



**Parent Handbook**

Revised January, 2011

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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.

## **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, 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.

### Contact Information

Registrar's office: 303-258-0495, Education office: 303-258-0495, During Summer 2011: 303-258-0495, Executive Director Cell #: 303-588-0299, Instructor Cell numbers: 404-441-1784, 303-746-2042, 802-324-1580

### School Year Program Hours

Afterschool 3:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.  
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.- 3:30 p.m.  
Boulder Programs: M- Th 8:30a-12:30p

Wild Bear Center is closed on New Years Eve, New Years Day, Memorial Day, July 4, Labor Day, the day before Thanksgiving, Thanksgiving Day and the day following Thanks giving, Christmas Eve and Christmas day.

### Weather policies

#### **Flood:**

- If it is raining steadily and very hard during a field trip, Staff are instructed to return safely to Wild Bear Center.
- If extreme weather makes returning in the vehicle unsafe, staff are 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 do their best to lead the group quickly to the safety of the vehicle. Staff are 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 are instructed not to lie flat: making themselves as small as possible and have minimal contact with the ground.
- Staff are 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 8:30-12:30 in the morning, avoiding the hottest time of the day. 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.

### **Water Hazard Safety Policies:**

Wild Bear Center enjoys offering workshops at Nederland’s Park, Chipeta Park. This park is bordered by the Middle Boulder Creek, which in the early summer months flows deep and fast. This creek leads to the Boulder Reservoir, which is shallow on its beaches. The Chipeta Park Pond is also a place for Staff to note potential hazards with children.

#### **Prevention of Water accidents:**

- Wild Bear MUST maintain an 8:1 children:adult ratio at all times at the Park.
- No Child may be in or within 10 feet of the creek, pond or reservoir without direct supervision by responsible adults.
- Wild Bear posts warning signs on the pavilion at the Park to state that children are not permitted without an adult beyond the point of the pavilion.
- Wild Bear Center shall always keep a buoy and life pole available when any program is at the park. All staff shall wear whistles to announce emergency situations to call for help.

If the unfortunate incident occurs where a child has fallen in the creek, staff are trained to throw the buoy, use the life pole to pull the child out. Second adult blows the whistle and calls 911 for assistance. Emergency protocol is then performed depending on the level of the accident.

### **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

#### **Dogs**

1) 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 attempt 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.

### **Animals**

When out in the woods, it is always important to respect the wildlife that live 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, here are a few tips from the Colorado Division of Wildlife (taken from <http://wildlife.state.co.us/WildlifeSpecies/LivingWithWildlife>).

#### **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.

### **Other Animals:**

- 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.

### **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.

### **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**

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!

**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.

**Registration Policies**

- Spaces are limited and reserved only with payment.
- Send in completed Registration Form along with full payment. If full payment is an obstacle, please contact Wild Bear for payment plan information. You will not be added to a list without payment. Discounts do not apply with payment plans.
- When we receive your Summer Registration Form and payment, we will send you program confirmation and an intake packet.
- All attendees of 2011 workshops must fill out 2011 (all enrollees do this annually for summer programs) Wild Bear forms at least one week prior to attending.
- Wild Bear provides a 10% discount on the balance of your second child's tuition.
- 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 a space becomes available.
- Wild Bear Center offers scholarships to qualifying families. Generally, if you are a Free and Reduced Lunch participant with your school district, then we can provide you with a scholarship. These are provided to you through our donors. Please request a scholarship application to determine eligibility. Wild Bear also accepts Boulder and Gilpin County Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). Discounts do not apply to scholarships.
- Wild Bear accepts cash, check, Visa and Mastercard.

**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

**Fee Schedule:**

The Wild Bear Federal Tax ID is # 84-1352764

To reserve a spot in any program, the program fee must be paid in full. If payment is not made and the child has participated in a program, a bill will be sent. Any balances that are past due will be assessed an additional 5% late fee. It is never our intention to charge a large fee for our services, but as a small nonprofit Wild Bear struggles to continue to provide quality educational programs. Payment plans can be arranged, if necessary.

**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 are 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 Clubwagon and Dodge Van. Staff are 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, cell phone (turned on), and radios with them at all times.
- 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 are 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) are 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 the Watershed School at 1<sup>st</sup> and Canyon at the mouth of Boulder Canyon. Children must be signed out with Wild Bear staff at the RTD bus stop at 6<sup>th</sup>/Canyon the Justice Center. Children are supervised at a 10:1 ratio and all sit together on the bus. Staff organize 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, ipods, 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.

#### **Medication Administration**

Wild Bear staff members **may not legally administer** medication to a child (**over the counter or prescribed**) unless accompanied by a Doctor's written notice. Medication forms can be found in your packet of information to be filled out 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 (no nuts or nut butter, please—some of our kids are very allergic!), 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.

### **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, 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!

## **Board List**

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Andrea Pearson  
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Denver, Colorado 80209  
w (303) 390-2537

### **Wild Bear History**

Since 1995, Wild Bear has been committed to serving the community by providing top quality and affordable educational 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, growing to serve over 20,000 people of all ages over the last 5 years. Founded by an elementary school teacher, Wild Bear's passionate vision was inspired by the belief that learning does not just begin and end within the classroom walls, 9am-3pm Monday-Friday during 9 months of the year, but should occur every day and all day and throughout our lives. Wild Bear has always been committed to providing youth with opportunities outside of the formal classroom to study and understand their backyard, after school, on days off from school and during the summer months. Wild Bear supports working families, evidenced by its commitment to long hours of service (8am-6pm during the summer, 3pm-6pm during the school year) and by providing scholarships to qualifying families. During this fiscal year, through its scholarship fund, Wild Bear Center has provided 15 families with almost 3,500 hours of programs at a free or reduced tuition. Through an application process that is modeled after Boulder Valley School District's Free and Reduced Lunch program, Wild Bear Center offers free and ½ priced workshops to all qualified families. Wild Bear is known for its high quality and affordable programs for youth (programs averaging \$7 /hour) as well as its ability to bring the community together to make a difference.

Wild Bear serves an important niche, providing the only school year program in the Nederland community to elementary age youth when school is not in session. In 2005, after being displaced by a roof collapse at the Nederland Community Center where Wild Bear was housed, Wild Bear's youth program relocated to Nederland Elementary School, providing a very convenient location for youth and their families to access the program. This has also facilitated a stronger relationship with Nederland Elementary School (NES), where Wild Bear supports teachers in their efforts to provide high quality science experiences in the classroom.

Wild Bear has accomplished a tremendous amount over the last 15 years, serving tens of thousands of people through youth and family workshops. In 2000, Wild Bear was a key partner in the preservation of land at Mud Lake, removing over 30 tons of trash and now has received Boulder County approvals for the state-of-the-art Mountain Ecology Center to be sited there. These goals were accomplished on a modest budget, without a continuous space in which to operate. Wild Bear Center has moved 8 times over the last 12 years.

Now, through generous donations from community members, Wild Bear Center will be opening a small nature center in downtown Nederland, a more permanent space where visitors and locals alike can engage in our signature workshops, enjoy exhibits highlighting the local and global environment, and contemplate our impact thereon. This space will engage children, adults, and families in both free and fee-based ongoing learning opportunities. It will also house *Wild Earth Goods*, a fundraising vehicle in the form of an ecologically conscious art & gift shop. This will allow for expanded workshops for families, teens and adults as well as free exploration opportunities for the community. Until further notice, Wild Bear Center will continue to operate its youth programs out of Nederland Elementary School.

Through generous support from foundations and donors, Wild Bear Center has become a recognized environmental education organization serving the Greater Denver area. Wild Bear was the proud recipient of El Pomar Foundation's Award for Excellence in 2006.

**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