

2017

Summer Camp Parent Packet



Pathfinder Ranch
35510 Pathfinder Rd.
Mountain Center, CA 92561
(951) 659-2455
www.pathfinderranch.com

Dear **Parent/Guardian**,

We would like to thank you for choosing to send your child to Pathfinder Ranch this summer. Our mission is to help build life-long memories, friendships and skills for children from diverse backgrounds. We believe in this mission, and we will do our best to provide this for your child.

Included in this document is a list of Frequently Asked Questions. The FAQ should answer most general questions, but if you have any further questions about paperwork, please contact us at (951) 659-2455 and we will be happy to help. Reviewing this information with your child prior to their arrival can better prepare him/her for camp (please note, there is also a letter for your child in this packet).

Our staff team here at Pathfinder Ranch looks forward to providing a safe and memorable summer for your child. If at *any* time you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us. Again, we want to thank you for trusting us to provide an amazing Summer Camp experience.

Sincerely,



Chris "Spo" Grumbine
Summer Camp Coordinator

Shari Walls
Recreation Director

Chris Fife
Executive Director

Dear **Camper**,

We hope that you're as excited as we are for your summer at Pathfinder Ranch! Whether it's your first time at Pathfinder or your fifth time here at camp, I can guarantee a memorable experience. Hopefully you will learn *something* new – maybe about yourself, maybe about someone else, or maybe even about our horses!

In order to be ready for camp, there are a few things you will need to do:

- **Help your parent/guardian with the packing list** (sometimes they forget things). Don't forget a water bottle! Water is very important, if you don't have a water bottle for activities, you will not be allowed to participate.
- **Be ready to try new things!** There are lots of new things to try – from new activities to crazy camp food! Open your mind to trying something...*anything*...that you may not get to try again. We will be there to help, and you won't regret it.
- **Try and pack something to wear for the week's theme.** There will be at least one night where we all get to dress up (although you could dress up every day if you wanted). It doesn't have to be a new outfit! I like to use my old clothes, ask a friend if I can borrow any old clothes, or go to the thrift store to make something to wear. Don't worry, you won't be the only one dressing up – the staff will too!
- **Come to have fun!** This means leaving all the negativity off camp. You don't need to worry about *anything* but smiling and laughing. Camp is great because you just get to be yourself – and that's exactly who we want you to be!

This will probably be the most amazing summer *ever*. We hope that you are ready to make new friends, create some great memories, and HAVE FUN – I know that we are! We can't wait to meet you! (You *are* marking the days off on the calendar until you get here, right?)

See you soon!



“Spo”
(Summer Camp Coordinator)
& the Pathfinder Ranch Staff

For your information:

- **Policies and Procedures:** Please read to understand our policies and discipline system.
- **Activity Requirements:** A description of the physical and equipment/clothing based restrictions of our activities.
- **Camper Equipment List:** Please use this list as a guideline for helping your child to pack and be prepared for their trip to camp.
- **Health and Wellness:** Explanation of Pathfinder Ranch's policy regarding the notification of parent/ guardian's by the health center staff.
- **FAQ:** A list of commonly asked questions and their answers.

Thank you for your cooperation. We are looking forward to providing your child with a fun, safe, and rewarding summer camp experience! If you have questions, please contact us.

Office Manager (for questions about registration and enrollment)

(951) 659-2455 x10

office@pathfinderranch.com

Summer Camp Coordinator (for questions about staff or programming)

(951) 659-2455 x17

summercamps@pathfinderranch.com

Fax Number

(951) 659-0351

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

Campers may arrive to Pathfinder between **noon and 12:30pm** on the Monday of their camp session. Supervision is not available to campers arriving prior to noon. Correspondingly, campers who arrive before noon will be asked to return to camp between noon and 12:30. Please use caution and follow signs to the basketball court. Once you arrive, please allow our staff to check off each of your campers as they exit the bus/van. **Departure time is between 9:30am and 10:00am on Saturday morning.**

PACKING FOR CAMP

Please take the time to thoroughly review the included packing list. Your camper’s experience, in many ways, hinges on the equipment they bring to camp. Please be sure to include all of the necessities on the packing list. Additionally, many parents / guardians find it helpful to label **everything** their camper brings. All of our activities (with the exception of the pool) require closed toe shoes. Campers without proper attire will not be allowed to participate. Water bottles are an absolute necessity, without them, campers are not permitted to attend any activities.

CAMP PHONE AND COMMUNICATIONS

Please do not expect to hear from your camper during his/her stay at camp. Campers are not permitted to use the camp phones. Pathfinder Ranch phone lines must be left open in the case of emergency. Campers may be contacted by USPS. Please note: each camp session is only 5 ½ days long. Please plan accordingly. Camper mail may be addressed as follows:

NAME OF CAMPER, Session # _____
c/o Pathfinder Ranch
35510 Pathfinder Rd
Mountain Center, CA 92561

Cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices are not permitted at camp. All such devices, if discovered, will be collected and returned at the end of the session.

CAMPER PARTICIPATION / EXCLUSION FROM ACTIVITY

Pathfinder Ranch strives to include all campers in all camp activities. However, in certain instances we do reserve the right to deny participation. These instances include but are in no way limited to: child does not have proper attire, child refuses to follow directions, child does not meet size/ height requirement, child is not medically cleared to participate, child’s Participant Information Form is unsigned or incomplete, child has untreated medical condition, child does not have proper medication, parent/guardian limits participation, child is a danger to his/herself or others, or the child’s Medication Order Form is not signed. If you wish to limit the activities in which your child will participate, please include a note in the space provided on the Participant Information Form, included with this package, detailing the requested limitations.

Age Requirement

Due to the inherent risk associated with some of our activities, minimum age requirements are in place in order to ensure that clients and Pathfinder Ranch staff members have a safe and positive experience. Minimum age requirements for participation in the following activities are as stated:

Participant Health History

Pathfinder Ranch has limited prior knowledge of the participant's health or health history, only what has been provided on the camper registration forms; for the safety of all participants and staff, Pathfinder Ranch asks that individuals with the following conditions NOT participate in certain activities:

- Over 250 lbs in body weight
- Pregnancy
- Cardiac Disease
- Received an Organ Transplant
- Currently experiencing Abdominal Organ Enlargement (ex: Mononucleosis)
- Active Orthopedic and/or joint problems such as
 - Rheumatoid Arthritis
 - Recent Fracture or Sprain
 - Current Sutures or Staples
- History of Head, Neck, or Back injuries
- Any condition that a physician has determined creates a limitation to physical activity or if you think that participating in Adventure Program activities will aggravate any previous medical condition

Proper Attire

For safety purposes, proper attire is required for all Adventure Program activities. Pathfinder Ranch instructors may ask participants to remove any accessory items (scarves, necklaces, etc.) that could pose a safety hazard. The requirements for specific activities are as follows:

Archery Team Challenge ExCEED Hiking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For safety purposes, closed toed shoes must be worn by all participants
Climbing Wall Alpine Tower Rock Climbing Zip-lines Pamper Pole High Ropes Traverse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For safety purposes, closed toed shoes must be worn by all participants Helmets are provided by Pathfinder Ranch for any and all Climbing activities, and must be worn by all climbers when climbing; helmets are also required to be worn by participants on the ground when instructed to do so by a Pathfinder Ranch instructor
Canoeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal Floatation Devices are provided by Pathfinder Ranch and must be properly fitted and worn by all canoeing participants.
Ground Based Horsemanship Horseback Riding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Properly fitted helmets must be worn by all riders; helmets are provided by Pathfinder Ranch¹ Closed-toe shoes must be worn by all participants, riding and non-riding Long pants are recommended for all weather conditions
Swimming Pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swimsuits and Swim Trunks are preferred Children that are in diapers should wear a Swim-diaper made for aquatic activities For participants choosing to wear an over-shirt: thin over-shirts only. No cotton No denim/jean shorts or pants

¹ If participants wish to bring their own helmet, they must submit it a Pathfinder Ranch staff member for inspection. The helmet must meet ASTM/SEI certifications for Equestrian Helmets, be in safe, working order, and be 5 years old or under.

CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE PROCESS

In order to attend camp, all participants along with a parent/ guardian must sign the *Camper Code of Conduct* form. Pathfinder Ranch's expectations of behavior, and the discipline process, are explained on this sheet. It includes details of the parent/guardian's responsibilities should a camper demonstrate unacceptable behavior.

Pathfinder Ranch makes every effort to follow our three strike discipline process. However, certain circumstances may arise that require a camper's expulsion from camp without prior notification of the parent/ guardian. To this point, Pathfinder Ranch reserves the right to send a camper home at our own discretion.

In the event that a camper's departure is recommended for behavioral reasons, no refund will be issued. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the parent/ guardian to pick-up a camper in a timely fashion, as determined by Pathfinder Ranch. Campers departing for behavioral reasons will be isolated from other campers and remain under the direct supervision of no less than two Pathfinder Ranch staff members. Pathfinder Ranch reserves the right to bill at the rate of \$20.00 per hour, per staff member for this direct supervision.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

A trained health staff is on-call 24 hours a day. Health staff will address first-aid and illness, as well as distribute all student medications. If your child requires any kind of specialized medical care, please contact our staff via email at summercamps@pathfinderranch.com, at least two weeks prior to your child's visit. Prior to moving into cabins, campers are checked for lice and athlete's foot. Campers suspected of having lice will require immediate departure from camp. Upon being cleared by a medical professional, they may return. Suspected athlete's foot may or may not be treated at camp, depending on the severity.

WHEN ILLNESS STRIKES:

- Campers will be sent to the camp infirmary to be evaluated by health staff.
- Any illness or injury which involves a sustained fever, repeated vomiting, severe injury, etc. will be reported by phone immediately to the parent/guardian.
- If it is determined that a camper must leave camp, a parent or guardian will be notified and asked to transport their child home.
- For everyone's benefit (yours, your child's and ours), do not send sick children to camp.

EARLY DEPARTURES

Campers will not be released to persons other than legal guardian(s) unless prior written authorization has been provided by the legal guardian(s) or by the club organizer. Before campers are released, Pathfinder Ranch must first obtain a copy of the parent/ guardian's driver license, passport, or state issued identification card.

MEDICATIONS AT CAMP

- **Rx:** In order to administer prescription (Rx) medications, we must have a Medication Order Form completed and signed by a physician and a parent or legal guardian. The pharmacist's label must be legible and display the camper's full name
- **Tylenol, Benadryl, Ibuprofen:** The Pathfinder Ranch Health Staff has standing orders from a physician to administer Ibuprofen, Tylenol, and Benadryl. It is not necessary to send these OTC medications, unless you would like them to be administered in a manner other than as directed on the manufacturer's label. This requires a completed Medication Order Form
- **Other OTCs:** In order to administer over the counter (OTC) medications, we must have a completed Medication Order Form
- **All medications (Rx and OTC):** must be non-expired and in their original containers
- Campers are not permitted to carry medications. The one exception is an emergency Albuterol Inhaler for asthma. Upon arrival to camp, the camper's parent/guardian will deliver any and all medications and the Medication Order Form to the Pathfinder Ranch Health Staff. (For Boys & Girls Club campers, the Club Liaison will deliver any and all medications and the Medication Order Form to the Pathfinder Ranch Health Staff)
- **Inhalers** must be marked with the camper's name using permanent marker. And like all medications they must be sent to camp with the original prescription container.
- **Pathfinder Ranch Health Staff will not administer injections**
- **Any medication that does not comply with the above requirements will NOT be administered**
- For any treatment a parent/guardian does not want for their child, for religious or other reasons, the parent/guardian must submit to Pathfinder Ranch, a signed statement specifying the action to be taken should the camper need care or treatment

WHEN WILL THE HEALTH CENTER STAFF CONTACT YOU?

As part of routine procedure, most medical events occurring during a camper's visit to Pathfinder Ranch will be treated and properly documented without notification of the parent/guardian. However, certain situations require that, in addition to the event being documented, the parent/guardian will be notified by a method deemed most appropriate by Pathfinder Ranch.

Instances when a parent/guardian will be notified:

- Serious injury or illness
- Suspected fractures
- Severe sprains or strains
- Moderate or repeated allergic reactions
- Asthmatic attack requiring outside medical intervention
- Loss of consciousness or unresponsiveness
- Seizure
- Snake bite
- Paramedic intervention
- Any medical situation requiring off-site treatment
- Suicidal ideation (all comments in regards to suicide, genuine or otherwise, will be treated as serious and will result in notification of the parents and possible intervention of local authorities)
- Violence against self or others
- Non-compliance with prescribed medications
- Heat stroke
- Near drowning
- Exacerbation of any pre-existing medical condition
- Situations (not already enumerated) for which the parent/guardian has made written request to be notified
- Any situation in which the health staff feels that parental notification is appropriate

Suspicion of lice or nits. Please check your child for lice prior to sending him/her to camp. Suspected cases of lice will result in our notifying the parent/guardian to remove the camper from Pathfinder Ranch until cleared by a Physician

PACKING LIST
 (to be read by **parent/guardian and camper**)

The following information is what we've found to be the best combination of clothing and personal items to set camper's up for an enjoyable week at Summer Camp...storage space in the cabins is limited, so in fact "more" is not necessarily better.

- CLOTHING**
- 2 pairs of Footwear (1 pair closed-toe w/rubber soles)
 - 6 pairs of socks
 - 6 changes of underwear
 - 1-2 pairs of long pants
 - 3 pairs of shorts
 - 1 set of swim-wear
 - 4-5 short-sleeved shirts
 - 2 sweaters or sweatshirts
 - 1 rain jacket or waterproof poncho
 - Pajamas
 - Hat (with a brim)

- CABIN ITEMS**
- Sleeping bag
 - Pillow with pillowcase
 - Bath towel
 - Soap
 - Shampoo
 - Toothbrush & toothpaste
 - Comb/hairbrush
 - Personal hygiene items
 - Lip balm (chap stick with SPF)
 - Sunscreen (minimum SPF 30...wear every day)
 - Pool towel

IMPORTANT!!! Reusable Water Bottle: Campers must have a water bottle with them at all times in order to participate in our activities. Please pack a water bottle that is at least 28oz in size and can be reused throughout the week (don't send something that is likely to break or leak after a few days in camp).

- TRADING POST MONEY**
- \$10-20 will be adequate. This money will be collected by Pathfinder Ranch Staff upon camper arrival. It can be used to purchase snacks, T-shirts (\$10), etc. The unused balance will be returned at the end of the week.

- OPTIONAL ITEMS**
- Sun glasses
 - Pool/shower sandals or shoes
 - Camera
 - Bag for dirty laundry

Helpful Hints: (remember, we've been doing this for over 50 years)

- Please bring practical outdoor clothing. We will be playing hard at camp, so don't bring your favorite outfit or new fashion shoes
- Label all items with camper's name
- Pack all clothing and gear into ONE (1) suitcase or duffle bag. Sleeping bag and pillow can be carried separately or in a large trash bag.

WHAT NOT TO BRING

Candy, gum, food, radios, music players, electronic games, cell phones, pagers, blow dryers, curling irons, aerosol sprays (including all body sprays), personal sports equipment, pets or other animals, or valuables. If any of these items are found at camp, they will be collected and returned at the end of the session. **Please be aware that Pathfinder Ranch cannot be responsible for lost or stolen items. Leave valuables at home. Drugs, alcohol, knives or other weapons will result in immediate expulsion from camp.**

Where is Pathfinder Ranch?

Pathfinder Ranch is located in the town of Mountain Center, CA -- about 1.5 hours northeast of San Diego, and 2 hours southeast of Los Angeles. We are about 1 hour from Palm Desert, Temecula, and Riverside at an elevation of about 4,200 feet.

Who are the staff members?

The Pathfinder Ranch summer staff is comprised of our full-time office personnel, a Summer Camp Coordinator, and seasonal Summer Camp staff, as well as our maintenance and kitchen employees. All of our staff must be at least 17 years of age, and all are required to have valid CPR and First Aid Certification while working at Pathfinder Ranch. Prior to employment, all Summer Camp staff go through a thorough interview process and references are checked. Before working with any campers, a criminal history check is completed on the State (DOJ) and Federal (FBI) level. All Summer Camp staff participate in a thorough training at camp before the summer begins. The majority of Pathfinder Ranch's Summer Camp staff are college students interested in pursuing a career in the field of recreation or education. Many summer staff members have worked at Pathfinder Ranch in previous seasons and return because of the positive impact the camp experience had on them. We employ about 28 seasonal staff members during the summer, giving us an overall camp ratio of 1 staff member for every 5 campers.

What does ACA accredited mean?

The American Camp Association (ACA) is a community of camp professionals who, for over 100 years, have joined together to share our knowledge and experience and to ensure the quality of camp programs. ACA Accreditation means that Pathfinder Ranch has undergone a thorough (up to 300 standards) review of its operation — from staff qualifications and training to emergency management. The American Camp Association collaborates with experts from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Red Cross, and other youth-serving agencies to assure that current practices at camp reflect the most up-to-date, research-based standards in camp operation. Pathfinder Ranch was recently reaccredited in the summer of 2014.

What's the weather like?

During the summer it is hot and sunny *most* of the time. Typically, the daytime temperatures are in the 80s and 90s (still a relief from the heat of the desert) and *dry*. Don't forget to pack a water bottle! Evenings can get cool (50s), so be sure to pack some warmer clothes for the evening. On very rare instances, it has even been known to rain in the summer!

What are the cabins like?

Campers will be staying in rustic, yet modern cabins. Each cabin is equipped with bunk beds and restrooms (with individual shower stalls and individual toilets). Cabins are separated boys/girls and further grouped into age. Each cabin group will have around 10 campers, with at least one counselor leading the cabin.

Can I request my child be in the same cabin as his/her friends or siblings?

Yes. During your registration, simply make a note of the request in your paperwork. You are also welcome to call us with any bunk requests. However, while we will do our best to accommodate these requests, we cannot guarantee that they will be met. Campers are divided into age groups so only friends of similar ages are likely to be grouped together.

What are the activities offered at camp?

At Pathfinder Ranch we offer a wide range of activities suitable for campers of different ages and skill levels. Our activities are led by program specialists, who are assisted by at least one counselor. These activities include but are not limited to Arts and Crafts, Rock Climbing, Canoeing, Archery, Team Challenge, Swimming/Pool, Horseback Riding, and Explorer's Club. Midway through the week, campers are given the opportunity to sign up for new and creative activities offered by our specialists. While the elective activities offered may change from season to season, campers are sure to have a great time. Past examples of elective classes are Farm Animal Fun, Dance, and Horsemanship. There are also planned evening activities throughout the week such as campfire, cabin night, and even a themed dance party!

You have a pool? What if my child doesn't know how to swim?

At their first pool session, our lifeguard will administer a "swim test". Campers who are able to pass this test are given a wristband and allowed in the "deep" end of the pool (5 feet). Campers who either do not pass or choose to not take the test will only be allowed in the shallow end of the pool (3-4 feet). Along with a lifeguard(s), we will also have counselors acting as lookouts who will assist in the monitoring of the pool area.

My child is on medication. How will he/she get medications at camp?

In order to administer prescription medication, a Medication Order Form must be completed and signed by a physician and a parent/legal guardian. In order to administer over the counter medication, a Medication Order Form must be completed and signed by a parent/legal guardian (for over the counter medication, a physician's signature is not required). Be sure to read the information regarding medications on the Health and Wellness page of this packet for more details.

What is the Trading Post?

The Trading Post is Pathfinder Ranch's "camp store". Campers will have the opportunity (twice a week) to buy items such as snacks (chips, cookies, candy, etc.), juice, T-shirts, and other novelties. These items will range anywhere from \$0.25 to \$10-\$12 (t-shirts). Since we do not allow campers to hold cash while at camp, all spending money for the Trading Post will be collected upon arrival and put into a Trading Post "account". You may also send a check with your camper to be deposited into their account. *Please make checks payable to "Pathfinder Ranch".* Any money that is leftover in the camper's account at the end of their session *will be given back to the camper.* Typically, \$20/week is more than enough for the Trading Post.

Please keep in mind that we **require campers to have a water bottle for all their activities at camp. If your camper did not come to camp with a water bottle, lost it during the week, or broke it due to misuse, money will be used from their account to supply them with a water bottle from the Trading Post.*

This will be my child’s first time at camp. Will he/she be ok?

Safety is our top concern at Pathfinder Ranch – both physical and emotional safety. That being said, there are many things you can do to help your child prepare for/adapt to his/her first time away from home. Some examples of things that will help are:

- Practice separations prior to camp – like a sleepover at a friend’s house
- Talk openly about camp with your child – questions, fears, why it will be a great experience, etc.
- Pack a personal item from home
- Send a letter that will be waiting for your child upon his/her arrival at camp
- Pack pre-stamped, pre-addressed envelopes for your child to tell you all about their experiences at camp – maybe 1 for every day at camp
- Don’t feel guilty for encouraging your child to stay at camp
- Try not to set up a “rescue” even if things may seem a little tough
- Visit the ACA’s website for more information on helping your child prepare for camp
<http://www.acacamps.org/media-center/how-to-choose/homesickness>

You should know that our staff is trained to recognize and deal with homesickness. However, if we feel that there is something that we can’t work through alone, you will be contacted by the Summer Camp Coordinator. Sometimes a little encouragement from a parent/guardian is all it takes. If we see that your child is not gaining *anything* from the experience, you will be contacted by the Summer Camp Coordinator to talk about possible solutions. Sometimes it’s just not the right time to be at camp.

As a parent/guardian, you should know that– no news is good news! While we have our share of homesick campers throughout the summer, they are outnumbered by our homesick parents/guardians. Pathfinder Ranch, given the opportunity, can be a great experience for the both of you.

How can I contact my child?

Unless it is an emergency situation, we ask that you *do not* call Pathfinder Ranch to speak directly to your child. We want your camper to enjoy their experience at Pathfinder Ranch to the fullest, which means giving them the freedom to be themselves in a new environment. Sometimes hearing that “voice from home” can bring up feelings of homesickness (for both the camper *and* the parent/guardian).

So remember **“no news is good news”**. If you haven’t been contacted about your camper, then everything is going great! If there are any concerns or issues (behavioral or medical) with your child, you will be contacted either by the Summer Camp Coordinator or the Health Staff.

If you simply want to check in to see how your child is doing, please call the Summer Camp Coordinator. We appreciate your interest in your child’s welfare, and we would be happy to give you any updates that we have.

Pathfinder Ranch encourages you to send your child mail via USPS. To ensure that postage mail arrives on time, you should try and send it one week *prior* to your camper's arrival day.

Camper Mail will be distributed at meal time. Please send all mail to:

NAME OF CAMPER, Session # _____
c/o Pathfinder Ranch
35510 Pathfinder Rd
Mountain Center, CA 92561

Someone other than me (the legal guardian) is going to pick up or drop off my camper. Do I need to notify the office?

If your child is being dropped off and picked up by a Boys and Girls Club, then you *do not* need to notify Pathfinder Ranch. The Boys and Girls club will have a roster of campers who they will be transporting.

If your child is being picked up from camp by anyone other than the named guardian(s), then this person **must** be named in the "Alternate Pickup" section of registration or call the ranch office to have someone added. The identity of this person will be verified when he/she picks up your child. Please inform the person(s) to **bring photo identification (state issued ID/driver's license/passport)**. Failure to provide this information will result in delays on departure – until all information is verified. If there is an unplanned event in which your camper must be transported by anyone other than the named guardian(s), please call Pathfinder Ranch and be prepared to verify any information necessary. These departure policies are in place for the safety of our campers.

Will I be able to tour the camp before I send my child there?

Absolutely! You are more than welcome to tour the camp. We ask that you set up a "tour date" *at least* one week in advance. Prior to Summer Camp, we are able to offer tours any time during the week (Monday – Friday) between the hours of 9am and 3pm. Once our Summer Camp is in session we can offer tours Tuesday – Friday between the hours of 9am and 3pm. If you aren't able to tour the camp during the week, give the office a call and we can try to set something up during the weekend.

If you have any other questions, concerns or are interested in learning more about the camp, please visit our website (www.pathfinderranch.com) or give us a call at (951) 659-2455.