



# 2023-2024 Parent Handbook

Hello Parents! This handbook has been created as a reference guide for you. It contains vital information and policies about our enrichment programs. Please take time to read the whole handbook so that you can partner with us in creating a safe, rewarding experience for your child.

### Voyager Youth Programs Mission Statement

*Voyager Youth Program seeks to inspire the Youth of Ouray County to achieve healthy lives through prevention education and enrichment activities with a purpose. We work in partnership with schools and communities to create an atmosphere where youth can thrive.*

Welcome to Voyager Youth Program Enrichment Program! Our programs offer your child a fun and safe environment in which to explore, test skills, and build relationships.

Voyager offers three separate programs for younger and older children. The youngest group will consist of children ranging from ages 3-7 and 6 - 11.

During After School Programming, your child will be involved in a craft activity, reading time/homework help, and social emotional learning. During Full Day care, your child will be participating in enrichment activities, a craft, reading time and social-emotional learning. During the summer your child will be participating in various themed weeks in addition to one swim day/week. Programming runs Monday - Thursday. If you have any questions please feel free to reach out to:

**Alex Durham**

Executive Director

[Alex@voyageryouth.org](mailto:Alex@voyageryouth.org)

(970)318-1218

**Madison Gustafson**

Program Manager

[Madison@voyageryouth.org](mailto:Madison@voyageryouth.org)

(940)368-6530

**Our Program Runs:**

**Monday - Thursday**

**After School - 3:00 PM - 5:30 PM**

**Full Days - 8:00 AM - 5:30 PM**

**Voyager will be closed: Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years, and the week of the Fourth of July.**

**For full days please reference our website for information on when we are open.**

## REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT

The State of Colorado requires that we have a completed enrollment packet for every child in the program, updated annually for each child. Please understand that no child can participate until we have updated/completed enrollment. YOU MUST fill out the enrollment forms completely using our online system and have then done **a week** before camp starts. Enrollment paperwork is good for one year after done through active networks, then must be completed again to obtain updated records from families participating. If we do not receive these forms **online before** your child starts, they will not be able to participate.

### **Enrollment Materials Checklist:**

- Enrollment form
- Contact authorization form
- Permission and authorization form
- + Statement of Health Status form
- + Certification of immunization
- + Behavior Contract

90% of participants ARE vaccinated.

**Vaccinations** are required for your child to participate in child care. Remember, you must submit vaccinations YEARLY. If you do not submit your vaccinations through active networks BEFORE your child attends, your child will not be allowed to participate. Parents please note; Voyager does accept unvaccinated children. If you have any questions please contact Madison.

Please note Voyager DOES accept unvaccinated children.

If your child is **unvaccinated** you MUST submit a signed form from a physician OR complete the CDPHE immunization exemption course. Reminder: **ALL** exemptions expire on **June 30th** EVERY year and MUST be up to date BEFORE your child attends. Please submit your record on active networks BEFORE your child attends. Your child will not be accepted if any information is expired or not turned in.

**For those missing immunizations;** please have an immunization plan on your records that you turn into Voyager. If you do not have this, you will be required to have a plan at the time your child begins attending Voyager. If you do not receive this plan your child will not be able to attend until they have this plan.

### **Registration**

You are required to register for our programming in advance. If you bring your child without registration for after school or full days, you will be charged through active networks with the card on file. Please inform us a day in advance if your child will not be attending so we have a proper head count. We use Active Networks for Enrollment and Registration.

## FEES AND PAYMENT POLICIES

**Full Day Enrichment Cost (2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR):** Cost for days for Full day care is \$40/day.

You MUST register your child in advance/pay in advance in order to attend. Payment and enrollments will be processed through our website. A detailed statement of payment will be available through your Active Networks account under “my programming.”

## Program Costs

### **After-School Programs**

\$10/day

### **Full Days: 2022 - 2023 School Year**

\$40/day

### **Starting June 2023 the Fee Structure will be as followed:**

#### **After School Programming:**

All Ages: \$10/DAY

#### **Full Days/Summer Days**

ALL AGES: \$50/day

*Remember, Financial assistance is available if needed. See below for financial opportunities.*

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Please reach out to Madison Gustafson if you are in need of financial assistance.

### REFUND POLICY \*\*\*\*\*

#### **After School Program:**

The After School Program is eligible for a refund. You must inform Madison Gustafson BEFORE 2:30 the day of to get a refund. If you do NOT let Madison know Before 2:30, you will not be eligible for a refund.

After School Program fees will be credited to your Active Network account.

#### **Summer Enrichment:**

To be eligible for a full refund you **MUST** inform Madison **2 Weeks prior to the Cancellation Date!** Any cancellation after the two weeks will **NOT** be eligible for a refund. Refunds will be *considered, not guaranteed* for illness or family emergencies.

Refunds for Summer Enrichment will be returned to the credit card registered on your Active Networks account.

## OUR PROGRAM

### Purpose & Goals:

Voyager Youth Program is an organization devoted to nature-based education and youth development. All of our programs have a primary focus. All of our programs are designed to accomplish three main goals:

1. **Skills:** Develop age-appropriate skills that will inspire confidence and encourage participants to embrace a positive, healthy lifestyle;
2. **Outdoor Adventure:** focus on physically active outdoor pursuits that youth may not be able to access without the help of Voyager Youth Program;
3. **Relationships:** improve a sense of connection and belonging among youth through relationship development with peers and adults in a safe, supportive environment. Voyager staff use positive guidance strategies and are trained in the Pyramid Model.

### The Youth We Serve\*

Voyager Youth Program's enrichment programs are offered to children ages 3 - 11 years old. We split the youth into three groups ages 3-5, 5-7 and 8-11. Program participants will be separated by the three rooms at Voyager and the 3-5 group and the 8-11 group will not commingle.

### Our Staff

Voyager Youth Program strives to hire experienced, highly qualified staff who love to be with kids to conduct all Voyager Youth Program activities. All staff undergo criminal and civil background checks and participate in training that further their skills at group/risk management and program design/delivery, and their knowledge of child development. All program staff are trained in CPR, First Aid, Universal Precautions, Positive Guidance Strategies, Positive Youth Development, and Social Emotional Learning.

## PROGRAM HOURS

### **After-school Programs (Ridgway)**

Monday - Thursday (excluding full days for Ridgway and holidays) - check the online program schedule for monthly changes Time: 3:00 pm - 5:30 pm (1.5 hours)

### **After-school Programs (Ouray)**

Monday - Thursday (excluding full days for Ouray and holidays) - check the online program schedule for monthly changes Time: 3:45 pm - 5:30 pm (1.5 hours) in Ouray.

For more information on the Ouray After School Program; please contact:

Michelle Melendez

Program Coordinator

Michelle@voyageryouth.org

### **Full Day**

Selected days of the year, check the online program schedule Days: Monday - Thursday

Time: 8:00 am - 5:30 pm (8.5 hours)

### **Summer Programs**

Selected weeks of the month, check the online program schedule Days: Monday - Thursday

Time: 8:00 am - 5:30 pm (8.5 hours)

## **Pick-up & Drop-off**

### **PICK UP:**

Please drop off your child at Voyager Youth Program, 280 N Cora, between the hours of **8am - 9:30am**. If you are late or need assistance to arrive before or after these hours, please communicate at least a day in advance, so we can accommodate your needs.

We have found that children adjust more easily to the childcare program if they attend regularly and also arrive and depart at the same time each day. Children who arrive significantly after 9:30 a.m. miss the opportunity to ease into the morning with their peers and teachers on a common schedule. In addition, children arriving late may interrupt the flow and structure of the morning, which the teachers work hard to establish. Of course, we understand the common complications of daily life but we appreciate every effort being made to have your child present by 9:30 am each day of attendance. If a child arrives late and the Voyager's are off site, a staff

member will walk the child over to the group and ensure the child is properly integrated into the activity.

### **Late Pick Up Policy:**

If you are later than 15 minutes after the pick-up time, you will owe \$1 per 1 minute, payable upon arrival directly to the staff member that is waiting with your child. If you have not arrived after one-half hour after the chosen pick-up time, staff will make an effort to contact you and will begin to call authorized individuals on your child's enrollment forms. If no one has been reached one hour after pick-up time, Voyager staff will contact Child Protective Services to have your child picked up.

Thank you for respecting our staff by ensuring that your child is picked up on time!

## **GENERAL SCHEDULE**

Each day the children will participate in a host of activities. Prior to signing up for our programs, you will have the option to see the topics, based on the offerings on our website. Schedules vary based on the program offered. Please note everything is SUBJECT TO CHANGE. Most activities are based on what the community offers and some cancellations are out of our control. Please look at the schedule BEFORE you enroll your child to ensure the activity is appropriate for their abilities.

### **Student Gear List**

Participants need to come prepared for **physically active, outdoor experiences**. They will be outdoors all day through all types of weather. Please make sure your child is dressed in comfortable, weather-appropriate shoes and clothes that can get dirty. If your child arrives unprepared they will NOT be allowed to participate in the activity.

#### **Please Pack:**

1. A **healthy lunch** and **one nutritious snack**
2. A water bottle, at least 16 oz. size or camelback.
3. Closed-toed shoes that are designed for physical activity (i.e. NO flip-flops, sandals, high-heels, or ballet flats), with the exception of pool days
4. A rain jacket, in case it rains.
5. A bathing suit and towel for swim day
6. A backpack

7. An extra layer for warmth (small fleece) or weather appropriate gear
8. Hat and sunglasses
9. Sunscreen approved and labeled with last name
10. Fidgets, if necessary for child to concentrate on
11. If your child has frequent accidents, please ensure you pack extra clothes for them to change into. If your child runs out of clothes; parents will be notified and required to bring extra clothes for their child.

**Leave the following items at home.** These items interfere with the program's goals, create jealousy among participants, and reduce your child's engagement with the program. If any of these items appear at Voyager, staff will hold them until pick-up time. **At no time will Voyager staff be held responsible for the whereabouts or conditions of any items on this list.** This includes but not limited to; personal items, technology, money and any other items. Your child must be responsible for their own belongings at ALL TIMES.

*Leave At Home:*

***PLEASE NOTE TECHNOLOGY IS NOT ALLOWED AT VOYAGER. IT WILL BE INSTRUCTED TO BE IN THEIR BACKPACK THE WHOLE TIME.***

1. Gum, candy, and soda pop
2. Gaming devices of any kind
3. Tablet computers and smartphones or technology (youth may call parents on instructor phones)
4. Items of value (jewelry, etc.)
5. Money (all costs are covered by the program)
6. Weapons
7. Fireworks
8. Distracting toys

**SIGN IN/SIGN OUT**

Parents or other authorized persons must sign children in at arrival and out at pick up. Parents will verbally communicate with staff, and staff will check students off and list the name of the



parent that picked up their child. This helps us to provide the safest environment possible as well as provide the opportunity for us to talk with you about your child's day.

Children will be released only to those authorized by the parent/guardian on the enrollment form. It is the parent's responsibility to notify Voyager Youth Program of any changes to authorization via phone, e-mail, or text message. If someone other than these people must pick-up your child, a written note must be sent ahead of time. Those picking up children should be prepared to show identification to staff members upon request. No child will be released to anyone who is not authorized to pick up that child.

If your child arrives late and the group is gone from the building, a counselor will walk them to the excursion site or a parent is authorized to drop them off in the location.

## ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Please inform us of any changes to your contact information as they arise so we can contact you in an emergency. Please ensure you update this information RIGHT AWAY we must be able to reach you.

## AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES (ADA) POLICY

The ADA requires that child care providers not discriminate against persons with disabilities on the basis of disability, that is, that they provide children and parents with disabilities with an equal opportunity to participate in the child care center's programs and services.

- Voyager will not exclude children with disabilities from programs unless their presence would pose a *direct threat* to the health or safety of others or require a *fundamental alteration* of the program.
- Voyager will make *reasonable modifications* to our policies and practices to integrate children, parents, and guardians with disabilities into programs unless doing so would constitute a *fundamental alteration*.
- Voyager will provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services needed for *effective communication* with children with disabilities, when doing so would not constitute an *undue burden*.
- Voyager will make our facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. Existing facilities are subject to the *readily achievable* standard for barrier removal, while newly constructed facilities and any altered portions of existing facilities must be *fully accessible*.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

Voyager Youth Program is **required** to retain current health and immunization records for every participant, even those attending for just a day or week. Please provide detailed information about allergies, food sensitivities, and other health needs.

## SICK CHILDREN

Children must be healthy enough to participate in the program's daily routine. We do not have the facilities to care for sick children and therefore do not allow them to attend our programs. For the safety and comfort of your child, please keep them home until they feel better and no longer present the danger of passing on their illness. **If your child becomes ill while in the program you will be required to pick up your child right away.** The child will be placed in an appropriate rest area until you arrive. When your child is ill, they need to stay home. If they vomit, have more than three diarrheas in a day or two in an hour or have a fever of 100 and above, they need to stay home. Children *can return to school* after being symptom free, **without** help of medication, for 72 hours.

## MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

Staff are trained to administer medications as needed with written order of a person with prescriptive authority and written parental consent. Voyager Youth Program may administer medications for chronic health conditions or emergency situations with written permission.. Please indicate this need on your enrollment form and we will discuss requirements with you directly. Non-emergency medication will be stored in a lock box out of reach of children, if not a quick relief medication. Medication CANNOT be shared with other children. YOU MUST fill out a medication administration sheet BEFORE you bring medication to Voyager. If this is NOT done we will NOT administer. Please email Madison for this form.

## ACCOUNTING FOR CHILDREN

Program attendance is taken throughout the day. All children are accounted for before, during and after all activities. Children are not permitted to come and go from the program during the day, **even if their home is nearby.** Students are in visual sight of our instructors through program hours. If a student is missing, we will engage in our Lost Child protocols and procedures. See "Behavioral Expectations" for details on what we expect from families participating in our programs.

## VISITORS POLICY

All visitors must report to the front office and sign the Visitor's Book on arrival and departure. Visitors will also be made aware of the Centers fire procedure and exits should the alarm sound. All visitors will be provided with a visitor's badge upon signing in. A member of staff will accompany visitors in the Center at all times while in the building; at no time will a visitor be left alone with a child . Parents and authorized responsible adults are able to drop and collect children without being accompanied.

## SUNSCREEN & SAFETY

The Colorado sun is unforgiving! Please apply sunscreen to your child prior to arrival at the program in the morning, especially if your child has sensitive skin. In the Enrollment Packet parents may give Voyager Youth Program permission to apply sunscreen whenever there will be outdoor activities. Here, we will outline the type of sunscreen used. We are required to make sure that all children are protected under the sun. If you do not grant permission for Voyager to apply sunscreen, children must bring their own to apply throughout the day, or have a note from a physician. If the child is over the age of 4 they are able to apply the sunscreen themselves. Staff take precautions to keep children from getting burned. If your child has severely sensitive skin, and requires special limits on their exposure to the sun, please let us know. If inclement weather occurs the program will CHANGE and the outdoor based activity will be CANCELED. The children will shift to an indoor based activity until the weather passes.

Children will be protected from the sun between the hours of 10:00 am and 4:00 pm. Protective measures include using shade; sun-protective clothing such as hats and sunglasses; and sunscreen with UV-B and UV-A ray sun protection factor 15 or higher.

Children will have access to clean, sanitary water at all times, including prolonged periods of physical activity, and be encouraged to drink water during periods of prolonged physical activity.

### COLD WEATHER

Children should wear layers of loose-fitting, lightweight clothing. Outer garments, such as coats, should be tightly woven and be at least water repellent when rain or snow is present. Children should wear a hat, coat, gloves/mittens kept snug at the wrist, and snow boots.

Teachers will check children's extremities for normal color and warmth at least every 15 minutes.

### INCLEMENT WEATHER

Our staff understands that our decision to open, close or delay opening during inclement weather often disrupts family schedules. We also understand that our children are better served – academically, emotionally and socially – by being in school or daycare. But, as always, our top priority is the safety of our children and staff, so the decision to close or delay opening is not an easy one. The process is complex and involves many people.

Please understand that we make the decision to open or close the center in bad weather based on a careful analysis of all relevant factors, including:

- Information on road conditions from transportation staff and from local law enforcement and road crews
- Amount of snow and/or ice accumulated
- Whether precipitation will continue throughout the day

- Temperature and wind chill
- Weather predictions (including those from a weather alert service)
- Storm timing, trajectory and projection
- Building conditions (such as whether our building's electricity and/or heat service is disrupted)
- Parking lot conditions

\*Generally, Voyager will be closed or delayed for inclement weather when local school districts and government are both closed or delayed. Please call us for the most up-to-date information in each unique situation: 940-368-6530.

## EMERGENCIES

In cases of emergency, staff will immediately call 911 and then parents/guardians next. In cases of non-emergency care, all children will be taken to the Mountain Medical Center located at 295 Sherman St. In Ridgway unless parents arrive first and choose to sign their child out and transport them elsewhere. In the event of a lost child, the Executive Director will be contacted immediately. Additional staff members will be provided to search for the lost child. The child's parents/guardians and appropriate authorities will be notified when necessary.

In the case of a natural disaster, the established plan of action will be taken which includes prompt notification of parents/guardians, the main facility and local authorities. Emergency transportation will be provided as available with staff or company vehicles at the appropriate sites. Children will be transported to Ridgway Town Hall in event of a disaster if Voyager is deemed unsafe.

In the case of stranger danger or environmental danger on the program, the established plan of action will be taken which includes prompt notification of parents/guardians, the administrative staff, and local authorities. Emergency transportation will always be available at all locations, trailheads, and park entrances.

In the case of an active shooter or emergency on property, children will take shelter in place in designated areas. Parents will be notified and local authorities will evacuate the children. Children will then be transported to the 4-H Center for reunification. Parents will **not** be allowed to pick their children up at Voyager and must pick their children up at the 4-H Center.

In case of an emergency in which the Voyager Basecamp is deemed unsafe, parents will be notified to pick-up students at the Ridgway Town Hall.

## TRANSPORTATION

Parents are required to drop-off and pick-up students at the Voyager Youth Program. Voyager is responsible for transporting kids to and from excursions in the Voyager Van, Minibus provided to us by the Ouray School, or Ridgway mini school bus.

If road conditions have deteriorated, we will NOT offer transportation. Any scheduled field trips requiring transportation will be canceled and Voyager's will stay at the center. All parents will be notified.

### VEHICLE TRANSPORTATION

If we do use a vehicle, parents must provide written permission for a child to be transported during enrollment if we do transport students via vehicle. All drivers are certified to operate vehicles that transport children. All children are required to follow the appropriate safety procedures at all times and can be removed from the program if they interfere with safety on the bus. All vehicles for transportation are up to standards for transporting school-aged children. All programs will have at least one approved staff member riding during our programs. In the case of an emergency on the road, we will notify parents and officials as needed, maintaining an open line of communication with staff cell phones.

### FIELD TRIPS

Voyager Staff follow careful safety protocols to ensure that trips go smoothly and children have a happy experience. During swimming activities, a swimming supervisor with a current American Red Cross Lifeguard Training Certification will be present.

If a child arrives at the site after we have left for a field trip, you can choose to transport them directly to the field site to meet us. It is also possible for children to be picked up at field sites when necessary. Please communicate these needs directly to the Program Manager to arrange these special circumstances.

Voyager's day care license mandates our staff:child ratio. This means we occasionally have to turn away late-comers for lack of space. Wherever possible, please enroll in advance, or call ahead for drop-in registration.

For children who require booster seats (age 3-5) please provide a booster seat for your child if we plan on doing any off site field trips that require transportation. We will notify parents well in advance if this is needed.

### LOST & FOUND

While the Voyager Youth Program can't be responsible for lost items, we also know that children sometimes lose things, especially in the midst of adventures. **Please be sure to label**

**your child's belongings wherever possible.** Staff ask participants to account for their things at transition times throughout the day. We collect lost items and will let parents know if we have found something via email or text.

## MEALS

Parents MUST provide LUNCH and SNACKs for their meals when their child attends Voyager. Voyager will provide ONE healthy snack for Children that meet the USDA standards. No junk food or sugary drinks will be given to students as a meal or snack. Snacks will include one bar or portion sufficient for the size of the child. For sufficient food for your child's growth and development please visit the USDA website to plan properly for your child.

## WATER

Students are expected to carry a water bottle with access to filling stations throughout our trips. Staff will have extra water available in their vehicles and at least two water bottles with paper cups in their backpacks.

## Program Rules and Behavioral Expectations

Voyager Youth Program's outdoor enrichment programs are designed to enrich the lives of all participants. We expect all participants of our programs to ensure a safe environment that promotes only risk-free behavior. We select experienced staff and continually train to sharpen our skills at handling the behavioral challenges that can arise in a group setting. We offer opportunities for students to learn from their actions and provide opportunities within the group to correct behaviors and ask for forgiveness from those that they have impacted.

## GENERAL RULES

Voyager Youth Program front loads each program by having every student discuss and agree to our program philosophy and group agreement:

1. Treat everyone and everything around you with respect and kindness
2. Clean up after yourself and participate in group clean-up
3. Ask for permission before leaving the room or group
4. Respect others' physical space
5. Keep your hands to yourself
6. Solve conflicts by talking to each other directly
7. Absolutely NO bullying

### **Field Trip Rules:**

1. Stay with the group at all times
2. Treat guides, bus drivers, and other special helpers with respect.
3. Follow all safety rules on the bus.

#### **Pool Rules:**

1. Only get in the water when staff gives permission
2. Do not run in the pool area
3. Do not dunk or splash others
4. In order to swim in the deep section, you have to pass a swim test.
5. Follow all the rules of the pool facility and its life guards.

Through this agreement, we discuss our main rules and agreements that all students must follow that also follow our Expeditionary Behavior Guidelines which includes the several relationships as outlined below.

#### Video Policy

Once in the year, Voyager offers G and PG movies. Parents must indicate on the enrollment form whether they give their child permission to watch movies. Alternative options will be provided to the child or group if permission is not granted.

#### Positive Guidance & Behavioral Expectation

Here is what your child can expect from Voyager Youth Program:

1. General Voyager rules are: Be safe, Be Kind, and be Respectful. Other Voyager Rules will be set and followed by the students and staff together in a collaborative way.
2. Voyager Staff will promote responsive and positive child, staff, and family relationships and interactions.
3. When a child is demonstrating challenging behaviors a staff member or program manager will discuss solutions to challenging behaviors with the student and the parent/guardian.
4. Voyager Staff will create and maintain a program-wide culture that promotes children's mental health, social, and emotional well-being.
5. Voyager teachers will teach Social Emotional Learning through Sources of Strength and the Pyramid model to support positive behavior, pro-social peer interaction, and overall social and emotional competence in young children.

When a child is demonstrating challenging behavior the staff will:

1. Provide individualized social and emotional intervention support for children with the support of the parents/guardian.

**Voyager Youth Program has the discretion to remove children from Enrichment Programs without refund in these cases;**

1. Opposition, hostility, or defiance of adults in settings that compromise group safety or program delivery
2. Physical or social-emotional violence toward any person of the group
3. Persistent patterns of shaming, intimidation, or harassment of another child (i.e bullying.)
4. Repeated defiance of rules in ways that compromise the safety or enjoyment of others in the group.

Before your child is removed from the group, we will talk to the parent and discuss the situation and what guidance the parent suggests. We will give the child to calm down and return them to the group. If the behavior continues, then we will call the parent again and send the child home.

All situations will be documented and communicated with the program manager and parent. If the child continues to demonstrate challenging behavior after the first incident, we will contact an appropriate mental health consultant to create a behavior plan with the family.

### SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCE

If your child has a behavioral plan in their school or other environment, or has learning/developmental differences that mean he or she may not respond to our discipline system in typical ways, you need to tell us. We can only help your child be successful at Voyager Youth Program if we know what their needs or differences are. We will make every reasonable effort to work with your child as long as you are working with us and your child is abiding by the standards of behavior.

### PARENT AND STAFF CONFERENCES

If you have any questions or concerns about your child or the development of your child please feel free to reach out to the Program Manager or Executive Director at any time. Staff will always be available to have a conference with you about your child.

## INSTRUCTOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR OUTDOOR PROGRAMS

### QUALIFIED INSTRUCTORS

All programs will be accompanied by two staff including two lead teachers. Additionally, each is certified in First Aid & CPR. All instructors have at least 15-hours of Voyager-specific training prior to engaging in our programs specific to the wellbeing and healthcare of students in an outdoor environment.



## VOLUNTEERS

The use of experts in the field to offer their insights and expertise is a core part of our program. This introduces students to experts and community members that are active in the community. It is our policy that any volunteer on our programs does not count as an additional staff member, and will always be accompanied by staff when in the presence of registered students. Students will never be left alone with any adult volunteer, unless in the case of a life-threatening emergency.

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES SPECIFIC AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

### SWIMMING (5-12)

- A qualified lifeguard will be present at all times.
- Ratios will be 1 adult to 10 children or fewer.
- Swimming will only be allowed in designated swimming areas or pools.
- Children swimming in water deeper than their shoulders will be required to take a skill test. Voyager Youth Program staff will directly supervise and monitor children at all times
- Children will be monitored for exhaustion, distress, sunburn, heatstroke, and threat of drowning.
- Adequate first aid kits will be taken on all trips.

### ROCK CLIMBING (5-12)

- All rock climbing wall indoor activities will be hosted by approved climbing instructors with appropriate certifications
- Proper supervision ratios will be maintained at all times as per the guiding facilities requirements (6:1 ratios)
- All participants will wear proper fitting climbing gear and helmets
- All ropes and gear used will be inspected for strength and wear. Any damaged or unsafe ropes will not be used.
- The climbing wall facility will be constructed and inspected according to climbing wall safety standards.
- Adequate first aid kits will be taken on all trips.

### HIKING (5-12)

- A minimum of 2 Voyager Youth Program staff members will accompany all groups on hikes. Both staff members will have a current First Aid & CPR + AED.
- Staff members will be equipped with risk management and emergency plans for every itinerary.

- Selection criteria for hiking: hiker's age, physical condition, and experience, seasons, weather trends, methods of evacuation and communication, and water quality and quantity.
- Each hiker/camper will be equipped with clothing that protects against natural elements such as rain, snow, wind, cold, heat, sun, and insects.
- Before participation the children will be instructed on the following: fundamental safety procedures to follow on the trail, procedures to follow if lost, proper health and sanitation procedures on the trail, rules governing land to be hiked, potential high-risk areas, and fire precautions.
- Adequate first aid kits will be taken on all trips.
- Hiking will occur on local trails
- All trailheads will have access to a vehicle in the case of emergencies
- Adequate first aid kits will be taken on all trips.

### **BIKING (5-12)**

- The bicycling supervisor will be familiar with state laws about bicycling; be knowledgeable about the type of bicycling terrain where the bicycle trips will occur, and shall know how to make simple bicycle repairs.
- At least 2 Voyager Youth Program staff will be with the group, one at the beginning and one at the end of the group.
- Water will be taken or be accessible on bike excursions.
- All children on bicycles or scooters shall wear a helmet.
- Bicycles must be in good condition and be inspected before each ride.
- Basic bike repair equipment and first aid kit will be taken on each trip.
- Children will be instructed on bike safety, riding procedures, and road/trail etiquette.
- Bike instructors and staff will evaluate each child's abilities and consider trip length, terrain, altitude, and weather conditions in choosing a ride.

### **BUILDING NATURAL STRUCTURES**

- Two instructors will be present when building natural structures with fallen tree branches
- Instructors are expected to instruct students on safety and risk management associated with building natural structures
- Natural structures will only be built on land parcels that are approved with the appropriate permissions for the land owners or managers
- Natural structures are expected to be taken down after building on the day they are built

## **CHILD ABUSE REPORTING & COMPLAINTS**

Voyager Youth Program staff are required by law to report any suspected child abuse/neglect to the local Department of Social Services at (970) 325-4437.

If you have any concerns or complaints about our program, staff, or decisions regarding your child, please speak with Program Manager Madison Gustafson at (940) 368-6530. If the complaint is with our Program Manager, please reach out to the Executive Director through the email: [alex@voyageryouth.org](mailto:alex@voyageryouth.org) or (970) 318-1218.

Formal complaints about Voyager Youth Program or any child care facility may be addressed to the following agency: Colorado Department of Human Services, 1575 Sherman Street, Denver, Co 80203-1714 1-800-799-5876

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Thank you for reading our Enrichment Programs Parent Handbook! We hope it gives you a better understanding of Voyager Youth Program's enrichment programs. Your comments, input, and support help us to continuously improve it to better meet the needs of local youth and families.

For more information about Voyager Youth Program, our programs, and our approach to outdoor experiential education and positive development, we encourage you to visit our website: [www.voyageryouth.org](http://www.voyageryouth.org).

Please also feel free to call the Program Manager with more questions at (940) 368-6530. We look forward to exploring nature with you while learning, building resiliency, and adding value to our local communities.