



# Outdoor Program

## Parent/Guardian Information

### Overview

Trailblazing Hope Outdoors is for youth that may not have access to the outdoors; whether mentally, emotionally, or physically. We utilize nature and the outdoors as a modality of physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual healing. The immersion in nature coupled with a structured program provides the many benefits that outdoor recreation has to offer. The Outdoor Program is 4-week program that includes formal instruction that creates a foundation for their journey into the outdoors. Upon completion of the Outdoor Program your hiker is eligible to participate in our follow up program: the Adventure Experiences. This program is where hikers will participate in various outdoor recreation activities to include; hiking, kayaking, rock climbing, rappelling, mountain biking, and more.

### Hiker Application

The Hiker Application is an important piece to your student's success in the Outdoor Program.

It creates a sense of buy-in as they are actively participating in the application process of the program. It also serves to show the level of their desire to participate. Without a personal desire to be an active participant, the program suffers as a whole. We want hikers who want to be there, but also know that there is a "warming up" process when trying something new. Once the shyness wears off it is followed by laughter, new friendships, and new adventures.

### Program Activities

Each program introduces participants to basic skills and tools that will aid them in exploring the outdoors in a safe and enjoyable manner. It is the main goal of the Outdoor Program to teach foundational principles that will best serve the hikers in their future outdoor adventures. The hikers will learn about Leave No Trace, which are the guiding principles that all individuals that spend time outdoors should adhere to. They will learn about the basics of first aid and what supplies they could use to build an adventure first aid kit. They will learn about the basics of land navigation and will be familiarized with the use of a map and compass. Finally, they will learn how they can be connected in nature and how it is an extension of who they are and how being mindful in nature can reveal the many benefits it provides.

### Program Expectations

The Outdoor Program takes place outdoors and barring extreme weather we will rarely cancel. Taking that in mind it is extremely important that your hiker is dressed properly. Rain gear for rainy days, winter clothing for winter days, light jackets, and other weather appropriate clothing. Your hiker's preparation when it comes to what they are wearing will have a large impact on their overall enjoyment and participation while in attendance. Suggested items based on season:

Winter: Winter coat, gloves, hat, thick socks, snow boots or insulated hiking boots.

Spring: Rain gear (coat and pants), light jacket, hiking boots or athletic shoes (no Vans, Chucks, or other flat soled shoes).

Summer: Tech athletic shirts (wicking material), shorts or thin pants (jeans not recommended), hiking boots or athletic shoes.

Fall: Light jacket, hoodies, light gloves, hiking boots or athletic shoes.

Outdoor apparel can be expensive but there are places you can find items inexpensively: clothing consignment shops (Plato's Closet), thrift stores, off-price retail stores (TJ Maxx, Marshalls, Ross, etc.), and Facebook Marketplace. If securing these items are difficult please let us know so we can help your hiker be best prepared.



# Outdoor Program

## Hiker Application

*Please write clearly and answer every question.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you participated in the Outdoor Program before? If Yes, \_\_\_\_\_  
why do you want to participate again?

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthday: \_\_\_\_\_ Ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent(s)/Guardian(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Mobile Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Mobile Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Your Email Address (if have one): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

How do you prefer to receive news from Trailblazing Hope Outdoors regarding upcoming events and other important information?

Email

Text

Both

How did you hear about the Outdoor Program? (Circle One)

Friend

Teacher

Parent

Table at lunch Why

do you want to participate in the Outdoor Program? (to learn more about nature, to be more confident outdoors, to meet new friends, to experience new adventures)

What kind of activities would you like to do with the Outdoor Program?

What are three words that would best describe you?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe three things that you are good at:

Is there anything that you would change about yourself?

What clubs, activities, or sports are you in now? How much of your time do these activities take up?

Hiker Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# Outdoor Program FAQs

## **What is the purpose of the program?**

The Outdoor Program is a foundational outdoor recreation course meant to introduce middle and high school aged students to nature while experiencing fresh air, physical activity, hands on learning, new friendships, and memorable outdoor experiences.

## **What about transportation?**

All hikers will need to be dropped off and picked up at designated meeting locations. Each week the hikers will be checked in prior to the start of the session, so we ask that you arrive no later than 5 minutes before the scheduled start time.

## **What should I do if my hiker cannot attend a session or is running late?**

Please notify us as quickly as possible. Trailblazing Hope Outdoors utilizes the group chat platform Discord. This allows us to send and receive communication quickly. Prior to the start of each program, you and your hiker will be provided an invite link that will grant you access to our account. Hikers that are more than 10 minutes late from the start of each session run the risk of missing out on important information or having to catch up with the group on the trail and is not guaranteed to locate them.

## **What if my hiker missed a session?**

We ask that the hikers attend at least 75% of the sessions (3 out of 4). If that is not possible, we ask that your hiker withdraws from the program and register for a future program. The information that we teach is progressive in nature and builds upon itself from week to week. We are aim to create a foundation for our hikers and it is important that they have as much of that foundation in place.

## **What if family plans conflict with a session?**

Once again it is important that your hiker attends a minimum of 75% (3 out of 4 sessions) of the program. Please notify us as soon as possible of your hiker's absence.

## **What comes next after the Outdoor Program?**

Upon completion of the Outdoor Program the hikers become eligible to participate in the follow-up Outdoor Adventure Experience program. The Outdoor Program is a prerequisite as it lays the foundation for participation in the future Trailblazing Hope Outdoors programming.

## **Can other family members or I go attend the program?**

We currently only offer programming for middle school and high school students. We will be providing pop up hike events, family events, and other sneak peek opportunities throughout the year. We encourage siblings that are in middle school and high school to attend together to limit transportation requirements.

**Who will pay for activities of the hiker?**

Trailblazing Hope Outdoors aims to offer no to low-cost opportunities for its participants. Our desire is to prevent cost from being the thing that deters involvement in our programming. We cover costs through donations, grants, and other fundraising means. We try to do more with less while also providing an experience that feels professional and done with excellence.

**How often should I or my hiker be in contact with the leaders and other participants?**

We encourage group chat participation through the Discord app as we desire to cultivate a community. We will provide a hikers-only channel where they can connect with each other

**What if there are concerns or questions I have in regards to my hiker's experience during the program?**

Please feel free to contact Jonathan Slider by phone at (757)575-8353 or email at [jonathan@trailblazinghope.com](mailto:jonathan@trailblazinghope.com). He is here to make the Outdoor Program work for you and your hiker. Please do not hesitate to reach out. We would like to know about anything that concerns you as soon as possible.