. This program will not tolerate any person to jeopardize the safety and value of the program. Each camper is responsible for their own actions and will face the consequences of their actions. Misbehavior in the program affects the program and campers. Consequences may include the following:

Suspension From Program: Suspension can be any where from missing a Day Trip to missing a camp out. If you break the rules of the program suspension from the program lets you the camper know that this type of behavior will not be allowed. Such behaviors *might* be:

- Bullying or Intimidation
- fighting
- Serious disrespect to staff or campers
- lack of respect for rules of club
- using your pocket knife in an unsafe manner.
- constant disruptions
- leaving the tent after lights out without letting counselor know.
- walking away from group on trips/camp outs.
- lying, stealing,...
- bringing inappropriate material to the program.

CONFERENCE: This basically means that you have received a suspension or heading toward one. Most of the time, conferences are set up to PREVENT suspension or termination from the program. Parents are directly involved in this process.

Terminated From ACF Program: Terminated means that you are no longer allowed to return to the Adventure Camping Fun Club. A serious action on your part must take place for you to be terminated. Such behaviors:

- Continued bullying, fighting or intimidation
- Doesn't show up to meetings/training's or just stops coming
- Shows no improvement in behavior after suspension/conference
- Stealing from campers or program.
- Threatening to harm another person whether or not with pocket knife or other possible weapons
- A constant lack of respect for program rules & values
- Having on your possession any drug, tobacco or alcohol
- Deliberately harming animals/wildlife

Parents Please Remember that just because you think your child is ready to camp overnight the staff may feel differently. Your child may camp when both you and Snake Education With A Twist, Inc. believe your child is ready for the next step, over-night camping.

DRESS CODE:

When camping over night, you will be advised of the weather conditions and possible clothes to bring. Other such standards are:

- Shoes to be worn at all times unless otherwise instructed by staff.
- Pants/shorts to be worn properly around the waist, NO Exceptions.
- No inappropriate sayings/logos on clothing, depiction's of any Alcohol, Tobacco, Drugs or Sex are allowed on clothing.
- Hats/Caps/head gear to be taken off while inside any building.

Also, please do not bring any **inappropriate** reading material on camping trips. If in doubt keep it out!

EXPECTATIONS:

All members are expected to behave (show appropriate behaviors) while in the A.C.F. Program. To help you remember, here are some major points:

On Van/truck: remain seated, no climbing over seats, no eating/drinking, keep feet on the floor, seat belts worn and hands off the radio.

Thumbs-Up means you are buckled up and we're ready to move (you actually stick your thumb up so that the driver can see it in the rear view mirror).

In public: while on outings or trips, show manners and follow the Family Values that we should all have.

When camping: stay as a group and listen to your staff. Have fun!

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS:

Each trip is different and will require a different cost. You will be informed of all trip prices prior to the trip. Out of state trips will cost more. Keep in mind you can work out a payment plan directly with us – just ask!

Payment procedures:

Payments must be made no later than the DAY OF the day trip/camping trip. Two weeks prior for out of state trips. Payments may be in the form of: Cash or check

If camper is ill the day of camp-out then we can work something out. A line of credit toward the next camp out may be possible. Out of State trips are done the same.

Additional Cost:

Additional cost outside of the camp outs may include: gas money for day trips, and trips in general (food/drink/admission, etc...).

FIRST AID:

A first Aid box will be taken on all camping trips. A Fanny Pack will be worn by at least one member of the group while on hikes away from the main camp.

HIKES:

During camping trips we will enjoy hikes of at least 30 minutes long and up to a couple of hours. No one will be pushed beyond their own limits.

ITEMS NOT PERMITTED ON CAMP OUTS:

There are a few items that are important enough to be written down. Most things are common sense but let us make sure:

- Lighters/matches
- Inappropriate reading/listening material
- Balloons/shaving cream
- Knife where blade is longer than your hand (permission from Chief first)
- Laser pens or anything similar
- Medication that has not been pre approved by A.C.F. Staff
- BB guns/pellet guns/cap guns/firecrackers
- Excessive junk food (candy, chips, sodas, etc...)

MEALS:

Meals will be that of: breakfast, lunch and dinner. All meals will be eaten together with a prayer before each. Campers may be required to pay (\$8 to \$10) for their own dinner/lunch on the first day of the trip. You will be informed of this prior to the trip. This meal is usually on the road heading toward our destination.

MIDNIGHT HIKES:

These hikes are just like any other hikes but done at night, usually midnight. The reason for these hikes are to give the campers a different perspective of the wilderness around them at night. Different wildlife come out at night and who knows what that large dark figure is about 20 feet in front of you!!!

OCALA NATIONAL FOREST:

One of our camping locations are in Ocala National Forest which consists of more than 430,000 scenic acres in central Florida. Established in 1908, it is the southernmost national forest in the continental United States. Ocala has 23 streams, 600 lakes and about 20 boat ramps.

POCKET KNIFE:

The cool thing about this Program is that you get to carry a pocket knife with you while on camping trips. But, first you must show the A.C.F. counselor and parent(s) that you are ready to carry a knife. Proper knife handling will be taught prior to any camper bring a knife on a camping trip. The knife blade is to be no longer than the width of the campers palm.

POW-WOWS:

This is a term used to close out the day. Each night before going to bed a pow-wow will be done. This involves a fire, a devotion and individual reflection of the day to the group. It is a time to put closure to any and all events of the day. It is a time of maturity, respect and acceptance. Day Trips may also have pow-wows.

RESTROOMS/SHOWERS:

Where we will be camping there are NO restroom facilities. Restrooms will be the nearest tree or designated area. The proper disposal of human waste is most important. Experienced campers/hikers will use a cat hole latrine..

Shower houses are not where we will be camping. To ensure a clean body, campers will use baby wipes to wipe down there body. This is a safe and quick way to getting clean when the nearest water hole is too cold to use. OR just jump in a lake/stream/spring.

STAFF RATIO:

The staff ratio to campers is 1 to 6. One counselor for every five to six campers. There will always be at least two counselors on every over night camping trip. **90% of all staff are former ACF Campers themselves.**

SWIMMING AREA:

Swimming area will be that of lakes, ponds, springs or/and streams. While swimming, the camper will be directly supervised at all times.

Campers will be required to wear a PFD at all times when in water that is deeper than chest deep. Campers that are not strong swimmers and wish to swim will be required to wear a PFD (Personal Flotation Device) at all times while in or near the water.

TRANSPORTATION:

A passenger van will be the means of transportation and at times a truck to and from all camping trips and outings. While in the vehicle, rules are that everyone wears a seatbelt, remain seated while the vehicle is moving. The driver will be in control of the radio.....and pee breaks!

TRIPS:

While in this program your son may have the opportunity to go on other trips that are directly or indirectly related to A.C.F.. These trips may involve additional cost to you for admission, gas, etc... Such events: fairs, Reptile Expos, Reptile shows, Reptile Centers, etc...

WEATHER CONDITIONS:

If the weather conditions become severe enough, campers will retreat to the van/truck for safety. The driver then may leave the immediate area until severe weather passes. A weather radio will be taken on all over night camping trips regardless of location.

WILDLIFE:

Dawn and dusk are the best times for wildlife observation. However, all times are good for enjoying the beauty of Ocala.

Florida has four species of poisonous snakes and there is a good chance snakes will be seen on camping trips. Caution is used when adventuring out into the wilderness.

Along with snakes, Ocala is also home to numerous other wildlife: Florida panthers, *black bears*, *deer*, *skunks*, *raccoons*, *foxes*, *bats*, shrews, *armadillos*, *rabbits*, bores, minks, badgers, lynx, *alligators* and many other species. It is with great care that we must not disturb their natural habit to ensure their existence.

YOU THE CAMPER:

Living in Florida being surrounded by trees, woods and forests does not mean that you get the opportunity to observe them first hand. There are many young boys that have not had the thrill of camping in the wilderness.

When camping in the wilderness, your eyes and mind are open to a whole new world. A world where humans are the visitor and wildlife is supreme.

You the camper will learn all about nature and what it has to offer to you. You will learn how this knowledge will help you in your ever day life. Growing up can be really hard sometimes but with the right help it can be a wonderful experience.

The staff are excited and eager to take your son on these trips into the wilderness. Only by asking questions will you learn. By knowledge you acquire power. It is this knowledge that will help you achieve your potential. Those that do not have the proper guidance will usually follow a path less desired. A path of despair and maybe self-destruction.

Our Program will help your son find answers to their questions; help him maintain a high/positive self-esteem and respect their self. He will learn the importance of wildlife and how he can help preserve what is already here. This program will help him learn that the world is a wonderful place and it is what you make it.

By becoming a member of our program your son will learn, if not already, that he is a unique individual that has a lot to offer. He will learn that in order to achieve his goals he must believe in himself and demonstrate values.

CHILDREN LEARN WHAT THEY LIVE:

If a child lives with criticism, he learns to condemn.

If a child lives with hostility, he learns to fight.

If a child lives with ridicule, he learns to be shy.

If a child lives with shame, he learns to feel guilty.

If a child lives with tolerance, he learns to be patient.

If a child lives with encouragement, he learns confidence.

If a child lives with praise, he learns to appreciate.

If a child lives with fairness, he learns justice.

If a child lives with security, he learns to have faith.

If a child lives with approval, he learns to like himself.

If a child lives with acceptance and friendship,

HE LEARNS TO FIND LOVE IN THE WORLD.

ADVENTURE CAMPING Values:

Respect

Do not speak when others are speaking. Wait your turn.
Making fun of another camper's feelings/emotions is not nice.
Using profanity in the program is not allowed.
Monitor your own conversations and the words you use.
Please do not go through another person's belongings.
You are not at home, but still need to demonstrate manners with one another and at meal time.

Responsibility

Pick up after yourself and keep the camp area clean.
Keeping your tent neat and clean is your job.
When not using your pocket knife keep it secure in its holder.
Respect the group and not whisper to another during Pow-Wow.
When camping take only pictures and leave only foot prints.
Stay with the group at all times and listen to what is being said.

Passion

Stand up for what you believe in.
Do not always give in so quickly.
Stand by your friends and this program and what it can offer.
Make sure your anger is not really passion that isn't focused and defined.
Think smart and speak clear to get your passionate point across.

Caring/Compassion

Remember we all hurt inside and out, help each other out.
If you accidentally hurt someone, care enough to apologize.
Name calling can really hurt, so don't do it.
Care enough to hold all side conversations during Pow-Wows.

Honesty

Being honest with your feelings can be difficult, but give it a try.
If accused of something that you did. Be honest enough to admit it.
Honesty really is the best policy.
Be honest not to cheat in games and activities.

Faith

Have faith that you can be adventurous and learn while having fun at the same time.
Having faith in a Higher Power will keep you well rounded and value oriented.
Having faith tells you that you can not do everything by yourself in life.

Some of them may think that this is a lot of rules to remember. But most of these rules (call them "Values") they already know. These "values" may seem like many but most of them are everyday living behaviors. You the camper should feel safe and wanted when in this program. By following these values you are giving those feelings to other campers and yourself. You are helping others.

WHY FOR THE BOYS?: -Note we recently increased our minimum grade level to 6th grade.

The reason for grade range (6th - 12th) is because they are at an age where social development and peer interaction is very important. Fear of getting hurt is a sense that keeps them from doing things that might get them injured. At this age they are becoming more independence and testing just how far they can go. At this age taking risks is usually associated with this age group. Let this program allow your youth/teen to take that risk with supervision of Value Oriented Staff (adults). Let this program teach your son new things/ideas and how to have fun.

This program is for the boys not the parents. The reason for this is because we would like your son to learn some independence from the immediate family but still be safe and secure in ours. We would like to teach your son all there is to know about camping and what it has to offer. Then and only then when they have learned enough and been on enough camping trips would we like to invite the parent(s) on a trip. Imagine how proud you and your son will feel when they teach you all they have learned. When your son is the one to take you on a **hike through the wilderness and points out the interesting features – now that is a memory for a lifetime.**

So, we ask that parent(s) do not attend these camping trips until your child has developed enough skills taught by the A.C.F. counselors. Self confidence is a great feeling and a son teaching a parent new skills is a great confidence builder. Wow, what an incredible thought.

WHY places like OCALA NATIONAL FOREST?:

The ACF program camps throughout Central Florida and around Florida. One of those more popular places is Ocala National Forest – which is a great place for primitive camping. Ocala is about 60 minutes away from Orlando, Florida. The forest goes through Marion and Lake County. It is the closest National Forest to Central Florida and has a lot more opportunities to offer a program like ours. The primary area we will be camping in is Farles Lake Quadrangle. *Also, Chief Rowley has been going there for over 18 years and is very familiar with the area and the wildlife.*

So How Do I Join:

Check out our website, talk to your friends and then contact Snake Education With A Twist, Inc. and learn more. You will then fill out an enrollment form, medication form and survey form. After all that is taken care of you will then be contacted Snake Education With A Twist, Inc. **REMEMBER: Space IS limited and you may be put on a waiting list for up coming trips.**

TIPS, TALES & TIDBITS...

1. An emergency blanket provides an excellent vapor barrier between your sleeping bag and tent floor, especially in wet weather.
2. Always wear a cap in the back country. The sun will suck the energy right out of your body through the top of your uncovered head.
3. If your feet get cold, cover your head. A warm cap will comfort your extremities in minutes.
4. Cotton balls smeared with petroleum jelly make great long burning fire starters. You will be amazed how many you can get into a film can.
5. Eating bananas within 24 hours of a camping trip will attract insects more than usual. The chemicals in the banana when passed through your pores attract them.
6. Carrying a glue stick with you can be used in a variety of ways. Using a match to melt the glue to repair, air-type mattresses, cracked water bottles, boots, etc...
7. Use Lithium batteries instead of Alkaline batteries in your flashlight. They weigh less and last longer.
8. Individually wrapped mini sanitary pads are excellent large, absorbent bandages, or pressure pads when trying to manage a serious bleed.
9. If you feel faint, lie down and prop your feet up high on a tree.
10. When smoke from your camp fire hangs low, a storm is moving in. Smoke rising straight up means clear weather.

11. Lots of morning dew or frost on the grass usually means the day will be fair. Little or no dew or frost means the air has been moving and wet weather is on the way.

12. If the temp is expected to drop or freeze while you are sleeping, turn your bottles up side down. Water freezes from the top to the bottom, therefore, the mouth of the bottle won't be clogged with ice in the morning.

13. Ants will build tiny "dikes" or mounds at the entrance to their tunnels before it rains; their activity will cease within one hour of the storm's onset.

14. Rubbing a freshly cut raw potato over a recent insect bite will cut down the irritation of the bite.

Some of these tidbits may surprise you others you might have already known. What other things can make your camping trip more camper friendly?

QUESTIONS MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED:

1. What happens if my son becomes seriously ill or injured?

We will be carrying a mobile phone and two-way radios with us on all camping trips. If a camper is seriously injured we have the means (transportation) to get them to help. Also, a first aid kit will be carried at all times and can properly be used by the A.C.F. counselors. We are not far from the Ranger Station.

2. What if my son becomes homesick?

We hope that your child does not become homesick. In the event he does we will not pack up and return. What we will do is try our best to comfort them and as a last resort allow them to call you. That is why these camping trips are spread out. In between trips we will have weekend training's/Day Trips. We also ask that you be completely honest when filling out the Enrollment Form.

3. At any time will my son be allowed to wander away from the group?

No, wait.....No!! The only time a camper will have some privacy is when using the restroom. We go out into the woods as a group and buddy system when just outside of camp.

4. Does my son need a lot of out door camping gear to join this club?

No, this Club is for any 4th to 12th grade boy interested in camping. All the camper needs is really a sleeping bag, flashlight and a good attitude. Someone will always have a tent to share with another. Campers won't sleep alone.

5. Are you really going to have no restroom facilities?

*Yes, we will have NO restroom facilities. The camping will be that of primitive camping. Prior to returning home we will stop off and get cleaned up, but that shouldn't require much. Out of State trips **will have** facilities.*

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?



Snake Education With A Twist, Inc.

Adventure Camping Fun Program

PO BOX 618618

Orlando, Fl. 32861-8618

(407)445-1812

www.snakeeducation.com

FOR YOUR *Collective* USE:

A.C.F. Program Staff: _____

YMCA Contact Number: 407-445-1812

Start Date: _____

Camper Names: _____ **Numbers:** _____

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