



Youth Wilderness Program Risk Management Policies & Behavioral Expectations

Nothing is more important to SBFC than the health and safety of our participants. Our policies regarding working with youth are in accordance with OSHA laws and regulations, United States Forest Service regulations, and the most current industry best practices. All of our staff are trained to work with youth accordingly. Please review the following policies prior to program participation. If you have any questions, please reach out to youth program director, Ian Harris, at iharris@selwaybitterroot.org or 406-548-7243. A more robust list of policies can be provided upon request.

Behavioral Expectation

Youth Wilderness expeditions provide rewarding experiences for exploration, growth, learning, and fun. However, crews work and recreate in some of the most remote and rugged landscapes in the lower 48 states. We are fortunate to call the Wilderness our “office”, but this comes with an inherent risk. A single participant’s poor or risky behavior can impact the safety of the entire crew.

Youth participants are expected to treat each other, themselves, and SBFC staff and equipment with respect. Participants are expected to follow the crew leader’s instructions, remain safety-focused at all times, and maintain a positive attitude. Any act or threat of physical violence, sexual conduct, or physical or verbal harassment will not be tolerated, and will result in the youth’s removal from the field. Likewise, the possession or use of drugs, alcohol, or weapons will not be tolerated.

General Policies

- No youth will ever be unsupervised. Participants will always remain in groups of at least three people.
- Youth will not work more than 8 hours each day, or more than 40 hours within a week.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE), such as hard hats, eye protection, and work gloves must be worn at all times when working with tools.
- Youth must be 16 years old to operate a crosscut saw.
- There will be at least two communication devices on every expedition.
- In the event that we need to cross a creek, all participants must wear creek crossing shoes with an ankle strap.
- Participants are welcome to bring phones or digital cameras, as well as power banks or small solar chargers. No other electronic devices are allowed. This includes game consoles, portable speakers, and music or video devices other than phones.
- Unrelated youth of different gender identities may not share tents. Unrelated youth of the same gender identity may share tents with written permission from both parents or guardians. Please plan accordingly prior to the expedition.
- Youth must remain in their tents at night (except to go to the bathroom), and must wake the expedition leader in the case of emergency.



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- No alcohol, tobacco, or marijuana will be permitted.
- Participants may not bring firearms onto an expedition.
- Youth may bring a personal knife, but the blade must be no longer than three inches.
- Youth may swim in calm waters, but only under adult supervision.
- Participants may bring their own bear spray with permission from a parent or guardian. An instruction on the proper and safe use of bear spray will occur on the first day of the expedition.

Medical Policies

- Every overnight expedition will have a leader with a current Wilderness First Responder certification or higher, and each crew will have two first aid kits.
- All medication belonging to youth will be collected at the start of the expedition, and held in a locked bag by the crew leader. Medications will be made available to youth at the instructed times and logged by the crew leader. **Medications must be presented to the crew leader in the original containers that display the youth's name, dosage, and instructions. Please only bring enough medication needed for the duration of the expedition.** Exceptions will be made for epinephrine auto-injectors, insulin, ibuprofen, and birth-control. These things can remain in the youth participant's possession.
- Youth participants' medical history forms will be held by the youth leader in sealed envelopes, only to be opened in case of emergency. **Please submit the medical history form prior to the start of the expedition.** Information will be destroyed after the expedition.