

# **Alliance Redwoods Outdoor Education**

Dear Cabin Counselor,

First of all, I want to thank you for investing your time in one of the best educational adventures offered to students. Whether you are a parent of an attending student or a young adult taking time off from school/work, we, at Alliance Redwoods, appreciate you.

As a Cabin Counselor we want you to share in the Outdoor Education experiences with your cabin. Therefore, we would like you to be involved in this program directly and actively by participating wholeheartedly with your cabin group. As you engage in all camp activities, experience the same wonder of nature and face the same mental and physical challenges of the week, we hope to develop a sense of community between classmates and cabin mates.

Here are a few items every Cabin Counselor should know before coming to camp:

Please be familiar with the Sample schedule in this packet. There will be changes made for each individual school and that revised schedule will be handed out to you on the first day of camp.

Each class consists of hiking. Although there are plenty of rest stops, be prepared to hike up and down our hills. The only flat ground is in our base camp where our cabins are located.

One night activity is a Night Hike. Flashlights are used at a minimum if at all. Also each naturalist plans a solo walk for the students. This is a time where each student walks on a safe path alone without a flashlight. Obviously fear is a very common feeling during this night activity but they gain a rewarding sense of accomplishment! Fear spreads like wildfire among people especially if Counselors spark this flame. We are teaching the students to overcome fears and to trust the naturalist and their classmates. This is an important shared experience for you and your cabin mates.

Thursday night is Campfire and Skit night. Every cabin is expected to perform a short skit. Skit practice is every night with Counselors and their cabin mates.

Only female counselors are permitted to be in the girls cabin area and only male counselors are permitted to be in the boys cabin area. Campers are not allowed in the cabins without a counselor present.

Shower times for students are before breakfast and after night activities. Please divide your cabin between these shower times to minimize the wait.

Scheduled time off for Counselors is very important. Please take this time to relax and be refreshed. All counselors are off during Journal Time. (The students are meeting with their teachers) Also only two Counselors are required for Classes. You may opt to take the morning or afternoon off if needed. It is better to take this time off to rejuvenate and come back ready to go, then to lose energy and enthusiasm and become an ineffective Counselor.

What can you anticipate in your role as a Cabin Counselor?

1. Serve as a role model for every attending student—know all camp rules and teach the students to do as you do. Your campers will have the same attitudes you do. Make sure they have a good one!

2. Have direct oversight of each and every camper assigned to your cabin. (Usually 5-7 students) Always sit as a cabin group and participate in all camp activities with your cabin mates.
3. During Free time, be generally aware of the location of your campers—their safety and well-being are your responsibility.
4. See that campers are on time for all scheduled activities. Count heads: if someone is missing, please find them!
5. Maintain control and order of your campers at all organized activities and meal times. Seek out the student's teacher as additional help. Be friendly and respectful, yet still in charge. NEVER use any physical means of discipline.
6. Hold campers to Lights Out time. Your cabin is not to be an exception.
7. Rise and Shine is at 7:00 am, not earlier. Please keep individuals inside the cabin and in bed until this time for some of your neighbors need the sleep!
8. Maintain order and discipline in the cabins. Remain with students in cabins at night.
9. See that students maintain proper health habits. If there is a concern, please notify the student's teacher.
10. Remember we are trying to develop a sense of community and shared experiences. Have a great time this week experiencing nature with child-like eyes!

Hopefully, this letter has answered many of your questions about being a Cabin Counselor. Thank you again for your involvement. Without your help the school could not participate in this great educational program. I'm looking forward to meeting you and serving the school you represent.

Sincerely,

The Outdoor Education Coordinator