

Dear Cabin Leader,

WELCOME! The help you are offering is an ESSENTIAL part of our Outdoor Science School program. THANK YOU!!

You've accepted an incredibly rewarding and challenging responsibility. You will be both a role model and "parent" for your group of approximately 10 children.

Most of your children will remember you for years to come. We want to help you in any way possible to make this week become a positive memory for both you and the students.

Sincerely,

*The Los Angeles County
Outdoor Science School Staff*

Can you become a GREAT Cabin Leader?

YES, if you....

- **like children.**
- **are enthusiastic and energetic.**
- **enjoy nature and the outdoors.**
- **are a good role model in behavior and appearance.**
- **are firm, fair, and friendly in dealing with children.**
- **ask for help when it's needed.**
- **have a sense of humor!**

Helpful Checklist of Things to Bring

Watch out for your comfort! New shoes and clothes can be uncomfortable and cause blisters. Older, sturdy attire is the best fashion for hiking and sitting outdoors. Label important items with your name and school name. The Outdoor Science School can also provide rubber boots and ponchos for rain or snow.

Basics

- 1 pillow
- 1 sleeping bag or 2 blanket bedroll with sheets
- 2 pairs of strong shoes with good soles including:
 - 1 pair boots (old ones don't cause blisters)
 - 1 pair tennis shoes (2 pairs if no boots)
- 6 pairs socks (heavy is best)
- 1 pair pajamas or sweat suit
- 3 pair tough pants
- 5 shirts
- 5 changes of underwear
- 1 warm sweater or sweatshirt
- 1 heavy jacket
- 1 hat and/or 1 cap
- toilet kit (comb, soap, shampoo, wash cloth, towel, chapstick, toothbrush, toothpaste, feminine needs)
- stationery and stamps/pen or pencil
- school work or reading material
- watch or clock with alarm (important!)

Seasonal Items

- Cold weather (rain, snow)
- warm hat, gloves & scarf
- heavy, warm boots
- 6 extra pairs of socks(wool is best)
- 3 more pants
- 2 more layerable shirts and sweaters
- raingear

Hot weather (early fall, late spring)

- water bottle or canteen
- sunscreen and hand lotion
- sun hat

Optional Items

- camera and film
- plastic drinking cup
- bathrobe
- daypack
- flashlight
- games, cards (no electronic games)
- hair dryer*
- small amount money (\$5)*

*Cabin leaders only!

Please leave at home:

Tobacco items curling irons, radios, knives, firearms, and scary stories. Minimal use of cosmetics, please. Encourage the kids to "go natural" with your example.

Health and Safety

Please use the following guidelines along with your sanity and ours.

1. Stay with your group at ALL times. If an emergency requires you to be away from your group, you must find another leader or teacher to supervise during your absence. Always know where your students are.
2. Send TWO students to the teachers' quarters to report any problems.
3. Immediately report any injuries or illnesses to a classroom teacher or naturalist. Send sick or injured students to the infirmary with 2 additional students.
4. Due to legal liabilities, you may not take students off campus for a hike.
5. You will receive a list of students in your cabin. The list will indicate special considerations for certain students. The following abbreviations are used:

Allergy	AL
Asthma	AS
Bee Sting Allergy	BS
Bedwetter	BW
Birthday	BD
Bowel problem	BP
Epilepsy	EP
Headache	HA
Nosebleed	NB
Prescription/Medication	RX
Sleepwalker	SW
Check Health Form	CHF
Food Allergy	FAL
See Teacher	CT
Potential Behavior Problem	!
English is 2nd Language	ESL
Learning Difficulties	SPE

Safe and fun cabin living requires that:

- Students do not enter any cabin other than their own.
- Students are not roughhousing.
- Lights are out and students are asleep or quiet by 9:30.

A Leader and a Role Model

As a cabin leader, you will be a "parent" and role model for approximately ten fifth and sixth-grade students. The students will look up to you. Not only will they be watching your every move, they will also imitate you, even walking, talking and acting like you! Remember, **YOU WILL CONSTANTLY BE TEACHING BY THE EXAMPLE YOU SET.**

Because we are a public school, smoking is not allowed! Other drugs and alcohol are also **NOT** permitted at Outdoor Science School.

To be an effective cabin leader, you will need to be a true leader. The students in your cabin need your direction and leadership, and will look to you for guidance and approval. Cabin leaders who are outstanding role models and excellent leaders are a key ingredient for an outstanding week at the Outdoor Science School.

Cabin Leader Roles

This is a big job with a lot of responsibilities. To make things easier, here is a list of cabin leader roles, including what we expect of you both inside and outside the cabin.

Cabin time...

Between activities and meals, you will be supervising your students in the cabin. Appropriate cabin time activities include journal assignments, skit preparation, showers (except for before evening programs), cabin clean-up, reading or writing, and cabin games. Make sure your group spends lots of time working on a skit to be presented Thursday night. The cabin leader coordinator will give you an environmental topic for your skit during the Monday meeting. Each student must participate in the skit, even if it's not a speaking part.

After dinner, students will have FOB time (feet on bunk). During FOB students are required to be on their own bunks for 20 minutes of rest. They may sleep, read, or write, but it must be quiet. Once the kids accept this routine, both you and they will appreciate the chance for quiet rest.

Class time...

During the day the students will go out on the trail with their naturalist for outdoor classes on natural science subjects (ecology, plants, wildlife, earth science, etc.). You will be assigned to one naturalist for the week. Your naturalist will give you specific instructions on your trail responsibilities. Be prepared to hike up and down hills between lessons and activities; hike distances vary with weather and other factors. Because you are a powerful role model, your enthusiastic participation in activities and discussions will have a strong positive influence.

As a cabin leader during class time, your responsibilities include:

1. Help the children pay attention and focus on the naturalist and the lesson. Hint: If you seem interested in the lesson, the students will be interested too.
2. Help the naturalist maintain good discipline. Hints: Speak quietly but firmly to children who are disturbing others. Encourage them to participate. Enforce hiking rules: stay on trail, don't throw rocks, don't run down hills, etc.
3. When hiking, it is best to place yourself at the end of the group. If two cabin leaders are present, be sure to separate (one cabin leader in the middle, and one at the end).
4. If there is an emergency you may be needed to assist an injured student, or take them to the infirmary.

Meal time...

In the Dining Hall, each cabin leader will supervise a table. You may be joined by a naturalist or teacher. Your role will be to encourage good table manners and behavior (i.e., saying "Please," and "Thank you," and speaking in low indoor voices) and organize the serving of the meal. Students must remain sitting down during the meal, and food should be politely passed around the table. Please listen carefully for instructions during meals. At least one time during the week, your cabin group will help with meal set-up & clean-up: before each meal the cabin group will set the Dining Hall tables with napkins, cups, and utensils. Arrive 10 minutes before the meal. Make sure all of the students have washed their hands before you arrive.

Evening programs...

Throughout the week, naturalists will present evening programs. Activities include campfires, night hikes and folk dance. Your role, aside from having a good time, will be to keep the kids focused, involved, and discourage any misbehavior. You can do this best by:

- Sitting with your cabin group!
- Singing along with songs!

Your Free Time...

You will arrange with your naturalist on Monday for scheduled time off during the week. This time off will occur while your students are on the trail with their naturalists during the day. The Outdoor Science School offers time off as an opportunity for rest, relaxation, completion of school assignments, etc. You may wish to bring a book to read or a board game to share with other cabin leaders.

Cabin leaders must remain on campus during time off. Please inform a classroom teacher or the cabin leader coordinator of your whereabouts during your time off, since we may need to find you in an emergency. You may not be in the cabin of someone of the opposite sex.

Phone calls may be made (by cabin leaders, not students) at a phone during your off time only. Also, please take showers only during your time off; you will be given at least 30 minutes per day for showers. Make sure you're on time to pick up your cabin group after trail lessons.

Sample Schedule

Time	Activity	Notes
7:00 AM	Wake-up	
7:40 AM	Meal Sets	
7:50 AM	Breakfast line up	
9:15 AM	Meet Naturalist Trail Group Meeting Lesson Lunch Lesson	
4:00 PM	Group meeting/Cabin time	
5:10 PM	Meal Sets	
5:20 PM	Dinner line up Cabin time/FOB	
7:00 PM	Evening Program	
8:45 PM	Bed time Preparation	
9:30 PM	Lights out!	

Rules and Behavior Management

The following rules have been developed so that everyone will have a safe and enjoyable time at Outdoor Science School (including cabin leaders). We ask that you respect these rules and enforce them consistently and fairly.

School Rules

1. Respect everyone and everything
2. Stay with your group at all times
3. No gum, candy, or food
4. Walk at all times
5. Stay on pathways
6. No throwing any object
7. No walking sticks
8. No roughhousing, horseplay, or fighting

Cabin Safety Rules

1. Keep all objects out of aisles
2. Wear shoes at all times
3. Keep all objects more than three feet from heaters
4. Use ladders to get up and down from bunks

Handling Problems

There will definitely be times when you have to deal with misbehavior in the cabin. Try to be both firm and positive. Recognizing and rewarding positive behavior (and improving behavior) is a powerful tool for handling discipline. Many behavior problems can be reduced or even eliminated by keeping the students occupied with games and activities.

On your first day at Outdoor Science School, emphasize to your group the importance of safety and respect for others. Use the system that the cabin leader coordinator will explain to you at the Monday meeting. Most behavior problems can be resolved by appealing to a student's common sense. The following methods of discipline are totally inappropriate:

DO NOT:

1. Yell at or threaten students.
2. Use foul language.
3. Physical punishments (e.g. push-ups, etc.)
4. Never hold, hit, or strike a child!

DO:

1. Recognize both good and bad behavior.
2. Give lots of praise for positive behavior and good attitudes.
3. Give appropriate rewards for good behavior. Appropriate rewards include being leader of the line, special roles in games, first showers, etc. Allowing students to break any rules as a reward is inappropriate. Use common sense.

Cabin leaders should never take responsibility for anything except dealing with minor behavior problems. Any student involved in a fight, cabin raid, food fight, or playing with emergency equipment should be brought to a staff member or teacher IMMEDIATELY. The Outdoor Science School staff and the classroom teachers are specifically responsible for discipline.

Help!

All of the staff here at L.A. County Outdoor Science School recognize that your job is very challenging. Remember, you are not working alone. We are available to help you, so please ask for help when you need it. If you have serious problems with students or personal problems, let a staff person know as soon as possible.

Working Together

How do you help your kids to work and play together in a positive way? If you set a respectful tone in the cabin, the students will likely follow your example. Here are some important steps you can take to encourage cooperation within your group:

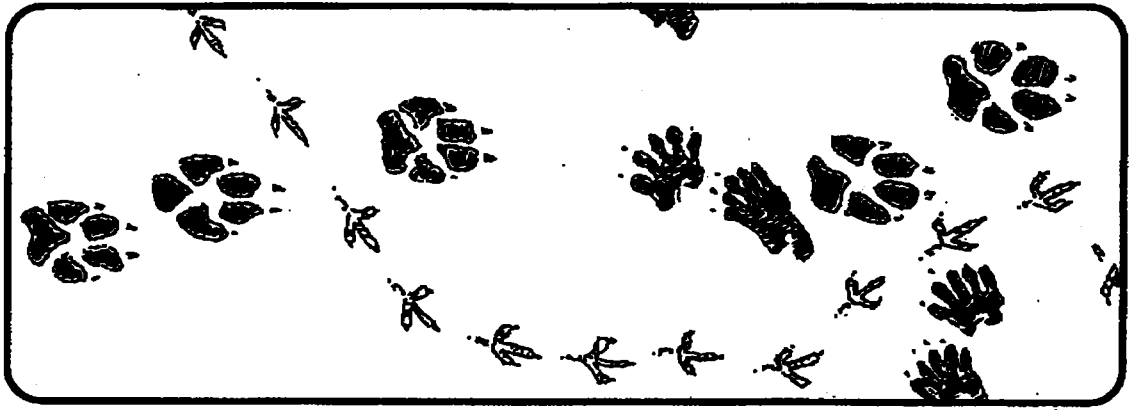
1. **Develop listening and speaking skills.** When there is a subject to discuss, sit the students down in a circle. Make sure each student has a chance to speak without interruption. A good way to do this is by using a talking stick (or other object). Only the student with the talking stick may speak, and everyone else listens until their turn.
2. **All of the students should participate in developing rules for getting along in the cabin.** If they make their own rules, they are more likely to follow them.
3. **Once a day, gather your students to briefly discuss how the group is working as a team.** Give plenty of praise whenever possible.
4. **As a cabin leader, you must actively enforce rules about respecting each other.** If you hear students calling each other names or being overly negative, quickly stop them. If you ignore it, it will probably get worse.

Cabin Games and Activities

Group games can be important in helping your cabin group achieve a feeling of togetherness. They can also help eliminate discipline problems. Make sure that no roughhousing occurs during this time. Focus on fun and cooperation. Involve everyone and avoid games that create winners and losers or competition.

The cabin leader coordinator will share some activities with you. In addition, please bring some activities and ideas of your own and share them with fellow cabin leaders. Nature topics work well and reinforce lessons. Here are a few suggestions to get you thinking:

1. **Sing songs;** teach them new ones!
2. **Name games:** Go around the circle saying your name plus the names of the people before you. "My name is ' _____ ' and I like ' _____ '" (Soccer, popcorn, etc.) Each person repeats the name and the hobby of each person before her or him. The last person repeats them all.
3. **Ha Ha!** The first person says "Ha." The next person says "Ha ha." The next person says "Ha ha ha" and so forth until it has gone around the circle. Now try it again without anyone smiling.
4. **Charades:** Two teams are chosen. Each team writes the name of a movie, book, or T.V. show on a piece of paper. An opposite team member must act out the title so his team will guess it. (Three minute time limit.)
5. **Twenty Questions:** The leader thinks of something in the room. Players have twenty "yes or no" questions to guess what it is:
6. **Group Storytelling:** The leader starts a story and develops it to a crisis point. The leader says "and then..." The next person must solve the problem and create a new situation before saying "and then..."
7. **Ooh-Ahh:** Start with the group in a circle and holding hands. The person designated as Starter gives a hand squeeze, like a bolt of electricity and says "ooh." the second person passes it to the third, who passes it to the fourth, etc. Meanwhile, the Starter sends another pulse of power in the opposite direction with an "Ahh."



Day by Day Steps for a Great Week

Monday—Starting off right!

The cabin leader coordinator will meet you today and begin your orientation. Listen carefully and ask questions. You will learn many things that will help you through the week. You will receive a schedule and suggestions for cabin activities. Get to know the naturalists, teachers, and other cabin leaders.

Getting your students...

- Take roll to make sure all your students are accounted for.
- If you are missing a student, notify the Outdoor Science School staff immediately.
- Take the group to the parking lot to pick up their luggage.
- Head with the group to your assigned cabin to get settled in.

Moving in...

- Assign bunks, making sure that sleepwalkers, bedwetters, and students with special physical needs get a **bottom** bunk. (Be discreet. Special codes will be on your role sheet. See the "Health and Safety" section.
- Make sure students are well mixed and don't separate themselves by school.
- Encourage new friendships.
- Introduce yourself to the students and help them get to know each other.
- Set the tone for a week of fun, sharing, and learning by playing name games and other activities (see "cabin games").
- Formulate a set of cabin living rules with the students. Write them down and post them where your students can see them. Let the students suggest and explain the rules. Don't allow silly rules. Typical rules are:
 - Keep your bunk and belongings clean and neat.
 - Hands off each other's belongings.
 - Treat each other with respect.
 - No foul language.
- Go over the daily schedule, including class times, cabin clean-up, FOB quiet time, bed time, and lights out.

Meal time...

- Make sure you and your group are at the dining hall on time.
- Each cabin leader must actively supervise a table.
- At least once during the week, your cabin group will be responsible for meal set-up and clean-up.

Cabin time...

- Keep your kids busy with appropriate activities (journals, skits, showers, games).
- After dinner students have twenty minutes of FOB (feet on bunk) time.
- Be sure to use some cabin time to work on skit ideas TODAY!

Evening Programs...

- Tonight's activity is a campfire program.
- Please sit with your kids to help them stay involved and behaving well.

Bedtime and lights out..

- Getting children to quiet down and go to sleep can be a challenge. To get your cabin group ready to go to sleep, follow these steps:
 1. IMMEDIATELY after the evening program, send any students requiring medication to the infirmary with a partner.
 2. Have your students brush their teeth, use the restroom, and get ready for bed. This should all be done by 9:15 p.m.
 3. The remaining time until Lights Out (9:30 p.m.) is spent on the bunks in quiet conversation, letter writing, or homework.
 4. The students may request a story. DO NOT tell any scary stories! If you feel like reading to them, turn the lights off at 9:25 and read by flashlight from the stories provided. Story time must end by 9:40.
- These steps are used to calm the kids down with quiet activities.
- If you allow the students to be rowdy until Lights Out, they will continue to be active and noisy. You must have them wind down gradually.

Monday is a key day. Start off right!

Tuesday—Setting the tone

As the students become more comfortable with you, they may test you to see what your limits are. Set the tone for the week (and save your sanity) by being firm, fair, and friendly.

Cabin clean-up...

- The group should clean the cabin each morning before breakfast.
- The cabin leader coordinator inspects the cabins while the students are on the trail.
- Rewards may be given to the cleanest, safest, and best behaved cabins.
- A list of specific duties will be given to you during your training session.

Class time...

- You and your cabin group are assigned to trail groups for day hikes and lessons.
- Before going on the trail, make sure your students use the restroom and bring their journals, jackets, cameras, etc.
- Be sure to lead your group to the meeting area on time.
- Your naturalist will give you specific instructions on your trail responsibilities.
- You are a powerful role model; your participation in activities and discussions will have a strong positive influence.

Your Free Time...

- Your time off will occur while your students are on the trail with their naturalists during the day.
- Your free time will probably include 30 minutes to take a shower at the end of every day's trail class, plus one full trail class off.
- Please take showers ONLY during your time off.
- Make sure you're on time to pick up your cabin group after trail lessons.
- Remember, cabin leaders must remain on campus during time off.

Wednesday—have an awesome time!

Make the most of the times you are with your cabin group. Take your kids outside to practice your skit, play games, or work in their journals, if the weather is good. Avoid cabin "dead time." That is when problems can start. Keep the group together at all times.

Skit checks...

- Your skit will be checked by a naturalist. The naturalist is there to give help and suggestions and to check the skit for appropriateness.
- Be ready to show a rehearsal of the skit.
- Remember to have the students practice facing the audience and speaking loudly and clearly.

Thursday—make it memorable!

Keep setting a good example for the students. On Thursday night you may need to remind the students that they are at school, and any misbehavior will have consequences either Friday or at their regular school. If you live up to their high expectations, they will probably live up to yours.

Wrapping up...

- Encourage students to exchange addresses with new friends, share highlights of the week and sign autographs.
- Keep the tone light and upbeat.
- Helpful Hint: Give out your address if you like, but not your phone number!

Friday—a perfect finish!

Friday morning the cabins should be cleaned thoroughly and all luggage packed before breakfast, if possible. Luggage should be put on the front porch until a naturalist checks your lodge room or cabin.

Thanks for volunteering to be a cabin leader at Los Angeles County Outdoor Science School. And thank you for reading this handbook to prepare for a great week!

Your Outdoor Science School Mailing Address: (Make sure you find out which of the two school sites you are assigned to.)

John Doe, Cabin Leader
Your School
Los Angeles County Outdoor Science School
P.O. Box 1561
Wrightwood, CA 92397-1561

OR

Jane Doe, Cabin Leader
Your School
Los Angeles County Outdoor Science School
23800 North Angeles Forest Highway
Palmdale, CA 93550



Los Angeles County Outdoor Science School Cabin Leader Responsibility Contract

I understand and agree to the following:

1. I understand that my primary responsibility as a cabin leader is the emotional well being and physical safety of the children in my care.
2. I agree to support and follow the rules, requirements and procedures outlined for the safe and effective implementation of the program.
3. I will be a positive role model for the children in my care, have a cooperative attitude, and participate with enthusiasm. I will exhibit good manners, consideration, and attention to instruction.
4. I understand that my responsibilities include overnight supervision of 8 to 12 children.
5. I will not use crude, abusive, sexually suggestive, vulgar or otherwise inappropriate language or conduct while serving as a cabin leader, including inappropriate jokes, sexual references and discussions of crime and drug use.
6. If I am unsure of how to appropriately handle a situation, I will contact the teachers or Outdoor Science School staff immediately.
7. I will ensure that the children under my supervision are on time for all scheduled activities.
8. I will not promote my personal beliefs or discuss or answer questions about my personal life.
9. I agree not to share or discuss personal information such as telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, websites, etc. I will not contact the families of students attending Outdoor Science School.
10. I will not bring or use tobacco, alcohol, or recreational drugs while serving as a cabin leader.
11. I understand that cell phones are for my own private use only, and agree not to share a cell phone with students. I agree to use a cell phone only during my time off.
12. I will dress modestly and appropriately for school activities in the outdoors.
13. I agree to remain on campus at Outdoor Science School at all times and will be available to help as needed at all times (if you are older than 18, you may be able to leave the site with approval of teachers and Outdoor Science School leadership staff).
14. I have never been convicted of a crime (other than minor traffic violations) and there is no legal action whatsoever pending against me. I understand that any misrepresentation or deliberate omission of a fact may be justification for termination of my responsibilities as a cabin leader.
15. I will complete any required registration forms (including parent or guardian signatures where required) and grant permission for supervising staff to obtain emergency treatment for me.
16. The Outdoor Science School, a project of the Los Angeles County Office of Education, has my permission to use photographs/video of me without additional compensation for use in brochures, web sites, marketing, advertising, training materials, or other promotions, without limitation, and at any time in the future.
17. I understand that if it is determined that I am not able to continue serving as a cabin leader, I will be sent home from the Outdoor Science School. I understand that my parents or another authorized representative will be asked to provide transportation from the Outdoor Science School to my home or school.

I have read the Cabin Leader Contract and fully understand and agree to abide by these terms and agreements.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed name: _____