



Parent Handbook

Revised June, 2017

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Mission Statement

Wild Bear Mountain Ecology Center is a nonprofit, tax exempt corporation offering year round hands on, educational programs to people of all ages to foster a lifelong appreciation of the environment and to promote an environmentally aware, responsible and ecologically sound community.

Wild Bear History

Wild Bear Center for Nature Discovery (a 501(c)3 corporation) was founded in 1995 to serve the community by providing top quality and affordable nature education programs for youth and families. Wild Bear's passionate roots to science education and the preservation of Colorado began as a small program serving 24 children in the summer of 1995, and has grown to serve thousands of people of all ages every year. Research shows that a lack of connection to the natural world in combination with common addiction to electronics is a serious health concern and Wild Bear believes it to be today's most critical health concern. Further, people who love nature will work to preserve it.

In 1999, Wild Bear collaborated with Boulder County Parks and Open Space and the Town of Nederland to preserve over 200 acres of land north of Nederland, called Mud Lake Open Space; voters approved this plan including the development of the Nature Center by Wild Bear. Over the next two years, Wild Bear successfully raised \$100,000 through private donations, and purchased 5 acres amid the Mud Lake Open Space. In July of 2000, Wild Bear organized 134 volunteers to remove over 30 tons of trash off of the Mud Lake property allowing it to regenerate to one of the healthiest wetland habitats in Boulder County.

Wild Bear's long-term vision has always been to develop a permanent Nature Center in the mountains of Boulder County. In 2010, as another milestone toward this greater vision, Wild Bear opened an interim nature center in downtown Nederland, where both visitors and locals can engage in nature education. Open year round, at least 6 days a week, this downtown location has made Wild Bear a major community resource in Nederland and in Boulder County. Over the last 3 years, program participation has grown by 150% through its popular programs for children and families. Last year, Wild Bear enjoyed an estimated 14,000 visitors to the Center, all of whom enjoyed the hands-on exhibits and local outdoor ecology information.

Wild Bear Mountain Ecology Center is the only all ages nonprofit nature center in Boulder County. Now, through a formal partnership with the Town of Nederland and Downtown Development Authority, Wild Bear Mountain Ecology Center is working toward securing a permanent site in downtown Nederland to develop the permanent nature center for Boulder County.

Ages of Children Accepted

Wild Bear is licensed as a School Age Child Care program by the Colorado State Department of Social Services, providing workshops for ages 5-16 years.

Our Curriculum

Wild Bear programs not only provide environmental education to people of all ages, they also provide an educational venue during times when children are not in school. Wild Bear bases all learning experiences on the Constructivist Learning Theory. This honors background experiences and provides discovery learning opportunities. Children are always given the opportunity to share their knowledge with others. One of the most important goals of our curriculum is to encourage students to become lifelong learners, discovering the amazing wonders of nature.

We strive to foster independent, self-confident, inquisitive learners, instilling an intrinsic love for learning.

Wild Bear forms curriculum around the following styles of learning:

- *Linguistic: reading, writing, telling stories
- *Logical/Mathematical: experiments, problem solving, reasoning/logic
- *Spatial: drawing, building, designing, puzzles, using their imagination
- *Musical: singing, instruments, sounds, rhythm
- *Kinesthetic: moving around, games, dance, sports, body language
- *Interpersonal: group/teamwork, communicating, sharing, cooperating
- *Intrapersonal: journaling individual work, working in an independent self-paced instruction.
- *Naturalistic: discriminate among living things as well as sensitivity to natural world features.

Developing an understanding of science makes it possible for people to share in the richness and excitement of comprehending the natural world. A sound foundation in science strengthens many of the skills that successful people use every day, such as creative problem solving strategies, critical thinking, and cooperative problem solving, and valuing life-long learning.

Learning is play. Learning is fun. Play is learning....

Staff

We believe strongly in positive, enthusiastic, experienced role models for your children. The members of our teaching staff bring higher education degrees and rich experiences to Wild Bear. Our staff hold undergraduate and graduate degrees in Environmental Science, Art, Environmental Conservation and Museum and Field Studies. All Staff are annually certified in both CPR and First Aid and all Wild Bear staff are required to receive background checks before they are allowed to work with children.

Instructors are responsible for creating a program curriculum that is developmentally appropriate for the program audience (children, teens, adults, families). Instructors attend weekly and monthly staff meetings, have established weekly planning times and are encouraged to attend professional development courses throughout the year to learn new curriculum and teaching strategies. Prior to the summer program, the summer staff participates in a full week of training and orientation in order to understand behavioral management policies and work as a team to create a well-rounded program for your child.

Wild Bear staff is available to share information concerning your child on a daily basis. Parent conferences are not found to be a necessity at Wild Bear, however conferences may be arranged at any time. We welcome your input, as you are the foremost expert about your child's needs.

Hikes

If Wild Bear has planned to take your child on a hike, please send your child with hiking boots or comfortable shoes, a backpack with a sack lunch and snack, plenty of water, sunscreen, sunglasses, sneakers or snow boots, extra layers of clothing, rain or snow gear. Your child's experience will be much more enjoyable if they are prepared. Please sunscreen your child each morning before they leave your care.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Resolved, that Wild Bear Mountain Ecology Center Board of Directors hereby affirms and shall enforce a non-discrimination policy which Wild Bear shall not fail or refuse participation because of the race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, or mental or physical disability of such individual or such individual's friends or associations; but with regard to mental or physical disability, it is not discrimination for Wild Bear to act as provided in this paragraph if there is no reasonable accommodation that the Corporation can make with regard to the disability, the disability actually disqualifies the individual from program participation and the disability has a significant impact on program participation. Wild Bear Center does engage in hikes to accomplish its educational goals and its vehicle is not equipped with handicapped ramp. We welcome all children and encourage parents to attend workshops which may be more physical in nature in order for a child with disabilities to enjoy a positive experience.

Location

Wild Bear Mountain Ecology Center workshops are based out of 20 Lakeview Drive Unit 107 as well as at Chipeta Park and Mud Lake.

Contact Information

Registrar's office: 303-258-0495
Education office: 303-258-0495
Executive Director Cell: 303-588-0299

School Year Program Hours

Afterschool 3:30pm – 5:30pm
Days off from school: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (unless otherwise noted).

Summer Program Hours

Mountain Programs: M-F 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
NCAR Programs: Fridays 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Wild Bear Center is closed on New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Memorial Day, July 4 and 5th, Labor Day, the day before Thanksgiving, Thanksgiving Day and the day following Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas day.

Weather policies

Flood:

- If it is raining steadily and very hard during a field trip, Staff is instructed to return safely to Wild Bear Center.
- If extreme weather makes returning in the vehicle unsafe, staff is instructed to climb to a higher elevation to avoid danger from flooding.
- If the safety of the children and staff are in danger, contact 911 for emergency assistance.

Lightning:

- Afternoon showers are a common fact in the mountains. Thunderstorms form quickly, with little warning besides a darkening sky. Therefore, the weather must be regularly monitored by staff to assess potential danger. If staff see tall, puffy cumulus clouds gathering and growing and daylight rapidly dimming, they are trained to observe these safety measures:
 - Make sure all children are accounted for.
 - **If they are near a building, go indoors.** If the storm is severe, with frequent and close lightning bursts, head for a basement or a room in the middle of a house or other building.
 - Keep away from objects that might conduct electricity (such as flagpoles, metal fences, radiators, pipes and metal door frames).
 - If indoors, stay away from windows.
 - Do not turn on the water or be near water. Water helps to conduct electricity, and walls don't always protect from the high energy of a lightning bolt.
 - Do not get close to electrical appliances such as plug-in radios and TVs. Use battery-operated radios.
 - If our groups are on a hike or outdoors, staff does their best to lead the group quickly to the safety of the vehicle. Staff is trained to **DO NOT RUN!** This can cause other accidents.
 - If staff/children feel their hair start to stand on end or their skin tingle, or if they hear crackling sounds, lightning may be about to strike you. Drop down quickly; bend forward, feet together, hands on knees. Staff is instructed not to lie flat: making them as small as possible and have minimal contact with the ground.
 - Staff is trained to **STAY AWAY FROM STREAMS, LAKES, POOLS** or other water source that can conduct electricity. Stay out of the water for at least 30 minutes after hearing thunder.

Excessively hot weather

- Workshops in the Wild, at 8,250 feet in elevation do not normally exceed 85 degrees in temperature. Workshops in Boulder take place from 8:00-3:30pm. Children are encouraged to hydrate throughout the day and should arrive to Wild Bear with a full quart of water. Water breaks are taken every ½ hour. Groups are encouraged to find shelter and shade during excessively hot days.

Safety Policies:

Stranger Danger

If staff come across an individual during a Wild Bear program who they consider a safety hazard (under the influence of alcohol or drugs, displaying violence or profanity), staff are trained to follow these guidelines:

- a) Carefully assess the situation for safety and redirect/ask the intruder to leave.
- b) Note the evidence and proceed carefully to call 911 to report an intruder. Keep the children safe until emergency services arrive

Animals

When out in the woods, it is always important to respect the wildlife that lives there! All wild animals need to defend themselves. We need to avoid situations where animals feel threatened. In the rare case that you should you come across a wild animal with your group, all wild animals must be respected and left alone. We do not touch or feed wild animals. When out in the woods, we are not at the zoo. We treat their homes with respect. Here are a few tips from the Colorado Division of Wildlife

<http://wildlife.state.co.us/WildlifeSpecies/LivingWithWildlife>

Dogs

Contact with pets is permitted only when a staff person is physically present. Wild Bear requests that all dogs remain at an adequate distance away from children to avoid any physical contact and potential problems. This is regardless of how “friendly” the dog may seem. If a dog becomes aggressive, staff attempts to scare the dog away and contact the local police to report the dog. If the unfortunate event of a dog bite should occur, Staff contact police and clean the wound. Parents are notified immediately of any incidents with dogs.

Mountain Lions:

When you walk or hike in mountain lion country, go in groups and make plenty of noise to reduce your chances of surprising a lion. A sturdy walking stick is a good idea; it can be used to ward off a lion. Make sure children are close to you and within your sight at all times. Talk with children about lions and teach them what to do if they meet one. Do not approach a lion, especially one that is feeding or with kittens. Most mountain lions will try to avoid a confrontation. Give them a way to escape.

- **Stay calm** when you come upon a lion. Talk calmly yet firmly to it. Move slowly.
- **Stop or back away slowly**, if you can do it safely. Running may stimulate a lion's instinct to chase and attack. Face the lion and stand upright.
- **Do all you can to appear larger**. Raise your arms. Open your jacket if you're wearing one. If you have small children with you, protect them by picking them up so they won't panic and run.
- If the lion behaves aggressively, throw stones, branches or whatever you can get your hands on without crouching down or turning your back. Wave your arms slowly and speak firmly. What you want to do is convince the lion you are not prey and that you may in fact be a danger to the lion.
- **Fight back** if a lion attacks you. Lions have been driven away by prey that fights back. People have fought back with rocks, sticks, caps or jackets, garden tools and their bare hands successfully. Remain standing or try to get back up!

Black Bears:

Black bears are highly intelligent, with individual responses to people and situations. Wild black bears seldom attack unless they feel threatened, cornered, or are provoked.

- **If You Surprise a Bear on a Trail**

- Stand still, stay calm and let the bear identify you and leave. Talk in a normal tone of voice. Be sure the bear has an escape route.
- Never run or climb a tree.
- If you see cubs, their mother is usually close by. Leave the area immediately.
- **If the Bear Doesn't Leave**
 - A bear standing up is just trying to identify what you are by getting a better look and smell.
 - Wave your arms slowly overhead and talk calmly. If the bear huffs, pops it jaws or stomps a paw, it wants you to give it space.
 - Step off the trail to the downhill side, keep looking at the bear and slowly back away until the bear is out of sight.
- **If the Bear Approaches**
 - A bear knowingly approaching a person could be a food-conditioned bear looking for a handout or, very rarely, an aggressive bear. Stand your ground. Yell or throw small rocks in the direction of the bear.
 - If you're attacked, don't play dead. Fight back with anything available. People have successfully defended themselves with pen knives, trekking poles, and even bare hands.

Black Widow Spiders

- Black Widow Spiders are the primary native spider that has venom that can cause serious illness. Prevention is the key to protecting yourself from Black Widow Spiders. Black Widows live in dark secret places and are only trying to survive. If you should stick your hand into their nest, they are bound to bite you. Children never reach in to places that aren't in clear view. If a child does get bitten by a Black Widow Spider, ice is placed on the wound, parents are contacted and the child is taken to a Doctor.

Fire

Inside the building:

1. Calmly announce there is a fire in our building
2. Evacuate the building according to the evacuation plan, all persons exiting out the front door of the school.
3. Close all doors upon exiting the building.
4. Groups will stay together and walk to the Buffalo Bills (unless otherwise instructed).
5. Staff will perform a role call after exiting the building.
6. All students and staff must remain outside the building until permission to return is given by the Fire Department.

On a field trip:

1. Contact 911 immediately.
2. Account for all children, line up and safely load the vehicle for departure.
3. Return to Wild Bear.

Bomb Threat

1. Each Bomb Threat must be evaluated on an individual basis.
2. If the threat is by phone, an attempt should be made to keep the caller on the line. The receiver of the call should try to write down exactly what was said; if possible, some other person in the office should contact 911 on another line to announce the receipt of the bomb threat.
3. If a decision has been made to evacuate, follow the evacuation plan.
4. Call 911 and request immediate assistance.

5. The evacuation must proceed as a “Fire drill”; do not announce that it is a bomb threat.
6. Note any “strange objects” to be reported to emergency services upon their arrival.
7. Do not use cell phones, radios or pagers during the search.
8. The Emergency Response authorities or Fire departments must conduct any necessary investigations.

Active Shooter

1. Call 911 and request immediate assistance.
2. All Wild Bear staff and children will be relocated to a safe space out of the building such as the Nederland Community Center or Nederland Schools if it is safe to leave the building.
3. If the threat does not safely allow all staff and children to leave the building the safest room inside the building will be chosen to hold everyone until help arrives.

Shelter-in-Place/Lockdown Drill

1. If there is immediate threat to Wild Bear staff and children 911 will be called.
2. Staff will lock all doors and close windows while another staff member will bring kids in each building space to the back rooms away from all windows and doors until the area is secure and safe.

Electrical Emergencies

1. Contact the Fire Department and Town Hall Public Works and request an immediate response.
2. If a major line is down, sparks are visible, there is smoke or a strong odor, contact 911
3. Building evacuation will depend on the situation. If evacuation is necessary, use evacuation procedures. All instructors must take role after reaching the safety zone (200 feet from the building).
4. NEVER touch a live wire.
5. Never try to rescue a person who is experiencing an electrical shock.

Hazardous Materials Spill/Biohazards

1. Contact Poison Control if there is any immediate danger of exposure to the chemicals.
2. If there is an immediate danger to life or health, evacuate the building and call 911.
3. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CLEAN UP THE SPILL!
4. All staff is trained in Standard Precautions and will handle the cleanup of biohazards according to the standards set by training using latex gloves and a sanitary solution approved by Colorado State Childcare Licensing. All biohazard waste will be double bagged and brought to the outside trash receptacles available for the tenants of the building.
5. Sharps or other biohazards such as glass, etc will be cleaned up using standards set by Standard Precautions training and contained in an impenetrable container to be discarded into the outside trash receptacles available for the tenants of the building.

Odor Investigation/Gas Emergencies

1. If a suspicious odor, such as a gas leak, is suspected, leave the building and use the cell phone (to avoid ignition) and to contact the Fire Department (911 or 303-258-9161) and Town Hall at 303-258-3266 ext 22.

2. Do NOT turn any electrical equipment or lighting off or on; also refrain from using cellular telephones or pagers.
3. Building evacuation must depend on the situation. If evacuation is necessary, use evacuation procedures. Clear the immediate area; evacuate the building to at least 300 feet away from the gas leak or break. Instructors must bring class list to take role after reaching the safety zone.
4. Keep the children quiet and orderly.
5. Wait for the Fire Department or Public Works to give the okay to return to the building.

Emergency Evacuation & Reunification of Families

Following an emergency evacuation, parents will be called and notified as to where Wild Bear staff and children are relocated for pick up. Safe places could include the Nederland Community Center or Nederland Elementary School/Nederland Middle Senior High School. All parents contact information can be accessed on line from any location. Staff and student files can be taken if evacuated. All children and staff, including anyone with disabilities or special needs, will be safely evacuated to the safe location.

Registration Policies

FOR YOUR INFORMATION:

- Wild Bear accepts cash, check, Visa/Mastercard/Discover. Your child will be added to lists ONLY with full payment or a signed payment plan contract. To receive discounts, FULL PAYMENT MUST BE RECEIVED BY DISCOUNT DEADLINE.
- Wild Bear provides payment plan, scholarships and is a CCAP provider.
- If you fill out registration online, Wild Bear will contact you with your total registration payment and to discuss payment options.
- CANCELLATION POLICY: Fees will be refunded if cancellation is made THREE (3) weeks prior to the program. In all cases a \$25.00 administration fee (or 10% of your cancellation total) will be retained.

I UNDERSTAND THAT

- In the event that a class is full, your child's name may be added to a waiting list and you will be notified promptly if space becomes available.
- When I need to make a SCHEDULE CHANGES I will be charged \$5/each day changed.
- I must completely fill out the INTAKE packet at least TWO (2) weeks prior to the beginning of my child's program. I understand that Wild Bear will charge \$5/day beyond this 2 week deadline.
- I must disclose on the intake packet any behavioral or physical challenges that Wild Bear should be made aware of in order to provide a positive experience for my child.
- Wild Bear programs end at specific times (see above). Wild Bear will charge \$1 for each minute I am late to pick up my child. When allowing others to pick up, I understand I MUST give Wild Bear permission to release my child to that individual. New people picking up must be prepared to show a picture ID.

Forms for Registration

Before your child's first day at Wild Bear we must receive the following **completed** forms:

- _____ 1. Parent Contract /Policies
- _____ 2. Intake Form
- _____ 3. Authorization Form
- _____ 4. Health Form
- _____ 5. Copy of Immunization records signed by your child's physician (new participants ONLY).
- _____ 6. Form indicating that you have read the parent handbook
- _____ 7. Medication Form (if applicable)
- _____ 8. Media Release

Prices

Tuition fees make up 50% of our total annual budget and the rest of our revenues come from grants, donations, and events. As a small nonprofit, our fees are comparable to most of the other programs in the Front Range. Wild Bear incorporates all materials costs into the tuition fee. Occasionally, however, we need to charge additionally for Full Day and Summer Programs to offset extra program costs such as snowshoe rentals, skiing fees, swimming, museum admission fees, and photo developing. You will be informed at time of registration if additional fees will be assessed for the program for which you enroll. A 10% discount is applied to the fees for the second (+) child within a family who is enrolled in a program.

See program catalogs for updated program fee schedules.

Wild Bear is licensed as a School Age Child Care program by the Colorado State Department of Social Services. Most of our programs operate at a capacity of between 12 and 21 children. State Law requires our programs to be staffed at 15:1 child: adult ration. However, we strive to maintain an adult/child ratio of 1:8. Enrollment is available to any child and for any program as space is available

Supervision and Behavioral policies

3.2 Supervision

- 1) For each group of 30 or fewer children cared for by the center, there must be at least one program leader providing supervision, plus additional staff.
- 2) By the limits of our license issued by the state, there must be one staff for every 15 children in attendance. However, Wild Bear strives to maintain an 8:1 student: adult ratio.
- 3) By the limits of our license issued by the state, when 8 or fewer children are present, there must be at least one program leader on duty and a second staff member on call and immediately available in an emergency.
- 4) At all times, staff **MUST** be actively supervising the children.
- 5) For safety reasons, Wild Bear encourages the use of a "Buddy System" during programs. Staff is encouraged to establish pairs of "buddies" on the first day of each new program. This is particularly important during field trips, and in the event of an emergency.

- 6) Children are not allowed to leave rooms within sight of instructor without the permission of an adult. Staff must know where the children are at all times.

3.3 Behavioral Policies

- 1) When an instructor is teaching a lesson, children should be focused and listening. Children should not be wandering around doing other things, talking to each other or playing when the instructor is teaching. Instructors need to implement strategies for maintaining a focused group, as covered during Staff Training.
- 2) Children are expected to respect each other, the staff and the Wild Bear materials. Destruction of materials is never okay at Wild Bear.
- 3) All teaching staff must participate in the Wild Bear Discipline Training (conducted during Staff Training week) before working with children.
- 4) Staff should hold high expectations of students. Clear expectations and consequences must be laid out at the beginning of every program.
- 5) In the event that a child should misbehave during a program at Wild Bear (ie, physically or verbally aggressive or disrespectful behavior, use of profanities, continuously disruptive behavior, or defiance of authority), the instructor is expected to take action immediately by privately talking to the child. If the behavior persists, the instructor will inform the Executive Director, who will meet with the child and the instructor. If the behavior persists, a conference will be held with the parent. Instances of these behaviors and actions taken must be documented in writing and given to Executive Director to be placed in the child's file. If the behavior continues, the child will be removed from the program without refund. Parents are informed of this policy and sign a contract with the registration packet.
- 6) Staff need to be mindful to limit physical contact with children, as physical touch can be easily misinterpreted. Make sure that all interactions with children are respectful, appropriate and non-aggressive. If necessary, sit down with children to discuss what kind of touch is healthy and appropriate (example: high fives, brief hugs, hand-holding). In general, ask that children keep their bodies to themselves.
- 7) Under no circumstances should a staff member be alone with a single child. Staff members need to protect themselves by remaining where their interactions with children can be observed at all times.

Missing/Lost Children

Staff members are required to perform head counts throughout all of our programs. With our small student to staff ratio, it is unlikely that we may be faced with a lost or missing child. However, it is very important for you to know that we do have a procedure and policy should this unfortunate circumstance arise. Staff members will notify the Executive Director immediately when it is suspected that a child may be missing. Staff will look for the child for 15 minutes. If the child is not located, the Police will be called by dialing 911. After the Police have been notified, the parents will be notified of the situation.

All staff members are trained to be observant and aware of their surroundings. Any suspicious persons or activities will be reported to the Executive Director and appropriate law enforcement immediately.

Health Policy

For the protection of all children, if illness is noticed after a child's arrival to Wild Bear, the child may be separated from other children until the parent or other authorized person can pick up the child. The ill child's parent will be notified immediately for immediate pick up. When a child is ill, the parent must take responsibility to provide alternate care.

The child may not return that day if the following are detected:

- a) Abdominal pain – Parents will be called if it doesn't lessen in one hour.
- b) Fever – Because a fever over 100.6 is usually a sign of infection, parents will be called to pick up their child.
- c) Vomiting – If a child vomits while at Wild Bear, parents are required to pick up their child.
- d) Rash – Parents will be notified in the case of an unusual rash.
- e) Pink eye/conjunctivitis – Parents will be notified and the child will be sent home. The child should definitely see a doctor because it is very contagious.
- f) Chicken Pox – The child may not return to Wild Bear until blisters have formed scabs.

During a non-life-threatening emergency where medical attention is needed, parents are notified before medical arrangements are made. Parents are responsible for directing staff to the appropriate medical service and parents are responsible for all medical expenses. If parents cannot be reached, the emergency contacts listed in the child's file will be contacted. If none can be reached, appropriate medical services will be arranged as needed in accordance with provisions agreed to by parents on the authorization form in the child's file. **No employee or staff member will ever transport a child for the purposes of medical treatment unless given permission by a parent or guardian.**

Staff are required to fill out an accident report (which instructors will carry in their First Aid kits at all times) should an accident occur and parents are asked to sign. A copy will be placed in the child's file and a copy will be sent home. All incidents involving a bump to the head shall be communicated with parents.

Sunscreen Information

Your child's instructors will assist with applying sunscreen 15-30 minutes before outdoor activities. It is the parent's responsibility to provide sunscreen with a minimum SPF of 15 and to apply it prior to attendance each morning. In the event that your child's sunscreen is not readily available you must authorize Wild Bear to apply sunscreen provided, on the health information page of the Intake packet. If you choose not to have Wild Bear apply available sunscreen, you must let us know on the registration form.

Medical Emergencies

When an emergency arises, every effort will be made to contact parents, guardians or an emergency contact. In the event of a possibly life threatening emergency, the person in charge will make the decision whether to call emergency medical services (i.e. ambulance, fire, rescue, 911). After emergency medical services are contacted, the parents are contacted and the Wild Bear Director is also notified. CPR and First Aid may be administered to the victim by qualified staff members if needed.

Field Trips in Wild Bear Vehicles: Mountain Program only

- 1) Wild Bear transports children via the Wild Bear Club wagon, Dodge Van, and Toyota Sienna. Staff is permitted to operate these vehicles if they are designated by the Executive Director. This includes submitting a form testifying to a clean driving record, a copy of driver's license, and participating in Driver Safety training.
- 2) At least one staff member and an assistant (volunteers or interns included) shall be on all field trips.
- 3) Staff is responsible for completing an Emergency Response Plan (ERP) prior to a field trip.
- 4) Staff must carry an ERP, first aid kit, medical forms, and cell phone (turned on).
- 5) All driving staff MUST adhere to the following rules at all times:
 - I. Check the following before every trip: mirrors, windshield wiper fluid, tire pressure.
 - II. Staff is responsible for safely transporting children across all parking lots. One staff member will lead the group of children, and one staff member will bring up the rear. Once the group has reached the vehicle, children shall wait their turn to board the vehicle.
 - III. Passengers must be loaded toward the front of the van. Rear seats remain empty if the van is less than full. Children may not occupy the passenger seat.
 - IV. Staff (including non-drivers) is required to check all students to be sure that they are adequately buckled. Two or more children must never be restrained in one seat belt. Children must be instructed and encouraged to keep the seat belt properly fastened and adjusted.
 - V. The program instructor will take a head count and check to see that all belts are secure before shutting vehicle doors. Children who are required to ride in booster seats must be secured in a booster seat.
 - VI. Children shall not open or close the vehicle doors.
 - VII. The driver will wait to place the key in the ignition until EVERY passenger (driver included) is safely buckled in (snug around the waist—loose seatbelts are completely ineffective).
 - VIII. Passengers must keep all body parts inside the vehicle at all times.
 - IX. All drivers MUST obey the rules of the road. Van operators should understand that going over the speed limit, failing to obey traffic signals, and aggressive driving all greatly increase the risk of rollover and do not constitute responsible driving.
 - X. Loose items must be safely secured from the floor to avoid obstructions to the driver (e.g. a water bottle could roll under the brake pedal).
 - XI. Cell phones MUST be turned on at all times, and in the hands of an adult passenger. Battery power should be checked prior to the program. Drivers shall never operate cell phones while driving.
 - XII. The adult in the passenger seat must act as navigator.
 - XIII. Radios must remain off to ensure good communication with passengers.
 - XIV. Seat belts must remain secured until the engine is off and a staff member opens the door.
- 6) Wild Bear Instructors shall take the cell phone on all field trips to report emergencies of any kind and to be contacted by families in the event of a family emergency. PLEASE KEEP THE

PHONE ON (AND OFF MUTE) AT ALL TIMES. Be sure to charge the phone upon return to site. Children must be supervised at all times including during emergencies.

Child Pick up/Drop off Policy

A sign in/sign out sheet must be signed by an authorized person listed in the child's files when the child is dropped off and again when the child is picked up. Under State law, according to the Department of Social Services and Colorado Department of Health, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to leave and pick up their child and to ensure that the staff has been made aware of the fact that their child has arrived or left.

If any other person other than the child's parent or guardian is to pick up the child, the Wild Bear staff must be notified in writing. If an emergency situation should arise, verbal notification is sufficient. This individual must be listed within the child's file or a personal note must be written from the parent. Staff is required to check identification and receive permission from the parent before children can be released to unknown individuals.

RTD Shuttle:

Wild Bear Center chaperones children on the RTD bus to join in the Mountain Program in Nederland. Parents escort their children and sign their child in with Wild Bear Staff at Settlers Park at 1st and Canyon at the mouth of Boulder Canyon. Children must be signed out with Wild Bear staff at the RTD bus stop at 6th/Canyon the Justice Center. Children are supervised at a 10:1 ratio and all sit together on the bus. Staff organizes songs, riddles, stories to make the ride up and down the mountain focused and fun. Children are not allowed to bring electronics such as video games, iPod, phones or other electronic devices on the bus. Children are not allowed to join our programs without proper paperwork filled out.

Late Pick Up Policy

Parents are required to pick up their child by the program's end. See individual program brochures to be sure of end time for your child's program. In the event that an authorized person does not pick up the child by the designated time, late fees will be charged. Should a parent continuously pick up after closing hours, a late charge will be assessed at \$5 for every 5 minutes (see financial policy). If an authorized person does not pick up the child within 15 minutes, parents are called. If 1/2 hour from the program's closing time, staff will call the emergency contact listed in the child's file. If an authorized person does not pick up the child within one hour from the program's closing time, Social Services will be called and the child will be placed in protective custody. The child will be released to parents or authorized persons at the discretion of Social Services.

Absences and Tardiness

If a child will not be attending Wild Bear due to an illness or other reason, it is the parent or guardian's responsibility to inform the staff. Please call Wild Bear at 303-258-0495 to inform us of such occasions! Parents will be required to make other arrangements for care if a child arrives late and thereby misses his or her program due to departure on a field trip. In some instances arrangements may be made for the late child to meet the group if the parent can transport him/her to that location.

Emergency Medication Administration

Wild Bear staff members **may not legally administer** emergency medication to a child unless accompanied by a Doctor's written notice. Medication forms can be found online to be filled out by your doctor and returned to Wild Bear upon enrollment in programs. The medication prescribed must be in the original container bearing the original pharmacy label, which shows the prescription number, date filled, doctor's name, directions for use method of administration and frequency and the child's name. Medication is kept in a locked storage, out of reach of children, when not being used. When no longer needed, or when expired, medications are returned to the parents or destroyed and parents are notified. Parents will be asked to sign a medication slip for each medication given, noting the time to be given, dose, frequency, method, and number of days to be given. In no case will a Wild Bear staff member administer a dosage in excess of the maximum recommended on the label without written direction by a physician. All administration of medication must be logged in the Medical log.

Children's Belongings, money and toys

Wild Bear provides a place for children to store personal belongings. We recommend that all belongings that come to Wild Bear be labeled with your child's name. Labeled belongings usually end up back with the child.

We ask that children leave money and toys at home. This prevents your child from losing his prize possessions and avoids distraction during exciting learning moments! Wild Bear also asks that children leave all electronic devices (cell phones, games, etc.) at home.

Lost Belongings

A common sight at Wild Bear is a parent asking a bewildered student "Where did you leave your lunch box?" or "How did you get your shirt dirty?" Please remember they will lose things and get dirty. By minimizing what your child brings to Wild Bear, you will cut down on the amount of lost items. Leave new, expensive things at home. There will be a Lost & Found at Wild Bear where you can check for all abandoned items. While we make every effort to be sure your child leaves with what they came with, we cannot be responsible for things left behind at Wild Bear. Expect that your child will be involved in his/her most important work - having fun. This fun may be messy. And drop by Wild Bear to check the lost and found located in the classroom!

How to Come Prepared

Participants enjoy a rich variety of scientific studies such as Entomology, Ornithology, Hydrology, etc. supplemented with guest scientists and hands on activities. Children should come prepared each day for an active outdoor experience. Each day students should bring lunch, snacks, backpack, plenty of water, sunscreen, comfortable walking shoes, rain gear, sunglasses... and a positive attitude.

Lunch and Snack

Wild Bear does not provide meals to its participants. During Full Day programs and summer programs, students are required to bring a sack lunch including an extra morning snack. Children are allowed to eat only during designated times. We do not allow children to share food, as it becomes a health issue concerning passing germs and unknown allergies. Parents are expected to note and communicate any food allergies on the Health Form within the Intake Packet.

Visitor Policy

During the school year, all visitors to the school must sign in and out on our visitor sign-in sheet located on the front desk at the Wild Bear Mountain Ecology Center. Visitors must list name, address, time of visit, and purpose of visit/interests.

Parent Involvement

Parent participation is a great asset to all of our programs. Parents are welcome to visit Wild Bear at any time. This is a great opportunity for us to all work together to ensure an exciting summer for your child. We welcome parents to join any programs. Come join the fun!!!

Child Abuse policy

All staff are required to read and sign a statement clearly defining child abuse and neglect pursuant to state law and outlining the staff member's personal responsibility to report all incidents of child abuse or neglect according to state law. If staff members have reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or who has observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect must immediately report or cause a report to be made of such fact to the Boulder County Department of Social Services, Nederland Police Department or Boulder County Sheriff's Department.

If suspected child abuse occurred at Wild Bear, the report of suspected child abuse must be made to the above-recommended agencies. If the suspected child abuse did not occur at Wild Bear, the report of suspected child abuse must be made to the local law enforcement agency in the community in which the incident is believed to have occurred.

If a parent suspects child abuse at the Wild Bear Mountain Ecology Center, it should be immediately reported to the Boulder County Department of Social Services at 303-441-1240 and to the Nederland Police Department at 303-258-3266 or the Boulder County Sheriff Department at 303-441-3650.

Cancellations

If weather threatens the safety of Wild Bear patrons, programs may be cancelled at the discretion of a Wild Bear staff member and approved by the Executive Director. Participants will be reimbursed for all programs that Wild Bear has decided to cancel.

When a family has registered and paid for a program and decides to cancel, fees will be refunded if cancellation is made at least 3 weeks prior to the program. After that fees will be refunded *only* if your child's space can be filled. In all cases, a \$25.00 administrative fee will be retained.

Play Time

Indoors: Children have choices during playtime to engage in any games, activities or toys that are provided by Wild Bear. Instructors often will organize group games which children can participate in at their own discretion. Wild Bear takes group bathroom breaks. There is a bathroom pass for girls and one for boys should your child need to go outside of the group time. Children are never to leave a room without informing staff of their destination.

Children should wear comfortable play clothes and shoes that will not hinder running, playing or other various activities. Playtime is scheduled every day and included in every Wild Bear program. Toys from home can be brought but are only allowed out during playtime. Children who bring toys must be prepared to share.

Outdoors: Weather permitting, we try to play outside as much as possible. (Children should be prepared for outdoor play including hat, mittens, boots, and coat and if appropriate snow pants. In the wintertime often our outdoor play area is snowy and/or muddy.)

Television and Video

Television is not a part of our programs; however educational videos are sometimes used as a teaching tool. All educational videos are previewed by staff to ensure the appropriate addition to our scientific study. Instructors actively watch with the children and facilitate discussion about the scientific subject matter of the video.

Program Evaluations

We are open to and embrace any and all feedback. Please feel free to give us feedback at any time of the year. You may schedule an appointment with a staff member or the Executive Director at any time to discuss your family's needs.

Parents will be asked to fill out evaluations at the end of most programs. Your feedback is vitally important to us and helps us to constantly improve and provide quality programs. Please take the time to tell us how you feel we are doing and provide any suggestions or comments about your expectations of Wild Bear Mountain Ecology Center. We occasionally release surveys if you could please find the time to fill them out we would appreciate it!

To File a Complaint About this Facility Contact:

The Colorado Department of Human Services
Division of Child Care
1575 Sherman Street
Denver, Colorado 80203-1714
Or Call
303-866-5958 or 1-800-799-5876