



## **Parents of Bluerock Wilderness Campers,**

So your daughter is now signed up for the Bluerock Wilderness Program this coming summer at Camp. She's excited, nervous and maybe feeling a little unprepared. Maybe she's been coming to camp for years, but this seems like a totally new experience and you want to make sure she's ready and has everything she needs to succeed. Here are some helpful things to think through between now and summer.

### **Is this program right for my child?**

Ultimately, you know your daughter best. Physically, the program will challenge her, but this is more of an "adventure" program than it is a "survival" program. It's meant to push them and get them outside their comfort zone, but it's not boot camp. She should be prepared to walk 6-10 miles per day with a pack on her back, but it's not done at a breakneck pace. Mentally, if she is excited about it and bought in, she'll have the time of her life. We do not, however, recommend that this is a program you sign your child up for without her knowledge or without her being on board. The same aspects of the program (hiking, sleeping in the woods, braving the elements at times) that make the program special and memorable are the same elements that can be particularly difficult for a camper who does not wish to be a part of this program.

### **What gear do we need to bring with us to Camp and what does Camp provide?**

#### Shoes:

Out of everything you bring, shoes may be the most important. There are a number of options and it really comes down to what your child is most comfortable with. Waterproof hiking shoes/boots are the best option and what we recommend. Some campers like hiking in Chacos or tennis shoes, but we discourage those, as they can easily lead to blisters, especially when wet. The most critical thing is that the shoes are broken in. Wearing brand new shoes on a 3-4 day hike is a recipe for pain! And just because Chacos or tennis shoes may be a normal part of her summer wardrobe, hiking 8 miles in them can be different. Some campers also choose to bring a pair of Crocs or lightweight shoes to wear at the end of the day, once they arrive at their campsite.

#### Clothing:

For clothing, lightweight is key. Dry-fit shirts are recommended because they help you stay cool, dry quickly, and help wick moisture and sweat away. Quick-drying shorts are also a great idea. We recommend wool or synthetic socks that come up above the ankle, to provide support and protection from poison ivy or thorns. A rain jacket is a necessity. With cool nights, layering is also important, so it's a good idea to pack a hoodie or thin fleece as well. Hats are great and can help with protection from the sun.

#### Backpacks:

For packs, you can use either an internal or external-frame pack with a hip belt. For pack size, 45-55 liters is a good range to shoot for. You'll want something big enough to hold 3-4 days' worth of clothing, food, and sleeping gear. The main thing is choosing a pack that is comfortable for your child. Packs can fit differently and sit higher or lower on the back and it's wise to have your child try a few on before choosing one. If the pack doesn't come with a rain shell cover that fits around it, in case of rain, you'll also want to purchase that separately. Camp has a limited number of internal frame packs that may be borrowed.

#### Sleeping:

For sleeping, all campers should bring a sleeping bag. Sleeping bags should be compressible, mummy-style and small enough to fit inside your pack (along with other supplies). Though it's rare, it's possible with elevation that temperatures could drop into the 40's, so it's important to choose a temperature-appropriate sleeping bag. A small camping pillow is also a necessity. From there, most either choose to bring a tent or hammock to sleep in. If you bring a hammock, you'll want an "under quilt" and a rain fly to go over the hammock and keep you dry. If sleeping on the ground, or in a tent, you may also want to consider a lightweight sleeping pad.



### Water Bottles:

You'll want to bring enough water storage, in water bottles or a hydration pack, to hold 2 liters of water. For water bottles, we recommend Nalgene over Hydro Flask, because of their weight and durability. Camp will provide water filtration.

### Head Lamps:

A flashlight is necessary for all Wilderness campers and we strongly recommend headlamps, because of their size and weight. Make sure to pack extra batteries!

### Other packing needs:

These are the items specific to the Bluerock Wilderness Program. All other packing needs can be found in the camp packing list, found under the "Preparing for Camp" page on our website.

### **What about food?**

The short answer is that we will provide all food, but you may want to consider bringing some snacks for the trail. We will provide breakfast, lunch, and dinner, as well as some hiking snacks, but campers often choose to bring snacky-type foods with them and we have no issue with that. Lightweight, individually packaged foods that cannot melt are best. Some also choose to bring drink packets, like Propel, Gatorade, or Crystal Light because they get tired of drinking water and it can add some electrolytes. We will provide all cooking grills, pots, pans, plates and utensils. If your camper has allergies or dietary restrictions, make sure and share that in the spring when filling out parent pack information.