



ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS
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 PROGRAM 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 community to create an atmosphere where youth can thrive.

Our enrichment programs- After School and Summer- offers your child a fun and safe environment in which to explore, test skills, and build relationships. Voyager created these programs to give children healthy options for the hours and seasons when school is not in session. Research indicates that these programs correlate strongly with a reduction in adolescent risk behaviors that interfere with healthy outcomes.

The After School Program runs through the school year for elementary school aged children who are at least five years old (our state day care license is strict on this point.)

Our Summer Enrichment Program includes two separate programs for younger and older children. The younger group consists of children entering kindergarten to third grade (must be at least five to enroll in camp). The older group is offered for youth entering fourth to seventh grade. Some weeks we combine the younger and older groups because they are doing similar activities, but mostly the group is separated based on skill, stamina, and interests.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Voyager Youth Program
P.O. Box 709
Ridgway, CO 81432

Office: 970-626-4279
Lisa Cell Phone: 970-596-8291

Executive Director: Lisa Thomason
Executive.director@voyageryouthprogram.org

Program Director: Danelle Hughes Norman
info@voyageryouthprogram.org

www.voyageryouthprogram.org

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 download, print, and complete enrollment forms on our website and bring them to your child's first day of attendance. To streamline this requirement, it is Voyager's policy to collect updated forms for every participating child at the start of our Summer Enrichment Program in June.

Enrollment materials checklist:

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| ‡ Enrollment form | ‡ Statement of Health Status form |
| ‡ Contact Authorization form | ‡ Certificate of Immunization |
| ‡ Permission and Authorization form | ‡ Behavior Contract |

FEES AND PAYMENT POLICIES

It is Voyager's policy to collect payment on or before the date of participation in our enrichment programs. We appreciate your cooperation in helping Voyager to reduce bookkeeping costs! Voyager is prepared to process cash, checks, and Visa or Mastercard. Because our enrichment programs are state-licensed daycare, you may request a summary report of all expenditures at the end of each calendar year to submit with your tax return. Please note that only After School and Summer Enrichment Programs count, and that late fees, or enrollment costs in Voyager's sports programs are not included.

After School Program Payment: \$4/hour calculated to the nearest 15 minutes. This program takes "drop in" enrollment, meaning that children may come any day we are open, as long as we have their enrollment forms.

Payment can be provided in one of two ways:

1. **Load Advance Hours:** You can load as many hours of care as you think you may need in a week or a month through Voyager's After School Program secure login page on our website. We will notify you have 3 or fewer hours remaining so that you may load more hours. The advantage of this approach is that you only pay for the hours you use. In other words, if you pick up your child after one hour, you will only be charged for that hour, instead of for the whole afternoon's program.
2. **Payment at Pickup:** If you do not load hours of care in advance, payment is due on the day of participation at the time of pick up. If you are not picking up your child, you must arrange for payment in another way. It is Voyager's policy not to bill after the date of care.
3. **Credits:** After School Program Hours loaded online that are not used during the school year may not be applied toward participation in the Summer Enrichment Program; they will rollover into the following school year's After School Program.
4. **Refunds:** Voyager does not offer refunds on After School Program fees.

Summer Enrichment Program Payment: We encourage advance registration for our Summer Enrichment Program to help us plan for staffing and activity costs by offering discounts. However, we do accept drop-in participants when we have room. The cost for camp is \$40 per day or \$150 per week (Monday through Thursday)

1. **Advance Registration:** Advance registration means signing up and paying for camp before the first business day of the month in which your child will be attending. You will receive a %10 discount.
2. **Early Registration Discount:** If you register your child for Summer Enrichment by May 1st, you will receive the "Early Bird Special" discount of 15% off.
3. **Drop-In Registration:** If you have not registered in advance, you must call between 8:00-8:30 am the day of the program to check availability.
4. **Credits:** To receive a credit for a day of Summer Enrichment Program that your child does not attend, you must call the site to notify us before 8:30 AM on the day they will miss. Credits can be applied to future days of the program.
5. **Refunds: Voyager does not offer refunds on the Summer Enrichment Program fees.**

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Voyager Youth Program is committed to providing our enrichment program to all children in the community, regardless of their financial status. To that end, we keep our fees at or below those of comparable programs in our region.

In partnership with the Department of Social Services, we have scholarship funding for the summer enrichment program. Be sure to complete the affidavit in the enrollment packet to see if you are TANF eligible before registering online. In addition, we have a limited number of partial scholarships intended to assist families who are unable to pay the full amount due to financial hardships. Please call the office or visit our web site to request an application.

Voyager Youth Program also accepts Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) from the Colorado Department of Social Services. Please contact the Ouray County Social Services office directly for eligibility requirements at 970-626-2299.

OUR PROGRAM

Purpose & Goals: Voyager Youth Program is a youth development and substance-abuse prevention organization. That means all our enrichment programs have a purpose. Our After School and Summer Enrichment Programs are designed to accomplish three main prevention goals:

1. **Skills:** develop age-appropriate skills that will inspire confidence and encourage participants to embrace a positive, healthy lifestyle;
2. **Experience:** 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's enrichment programs are offered to children entering grades K-7. Due to our state day care licensing requirements, incoming kindergartners must be at least 5 years old to participate in Voyager. We regret any inconvenience this might cause families, but can't change the terms of our license with the Colorado Department of Human Services.

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 trainings that further their skills at group management and program design/delivery, and their knowledge of child development. All program staff are trained in CPR, First Aid and Universal Precautions.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM HOURS

Monday through Thursday after school – 5:30 PM
Full Days* 8:00 AM – 5:30 PM

*Full Days during the School Year run on district holidays and staff work days.

SUMMER ENRICHMENT PROGRAM HOURS

Monday through Thursday 8:00 AM---5:30 PM
Core Programming 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Drop Off and Pick Up Times: Children may be dropped off at 280 North Cora as early as 8:00 AM for extended care and no later than 9:30 AM to join the program. Children may be picked up between 4:00-5:30 PM. Please note, we will be taking some field trips that require us to leave sooner than the scheduled drop off time or arrive later than the regular pickup time. We will let you know in advance days that require an earlier drop off or later pickup.

Late Pick Up: If you are later than 5:30 PM to pick up your child, you will owe \$1 per minute that you are late. This is **payable upon arrival, directly to the staff person who is waiting with your child**, and who is being delayed from their own life and family because you are late. If you have not arrived by 5:30 PM, staff will make an effort to contact you, and then will begin calling the authorized individuals listed on your child's enrollment forms. If no one has been reached by 5:45 PM, Voyager staff will contact Child Protective Services. 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 variety of activities around each theme designed to help your child to realize their potential and embrace a positive, healthy lifestyle. Each day's adventures will be posted at sign-in. In general, the day is arranged as follows:

8:00–9:00 am	AM Extended Care
9:00-9:15 am	Morning snack & meeting
9:30 am	Transportation or walk to day's activity
9:30-12:00 pm	Core Programming
12:00-12:30 pm	Lunch
12:30-4:00 pm	Core Programming
4:00-5:30 pm	PM snack, clean-up, and Extended Care

Appropriate activities for the daily program will be held inside during inclement or excessively hot/cold weather.

WHAT TO WEAR & BRING

Participants need to come prepared for physically active, outdoor experiences. Please make sure your child is dressed in comfortable, weather-appropriate 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. **It is important to stay hydrated during our active days, so, if your child does not have a water bottle, we will provide one for a \$5 fee.**
3. Closed-toed shoes that are designed for physical activity (i.e. NO flip-flops, sandals, high-heels, or ballet flats)
4. A rain jacket or rain poncho
5. A bathing suit and towel for swim days every Monday

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 smart phones (youth may call parents on the Voyager phone if they need to communicate with you)
4. Items of value (jewelry, etc.)
5. Money (all costs are covered by the program)
6. Weapons
7. Fireworks
8. Toys

SIGN IN/SIGN OUT

Parents or other authorized persons **must sign children in at arrival and out at pick up.** 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. 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

Records: Voyager 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 the program. 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.

Medications: Staff are trained to administer medications as needed with written order of a person with prescriptive authority and written parental consent. Voyager 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. See "Behavioral Expectations" for details.

Sunscreen: 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 permission to apply sunscreen whenever there will be outdoor activities. 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/guardian 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 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.

In case of an emergency in which Voyager basecamp is not safe, Voyager will operate at Ridgway Town Hall at 201 N. Railroad Street until other accommodations are communicated.

TRANSPORTATION

In the Enrollment Form, parents provide written permission for a child to be transported. All drivers are certified to operate school 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.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are the core of the Voyager experience. We hope that each one gives participants a way to explore new places and activities that will inspire them to live healthy lives.

Voyager staff follow careful safety protocols to ensure that trips go smoothly and children have a happy experience- don't hesitate to ask our Program Director any questions you might have. During swimming activities, a swimming supervisor with a current American Red Cross Lifeguard Training Certificate 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 contact your Program Leader directly to arrange special circumstances like these.

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 Voyager 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 also keep a Lost & Found bucket by the door of the program room where items will wait to be claimed.

PROGRAM RULES AND BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

Voyager's enrichment programs are designed to enrich the lives of all participants. We select experienced staff and continually train to sharpen our skills at handling the behavioral challenges that can arise in a group setting.

Because we primarily serve youth in the Ridgway and Ouray School Districts, Voyager Youth Program aligns our approaches to behavior to match those in the school settings. When youth already know what is expected of them, they are able to be more successful. In 2015, we adopted the "Pyramid Model for Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Children." This is an integrated approach to discipline and behavioral issues that is used in the preschools, and has continuing relevance throughout elementary and middle school. We are happy to talk with any interested parent about how this works.

General Rules:

Voyager has simplified our rules so that all participants, whether spending the whole summer program, or just a single day, can easily grasp them. Please share and discuss the meaning of these rules with your child. These rules are:

1. Be Safe
2. Be Kind
3. Be Appropriate

Field Trip Rules:

1. Stay with the group.
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 give permission.
2. Walk.
3. Swim in the section where you are allowed (youth must pass a swim test to swim in the deep section.)
4. Follow all the rules of the pool facility and its lifeguards.

Behavioral Incidents or Issues:

Here is what your child can expect from Voyager:

1. We will clearly and patiently discuss the rules in advance, to all Voyagers.
2. We will be fair, and expect everyone to follow the rules.
3. If a participant does not follow the rules, we will immediately and calmly discuss what behavior was a problem (i.e. not safe, not kind, or not appropriate), why it's a problem, and what consequence 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:
 - Removal from the situation
 - Opportunity to calm down, and then to discuss the situation with staff
 - Opportunity to rectify the situation (clean up, apologize, fix what was broken)
 - Opportunity to rejoin the activity
 - Communication with parents/guardians as needed

VIDEO POLICY

On occasion, 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.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Voyager is housed in an ADA compliant facility. Voyager will make a reasonable effort to accommodate children with special needs. For a child with special health care needs, we must obtain written instructions for providing services from the child's parents or legal guardian and the health care provider. If the child with special health care needs does not have an existing individualized health care plan, the individualized health care plan must be completed within 30 calendar days of the child's enrollment.

Children with physical challenges, developmental disabilities, extremely challenging behaviors, or other unique patterns are welcome at Voyager. It is very important for parents to understand that our program can be physically demanding, and that, in some circumstances, these children may require their own designated staff to help them adapt to and successfully participate. Please talk with us about what your child will need in advance of registration if you anticipate that they could require a higher level of support.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

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 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 the standards of behavior.

Voyager has the discretion to immediately remove children from the Summer Enrichment Program in these cases:

1. Opposition, hostility, or defiance of adults in settings that compromise group safety (i.e. on the bus, on a climbing wall, etc.)
2. Physical violence toward any person.
3. Persistent patterns of shaming, intimidation, or harassment of another child (i.e bullying.)
4. Running away from the site or group.
5. Repeated defiance of rules in ways that compromise the safety or enjoyment of others in the group.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES SPECIFIC TO 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.

ROCK/WALL CLIMBING

- The climbing supervisor will be a qualified climber.
- Proper supervision ratios will be maintained at all times.
- All participants will wear proper fitting climbing gear and head protection.
- All ropes 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.
- Natural climbing areas will be inspected by the supervisor for the following conditions: safety from loose falling rocks and debris, adequate anchoring conditions, skill level of the participants, weather conditions and rock conditions, and accessibility in case of emergency.

HIKING

- A minimum of 2 Voyager staff members will accompany a group on hikes. At least one staff member accompanying the group will have a current first aid/CPR certificate.
- 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.

BOATING/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, shall know how to make simple bicycle repairs; and shall hold a first aid/CPR certificate.
- At least 2 Voyager 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.

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 Executive Director Lisa Thomason right away at (970) 626-4279 (Office) or (970) 596-8291 (Cell).

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'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, our programs, and our approach to youth development and substance abuse prevention, we encourage you to visit our website: voyageryouthprogram.org.

Please also feel free to call Program Director Danelle Hughes Norman with more questions at 970-626-4279.

Here's to a year filled with healthy adventures and happy memories for all!