

Guidelines for Visiting Teachers and Chaperones

Whether this is your first time being in charge of a group of students or you have years of experience leading children, supervision during a residential outdoor experience requires some advance preparation. Keep the following list of guidelines in mind to help make your trip a success:

1. Model the behavior we expect from the students – walk, dress for the weather, be on time, be respectful of property, others, nature, and self.
2. Expectations while chaperoning Taft staff led classes:
 - a. Encourage the students to participate. You can do this by being a participant yourself – show interest, ask questions, and ask the instructor if you can participate in games and activities alongside the students.
 - b. When a student (or the group) is trying to figure things out, don't give answers. Let the students problem solve for optimal learning opportunities!
 - c. Assist with behavior management by redirecting students who are acting in ways that are distracting or unsafe. Ask the instructor if there are other ways you can help.
 - d. Keep track of the students in the group. Notify the instructor if someone is missing.
 - e. Talking with another teacher/chaperone about unrelated things is distracting to the instructor and the group. Please avoid doing so. Please also avoid using your cell phone during the class.
3. Expectations at meals:
 - a. Please spread out so that there is at least one adult/table to monitor the students.
 - b. Encourage good dining etiquette.
 - c. Direct the organization of clean up from the table (i.e. “Let’s stack our plates and sort our silverware for the hopper.”), but let the hoppers and the Taft staff do the work. They have been trained and know the dining hall rules and where items go during clean up.
4. Expectations in the dorms:
 - a. In outdoor education settings, most accidents happen in the dorms. Be vigilant as a chaperone in that environment.
 - b. Dorm rules include:
 - i. Students can never be in the dorm without an adult chaperone.
 - ii. Only one person at a time on top bunks.
 - iii. No jumping on the beds or from one bunk to another.
 - iv. Keep hands and feet to yourself.
 - v. Pillows are for sleeping – use them only for that purpose.
 - vi. Use caution on wet or slippery floors (socks are slippery on the dry floor surface!)
 - vii. In Heckman the dorm doors meet fire codes, but they are heavy and are meant to close automatically. Direct students to be careful not to get their fingers caught in the doors.
 - viii. Turn out lights when leaving the dorms.
 - c. Be sensitive to the feelings and emotions of the students in your care. For many of your students, this is their first time away from home. They may look to you, at least partially, to step in and fill the “parent role.”

5. First aid
 - a. The campus nurse is available from 7:30 am – 3:00 pm. The clinic is located in Browne House, and the nurse is in the dining hall during breakfast and lunch. Please make sure an adult goes with students who visit the nurse.
 - b. First aid kits are located in the dorms and classrooms. A thermometer can be found in the dorm instructor rooms.
 - c. If a student leaves campus for medical care, work with the Taft coordinator to make sure the required documentation is taken care of.
 - d. If you remove a tick from a student, save it to give to the student's parents.
 - e. If a student is exposed to poison ivy, have him/her wash the exposed area as soon as possible. Poison ivy rashes take a day or two to appear after exposure, so it is rare to see them in the short time students are at Taft.
 - f. Stinging nettle rashes appear immediately. They are uncomfortable and look bad but are short-lived. The area can be washed, but the rash will go away on its own with no treatment.

6. Emergencies
 - a. Report emergencies to the office during office hours (8-4:30). After office hours, report emergencies to the campus manager-on-duty. This person's name and location is posted on the office door. During school visits, the manager-on-duty is usually Amy or Joshua, and their residences are located in the mobile home, which is west of the maintenance shop.
 - b. If emergency services need to be called, dial 911 from a cell phone or 9-911 on campus landline phones.
 - c. If a fire occurs in the dormitory at night, evacuate the students and get the manager-on-duty to coordinate the emergency response.
 - d. In the case of inclement weather, go to the interior bathrooms of the Clarksons or Grover, or to the basement of Heckman, unless campus staff direct you to a different location.

7. Protect yourself. Avoid compromising situations with students by never getting yourself in a situation where you are alone with a student. Always use the buddy system - the student, you, and someone else (student or adult.)

8. BE PREPARED! Be prepared for fun, insights, sleep deprivation, and a great deal of responsibility. (If caffeine is needed to deal with the sleep deprivation, the dining hall is open from 7 am until evening snack. Help yourself to coffee or tea! To-go cups are available, but to be really "green," bring a reusable mug.)

9. Finally, THANK YOU! The school would not be able to participate in the program without your help. Adults play an extremely significant role in the success of the residential outdoor education experience.

Thank you for sharing your time and talents with the students from your school.
We wish you the best as you strive to be friendly and fair and have fun.