



2022 Parent Handbook

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

### Voyager Youth Programs Mission Statement

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

Welcome to Voyager Youth Program 2022 Summer Enrichment Program! Our programs offer your child a fun and safe environment in which to explore, test skills, and build relationships.

Voyager offers two separate programs for younger and older children. The younger group will consist of children ranging from ages 5 - 7 and the older group ranging from ages 8 - 11. A majority of our summer camp will take place outdoors with a few hours spent indoors.

On Mondays, Your child will be doing an adventure in or around town, similarly on tuesdays. On Wednesdays will be hike days and Thursdays will be Pool days. Below are the dates and themes for each week of camp. If you have any questions please feel free to reach out to:

**Alex Durham**

Executive Director

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

(970)318-1218

**Madison Gustafson**

Program Manager

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

(940)368-6530

### **2022 Camp Themes all Camps run Monday-Thursday**

#### **June**

May 31 - June 2: Wheels Week

June 6-9: Outdoor Adventure Week

June 13-17: Garden Week

June 20-23: Artist Week

June 27-30: Science Explorers

#### **July**

**July 4-7: VOYAGER CLOSED**

July 11-14: Rocket Week

July 18-21: Olympics Week

July 25-18: Animal Week

#### **August**

Aug 1-4: Crime Stoppers

Aug 8-11: Western Week

Aug 15-16: Sources Week

Aug 22-26: *Cabin Carnival*

*\*This year we will not be going to Bananas Fun Park, Instead we will be doing an end of the year party for families at the Ridgway Reservoir.\**

## REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT

The State of Colorado requires that we have a completed enrollment packet for every child in the program, updated annually for each child. Please understand that no child can participate until we have updated/completed enrollment. We encourage you to fill out the enrollment forms completely using our online system and have then done **a week** before camp starts. Enrollment paperwork is good for one year, then must be completed again to obtain updated records from families participating.

### **Enrollment Materials Checklist:**

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enrollment form                   | + Statement of Health Status form |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contact authorization form        | + Certification of immunization   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Permission and authorization form | + Behavior Contract               |

## FEES AND PAYMENT POLICIES

**Summer Enrichment Cost:** Cost for days for summer enrichment are \$40/day.

You must Register your child in advance/pay in advance in order to attend. Payment and enrollments will be processed through our website. A detailed statement of payment will be sent out by the first of each month if your child was registered.

## Program Costs

### **After-School Programs**

\$4/hr

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

\$40/day

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE\*

Scholarships for TANF Eligible Families Experiencing Economic Hardship: Income <\$75,000 Childcare	Up to \$18,000 for contract period
After School Care Debt Forgiveness	Up to \$2,300

## OUR PROGRAM

### Purpose & Goals:

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

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

### The Youth We Serve\*

Voyager Youth Program's enrichment programs are offered to children ages 5 - 11 years old. We split the youth into two groups ages 5-7 and 8-11.

### Our Staff

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

## PROGRAM HOURS

### **After-school Programs**

Selected days of the week - check the online program schedule for monthly changes  
Time: 3:00 pm - 5:30 pm (1.5 hours)

### **Summer Programs**

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

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

## Pick-up & Drop-off\*

### PICK UP:

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

### Late Pick Up Policy:

If you are later than 15 minutes after the pick-up time, you will owe \$10 per 15 minutes, payable upon arrival directly to the staff member that is waiting with your child. If you have not arrived after one-half hour after the chosen pick-up time, staff will make an effort to contact you and will begin to call authorized individuals on your child's enrollment forms. If no one has been reached one hour after pick-up time, Voyager staff will contact Child Protective Services to have your child picked up.

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

## GENERAL SCHEDULE

Each day the children will participate in a host of activities. Prior to signing up for our programs, you will have the option to see the topics, based on the offerings on our website. Schedules vary based on the program offered.

### Student Gear List

Participants need to come prepared for **physically active, outdoor experiences**. They will be outdoors all day through all types of weather. Please make sure your child is dressed in comfortable, weather-appropriate shoes and clothes that can get dirty.

#### *Please Pack:*

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

6. A backpack
7. Journal, pen/pencil
8. An extra layer for warmth (small fleece) or weather appropriate gear
9. Hat and sunglasses
10. Sunscreen approved and labeled with last name
11. Fidgets, if necessary for child to concentrate on

**Leave the following items at home.** These items interfere with the program's goals, create jealousy among participants, and reduce your child's engagement with the program. If any of these items appear at Voyager, staff will hold them until pick-up time. At no time will Voyager staff be held responsible for the whereabouts or conditions of any items on this list.

***Leave At Home:***

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

### **SIGN IN/SIGN OUT**

Parents or other authorized persons must sign children in at arrival and out at pick up. Parents will verbally communicate with staff, and staff will check students off and list the name of the parent that picked up their child. This helps us to provide the safest environment possible as well as provide the opportunity for us to talk with you about your child's day.

Children will be released only to those authorized by the parent/guardian on the enrollment form. It is the parent's responsibility to notify Voyager Youth Program of any changes to authorization via phone, e-mail, or text message. If someone other than these people must

pick-up your child, a written note must be sent ahead of time. Those picking up children should be prepared to show identification to staff members upon request. No child will be released to anyone who is not authorized to pick up that child.

All visitors to the site must sign in and show identification.

## ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Please inform us of any changes to your contact information as they arise so we can contact you in an emergency.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

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

## SICK CHILDREN

Children must be healthy enough to participate in the program's daily routine. We do not have the facilities to care for sick children and therefore do not allow them to attend our programs. For the safety and comfort of your child, please keep them home until they feel better and no longer present the danger of passing on their illness. **If your child becomes ill while in the program you will be required to pick up your child right away.** The child will be placed in an appropriate rest area until you arrive

## MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

Staff are trained to administer medications as needed with written order of a person with prescriptive authority and written parental consent. Voyager Youth Program may administer medications for chronic health conditions or emergency situations. Please indicate this need on your enrollment form and we will discuss requirements with you directly.

## ACCOUNTING FOR CHILDREN

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

## SUNSCREEN & SAFETY

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

## EMERGENCIES

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

In the case of a natural disaster, the established plan of action will be taken which includes prompt notification of parents/guardians, the main facility and local authorities. Emergency transportation will be provided as available with staff or company vehicles at the appropriate sites.

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

In case of an emergency in which the Voyager Basecamp is deemed unsafe, parents will be notified to pick-up students at the local Firehouse Station on 421 N Railroad St, Ridgway, CO 81432.

## TRANSPORTATION

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

## VEHICLE TRANSPORTATION

If we do use a vehicle, parents must provide written permission for a child to be transported during enrollment if we do transport students via vehicle. All drivers are certified to operate vehicles that transport children. All children are required to follow the appropriate safety



procedures at all times and can be removed from the program if they interfere with safety on the bus. All vehicles for transportation are up to standards for transporting school-aged children. All programs will have at least one approved staff member riding during our programs. In the case of an emergency on the road, we will notify parents and officials as needed, maintaining an open line of communication with staff cell phones.

### FIELD TRIPS

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

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

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

### LOST & FOUND

While the Voyager Youth Program can't be responsible for lost items, we also know that children sometimes lose things, especially in the midst of adventures. Please be sure to label your child's belongings wherever possible. Staff ask participants to account for their things at transition times throughout the day. We collect lost items and will let parents know if we have found something via email or text.

### MEALS

All snacks and meals provided by Voyager Youth Program staff will be considered healthy by standards set by USDA standards. Alternative healthy food options will be made available for those with allergies or to those that only have unhealthy snack options in their backpacks. Meals will be made available to students present in the program for four hours or more. No junk food or sugary drinks will be given to students as a meal or snack. Snacks will include one bar or portion sufficient for the size of the child.

### WATER

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

## Program Rules and Behavioral Expectations

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

### GENERAL RULES

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

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

#### **Field Trip Rules:**

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

#### **Pool Rules:**

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

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

### Video Policy

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

## Behavioral Expectation

Here is what your child can expect from Voyager Youth Program

1. We will clearly and patiently discuss the rules in advance, to all students in our program. All students must agree to the agreement before participating in group activities
2. We will be fair, and expect everyone to follow the rules.
3. If a participant does not follow the rules, we will immediately put an end to the behavior. Following this, we will calmly discuss what behavior was a problem (i.e. not safe, not kind, or not appropriate), why it's a problem, and what consequences will occur if they continue with their behavior
4. If consequences are necessary, they will be fair and logical, and will never interfere with the child's physical needs or dignity.
5. Consequences will consist of this progression, except in extreme cases where safety for any member of the group is compromised.
  - Removal from the situation
  - Opportunity to calm down, and then to discuss the situation with staff and/or other students involved
  - Opportunity to rectify the situation (clean up, apologize, fix what was broken)
  - Opportunity to rejoin the activity and group with a group discussion to talk about the behavior and its effect on the group.
  - Communication with parents/guardians will be made at the end of the program if required.

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

1. Opposition, hostility, or defiance of adults in settings that compromise group safety or program delivery

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

### SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCE

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

## INSTRUCTOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR OUTDOOR PROGRAMS

### QUALIFIED INSTRUCTORS

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

### VOLUNTEERS

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

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES SPECIFIC AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

## SWIMMING

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

## ROCK CLIMBING

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

## HIKING

- A minimum of 2 Voyager Youth Program staff members will accompany all groups on hikes. Both staff members will have a current First Aid & CPR + AED.
- Staff members will be equipped with risk management and emergency plans for every itinerary.
- Selection criteria for hiking: hiker's age, physical condition, and experience, seasons, weather trends, methods of evacuation and communication, and water quality and quantity.
- Each hiker/camper will be equipped with clothing that protects against natural elements such as rain, snow, wind, cold, heat, sun, and insects.
- Before participation the children will be instructed on the following: fundamental safety procedures to follow on the trail, procedures to follow if lost, proper health and sanitation procedures on the trail, rules governing land to be hiked, potential high-risk areas, and fire precautions.
- Adequate first aid kits will be taken on all trips.

- Hiking will occur on local trails
- All trailheads will have access to a vehicle in the case of emergencies
- Adequate first aid kits will be taken on all trips.

### **BOATING AND WATER SPORTS**

- The boating supervisor will be a qualified guide and hold necessary credentials with the water crafts being used
- Whenever children are on the water they must wear a personal flotation device appropriate to the weight of the child.
- Children shall be equipped with a warning device while out on the water, such as a whistle, which can readily be heard by persons on the water. There shall be a minimum of two lookout staff members at the shoreline or on the water at any time when children are on the water in boating activities.
- At no time shall the occupancy of the craft exceed the capacity established for the craft by the United States Coast Guard standards.

### **BIKING**

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

### **BUILDING NATURAL STRUCTURES**

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

## **CHILD ABUSE REPORTING & COMPLAINTS**

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

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

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

## FINAL THOUGHTS

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

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

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