

**PARENT
ORIENTATION
PACKET**

**SUMMER
2016**

RW
River Way Ranch Camp

Memories and friendships to last a lifetime.

6450 Elwood Road, Sanger, CA 93657



Dear River Way Ranch Camp Parents,

It is with great pleasure that we welcome your child to River Way Ranch Camp for the summer of 2016. Our community is a place where your child can take healthy steps towards fostering personal growth.

River Way staff treat their campers as though they were their own family, and younger brothers and sisters. These relationships are why River Way Ranch Camp is so highly regarded in the industry. Our staff provides the safety nets for your child to discover new interests, new hobbies, and to form new friendships.

While your child is in our care, we will help him/her learn life skills that encourage wellness and personal growth. We will create opportunities for decision making, responsibility, resourcefulness, and teamwork. The camp experience revolves around making friendships and establishing a sense of place for each and every camper.

We take pride in our efforts to give your child an invaluable experience while creating memories and friendships that will last a lifetime.

We appreciate the confidence you have placed in us by sending your child(ren) to River Way Ranch Camp. We would like to remind our returning families, and inform our new families, that if you feel some anxiety during your child's stay at camp, please do not hesitate to contact us to find out how your child is doing.

Sincerely,

Carrie Gross

Carrie Gross
Camp Director



TRANSPORTATION

How your child arrives to, and departs from, camp is communicated by completing an **online Transportation Form** from your CampInTouch Account. Applicable fees will be adjusted once your Transportation Form has been received. Please use the information below to help you decide which transportation option is best for your camper:

To Camp

DEPARTING FROM HOME (Car)

You may drive your camper to River Way on the Sunday of the start of their session.

Arrival time by car is between 11:30 AM and noon. Please understand that we are on a very strict timeline to prepare the property and facilities between sessions and we are unable to accommodate arrivals before 11:30am. If you will be later than noon, please let our office know in advance. Driving directions can be found on our [website](#) by clicking the [Contact Us](#) button.

DEPARTING FROM SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES (LA Bus):

Charter busses will depart from the back side lot at Taft High School (5461 Winnetka Avenue, Woodland Hills, CA 91371) south of the Ventura Freeway on Winnetka Avenue at **8:30 a.m. sharp.** This lot is adjacent to the Ralph's parking lot, near the intersection of Winnetka and Santa Rita. Campers must check-in by **7:30 a.m.** The roundtrip transportation fee is \$130.00 and must be paid prior to departure.

DEPARTING FROM SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, ORANGE COUNTY (OC Bus):

A charter bus will depart from the Islands Restaurant Parking Lot (1380 Bison Street, Newport Beach, CA 92660) at **7:15 a.m. sharp.** Campers must check-in by **6:45a.m.** The roundtrip transportation fee is \$130.00 and must be paid prior to departure.

DEPARTING FROM NORTHERN CALIFORNIA, SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO (SF Bus):

Vans will depart from the Best Western Grosvenor Hotel (380 S. Airport Blvd., South San Francisco, CA 94080) at **8:30a.m. sharp.** Campers must check-in by **7:45 a.m.** The roundtrip transportation fee is \$130.00 and must be paid prior to departure.

DEPARTING BY AIR, DOMESTIC & INTERNATIONAL (Fresno Air Terminal; FAT):

If your camper will be departing home by air, their final destination must be the Fresno Air Terminal (FAT) on the first day of the session, arriving between the hours of **8:00am-11:00am.** Your child must fly as an Unaccompanied Minor, arranged with the airline, and be in possession of a pre-paid debit card to use for luggage fees upon their departure from camp. Please phone our office prior to purchasing airline tickets to confirm details.

To Home

ARRIVALS:

Parents are to pick up their children on the last day of the session as follows:

River Way Ranch Camp (Car/Parent Pick Up):	9:00a.m.
Taft High School (LA Bus):	1:00p.m.
Islands Restaurant (OC Bus):	2:15p.m.
Best Western (SF Bus):	12:30p.m.
Fresno Air Terminal Departures (FAT)	8:00am-11:00am

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY GUIDELINES:

Please read the following information carefully, and go over it, where applicable, with your camper.

LA Bus:

- There is a coned entrance, and our staff will direct you on where to stop for luggage removal and parking.
- Once parked, please walk to the welcome table and check in your camper. There will be numerous signs guiding you to the correct table.
- Once checked in, please remain in the designated waiting zone until all traffic has arrived.
- We will begin loading campers on the bus at 8:15am.
- We will perform three head counts, and leave promptly by 8:30am.
- Please remain in the parking lot until the buses have departed. **DO NOT BE LATE! WE WILL LEAVE PROMPTLY AT 8:30AM!**
- If you are unable to arrive by the check-in and departure times, please phone our office and let us know how your camper will be arriving to camp.
- On the Bus: All campers must remain seated at all times. There will be 2-3 counselors on each bus, if your camper needs to leave their seat for any reason, please have them raise their hand and notify a counselor. Counselors will be engaging with campers during the entire trip, singing songs and playing games.

OC Bus/Vans & SF Vans:

- Drive into the parking lot of Islands Restaurant (OC) or Best Western (SF) and park in the available lot.
- You will see our vehicle(s) and staff. Staff will be available to help with the unloading of luggage.
- Once parked, exit your vehicle and check in your camper.
- Buses/vans will depart sharply by 7:15am for OC, and 8:30am for SF. **PLEASE DO NOT BE LATE!**
- If you are unable to arrive by the check-in and departure times, please phone our office and let us know how your camper will be arriving to camp.
- On the Bus/Van: All campers must remain seated at all times, with their seat belts fastened (vans). There will be 2-3 counselors in each vehicle. Counselors will be engaging with campers during the entire trip, singing songs and playing

games. If your camper has a need, please have them raise their hand to notify a counselor.

FAT:

- Three to five days prior to your camper's arrival to, and/or departure from camp, we will email you the name and contact information of the staff member who will be responsible for picking up/dropping off your camper at the Fresno Air Terminal.
- This contact information is to be provided to the airline for the Unaccompanied Minor paperwork.
- Our designated staff member will be waiting on the gate to receive your camper from the airline, and will remain at the gate upon departure until the aircraft is airborne.

CAR:

- There is one gated entrance to the camp.
- Approach the gates and pick up the telephone handset to notify us that you have arrived; or check in with our staff member posted at the gate.
- An on-duty patrol will arrive via golf cart, or will be positioned at the gate, and will open the gates.
- Follow the on-duty patrol to the designated luggage drop off area, or follow the directions from the staff member posted at the gate.
- Once luggage is unloaded, a member of our welcome committee will direct you to the parking lot.
- Once parked, exit your vehicle and head to the welcome table to check in your camper.

PARENT/CAMPER COMMUNICATION

MAIL: Campers are required to write home three times in a two-week period and will only be permitted to enter dinner on letter meal days by depositing a letter in the "mailbox". Sometimes they outsmart us and send letters to friends, dogs, etc. If you are not receiving letters, send an e-mail to CampMom@RiverWayRanchCamp.com, and we will look into it. Your child also expects letters from home. Twice a week is sufficient. To help them adjust to being away from home, please do not write any distressing news. You may send prepared mail for your child and we will be happy to issue a letter 2 or 3 times a week, just let us know. For our international families, please contact our office for guidance on your camper's communication home.

You may mail letters to:

Camper's Name
Bunk #
6450 Elwood Road
Sanger, CA 93657

Bunk numbers will be released on the Monday morning following the first day of each session. Please either phone or email us, and we will happily provide your camper's bunk number.

NO PACKAGES: Due to the increased enrollment over the last couple of years, we no longer accept care packages. Camper mail is limited to envelopes and postcards only. If it requires more than a single first class stamp to mail, it will be returned unopened. If your camper has forgotten an item from home, please contact our office to arrange for your camper to receive his/her forgotten item. When sending a pre-arranged forgotten item, please do not include any additional items as they will be returned. If your camper will be celebrating their birthday while at camp, please contact the camp office or the camp mom if you'd like to arrange to send them a package; these are the ONLY exceptions to the No Packages Policy.

PARENT ONE-WAY EMAILS: One-way e-mailing will be organized through your CampInTouch account. Each email requires a minimum of 1 camp stamp. On the Sunday of the start of each session, CampInTouch will gift 5 camp stamps per camper per session to each family. Additional camp stamps may be purchased through your CampInTouch account. Daily photos will also be posted here throughout the summer. You will need to approve and enter other family members and friends in order for them to e-mail your camper by clicking on the "Guest Accounts" link from your CampInTouch home page. Camper email is downloaded multiple times each day and printed for distribution daily.

PHONE CALLS: River Way believes in the unplugged approach to summer camps. Because of this, Wi-Fi and cellular enabled devices are not allowed during your campers stay at camp. ALL smart phones, regardless of the service, are NOT permitted in camp. If your child has a need to listen to music during his/her time with us, please pack an I-pod or MP3 player that does not have Wi-Fi capabilities. We have found that the unplugged approach provides a higher quality camping experience by allowing your camper to build strong social connections and experience new challenges and activities. Due to our camp programming, and for the benefit of your camper's adjustment to camp, we do not allow phone calls to be placed or received home. News of friends speaking to their parents on the telephone can cause problems with other campers and make their adjustment to camp life more difficult. You should be receiving letters on a regular basis. You are welcome to discuss your child's progress with our Camp Moms, who will return all incoming calls the same day. If you have questions about how your camper's stay at River Way is going, our Camp Moms are available to act as the liaison between you and your camper.

VISITATION: Parents whose child is enrolled for **more than two sessions** (more than 4 weeks at camp) may contact us to obtain permission to visit on July 16, 2016 or July 30, 2016. We have no camp visitation days for stays of one and/or two sessions (2 to 4 weeks) as we have found it can be a difficult experience for a child away from home to see other parents and relatives visiting. This, in turn, can cause morale problems throughout the camp. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in

this matter as it will be a great help to your child in their adjustment to camp life. All parents are welcome to visit the facility prior to the opening of camp, or during any session your child is not attending. Some families take advantage of Mother's Day weekend to join us for a Bed and Breakfast, incredible Mother's Day brunch, horseback riding, and a tour of the camp - call our office for details.

HOMESICKNESS: If your child writes distressing letters, which homesick children commonly do, do not become unduly alarmed. We have found that some children may write their first letter on the bus, before they arrive at camp. You receive the letter two days later, and while you are reading it, your child has fully adjusted and is having a wonderful time on a waverunner or horseback riding. Be assured that we are deeply concerned about the welfare of your child, and that he or she will always have our full attention. Should you have any anxiety in this regard, please feel free to call or email our Camp Moms. Camp Moms are happy to discuss your child's progress. To help your child successfully transition to being away from home, please do not give them the option of returning home in three days, or at any time prior to the end of the session. There is no pro rate option under these circumstances, and children who have this in mind prepare for a three-day or abbreviated stay and never allow themselves the chance to have fun. We assure you, we will let you know if your child is having a more difficult time adjusting than the average camper.

FINANCIALS

CANTEEN FUND (CAMP STORE – SPENDING MONEY): The amount of money charged to your account for the Canteen Fund will be deposited in your child's name in our camp store. Items such as toothpaste, camp T-shirts, mugs, flashlights, souvenir items, snacks, drinks, etc. may be purchased. There will also be a small selection of camper clothing available for purchase that will not be available online. We have found \$125.00 to be an adequate amount for the first two weeks your child attends, and \$50.00 for each additional two weeks. We suggest \$75.00 for the one-week sessions. Your child will be advised of his/her balance after each purchase. Entrance fees for outcamp activities, such as bowling, ice skating, Water Park, etc. will also be deducted from your child's Canteen Fund. If your child chooses to participate in an outcamp activity, they will be required to purchase an outcamp t-shirt.

In the event your child depletes their canteen fund, you have an opportunity to indicate if you would like to allocate additional funds through the completion of the **online Canteen Form** from your CampInTouch account. You may choose to allow for extra canteen funds, or not. If you indicate extra canteen money is available for your camper, these funds will only be allocated in the event your child depletes the original amount.

If, at the end of their stay with us, your camper has a positive balance remaining in their canteen account, you may choose to have it refunded, or donate it to the American Camp Association/River Way Ranch Camp Scholarship Fund. This applies

ONLY to the original amount allotted to your camper. If you have agreed to allocate additional canteen funds in the event your camper depletes their account, and there is a remaining balance on these additional funds, this money will automatically be refunded to you.

Please indicate your preference through the completion of the **online ACA Donation Form** from your CampInTouch account.

WHAT IS THE AMERICAN CAMPING ASSOCIATION RIVER WAY SCHOLARSHIP FUND?

In the fall of 2009, River Way Ranch Camp entered into a partnership with the American Camp Association to create a scholarship program to assist as many children as possible in experiencing the enjoyment of summer camp. The partnership was created as part of ACA's 20/20 Vision – 20 million children in the United States attending summer camp by 2020. Today, less than 10 million children attend summer camp and only 3 million of those children attend an accredited camp like River Way. In addition, River Way recognizes the unstable global economic times and wants to ensure that as many children as possible can experience the power of a residential summer camp program. Camp is a place for children to take healthy risks to foster human growth by trying new activities and meeting new friends. Camp has proven to improve decision making, responsibility, resourcefulness, and leadership capabilities. River Way would like to give this opportunity to as many children as possible and, thanks to a partnership with ACA, we are well on our way to achieving their mission and ours.

LAUNDRY: Laundry is available once a week, or as needed. The fee of \$8.50 is automatically deducted from your child's Canteen account.

YEARBOOK: An 80+ page color yearbook is produced from pictures taken during the entire camp season, featuring the campers, activities, and memories that last a lifetime. A \$65.00 charge on your invoice covers the purchase of our full-color yearbook. If you do not wish to purchase a yearbook, please contact the camp office no later than July 1st, or write a note on your invoice. Because it takes time to design and publish them, the yearbooks are mailed out at the end of the calendar year.

SENIOR DAY: Should water levels permit, River Way provides an adventure of a lifetime offered only to our Senior age division campers. This exciting White Water Rafting trip has become a tradition and rite of passage for Seniors, with almost always 100% participation. For an additional fee, your Senior camper will experience a thrilling day of rafting down the Kings River. Complete the **online Rafting Forms** from your CampInTouch account. In the event white water is unavailable, we will offer an alternate off property activity, which may require forms to be completed. If so, you will be notified via email. Please be advised that this location and cost will be determined within the weeks leading up to each session. A popular alternate choice to White Water Rafting is the renovated sports facility, McDermont Field House, offering a flowrider, laser tag, water slides, bounce houses, arcade, and many other attractions.

EXTRA MONEY/VALUABLES: DO NOT send money with your child. Campers have no need for it at camp and it may get lost. Campers also should **NOT** bring valuables such as expensive watches, jewelry, cameras, and video games. **Cell phones,**

including all Wi-Fi capable devices, are not permitted. The camp cannot take responsibility for these lost items.

CAMP FEES: The balance of all camp fees **is due by June 1st.** Please log-in to your CampInTouch account to make your final payment, or phone the office, or remit your check by mail. Make checks payable to River Way Ranch Camp, 6450 Elwood Road, Sanger, CA 93657. On June 2nd all outstanding balances will be charged to the credit card on file. River Way Ranch Camp reserves the right to resell any reservations that have not been paid in full by June 1st. Any calls regarding payment should be directed to the camp accounting office, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:00a.m. and 4:30p.m. Telephone: 800.821.2801 x360.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

DOCTORS, NURSES, & AN INFIRMARY: A resident physician and nurse are employed and living on the premises at all times. Parents will be notified if their child is confined to the infirmary for longer than a 24-hour period. Should a condition arise of a serious nature, the Camp Director, Assistant Camp Director, or Camp Mom will contact the parents or guardians, or your personal physician if necessary, by telephone.

MEDICATIONS: If your child is to take any medication while at camp, please do not pack your child's medication in their luggage. Instead, enter the information into the **online Health History Form**, and present it to the staff at the check-in table at the departure location.

SMOKING, ALCOHOL, & DRUGS: Use or possession of cigarettes, alcohol, or non-prescription drugs by any camper will result in dismissal, in which case there will be ***no refund of any amount of the camp tuition.***

PHYSICIAN'S EXAMINATION FORM & HEALTH HISTORY FORM: Every camper is required to have a physical prior to arriving at camp. Please print out the **Physician's Examination Form and Parent Authorization Form** from your CampInTouch account. Have your physician complete the Physician's Examination Form, you complete the Parent Authorization Form, then scan and upload them each to your CampInTouch account. Additionally, every parent must complete an online history of their child's health through the completion of the **online Health History Form** from their CampInTouch account.

FIRST DAY HEALTH SCREENING: Under the supervision of the Camp Nurse, each camper will receive an initial health screening upon arrival to camp. The screening will look at overall observable health, a scalp check, throat and mouth check, and skin check.

HEAD LICE POLICY: Each camper will be examined for head lice upon arrival on the first day of each camp session. If nits or lice are present, the Camp Director will decide if the camper must return home. Camp is not responsible for the expenses incurred for the return transportation of the camper. Campers may have the option of being treated


at camp. Costs incurred for treatment are at parent's/guardian's expense. We encourage you to check your child's head for lice several weeks prior to, and the days leading up to, camp to ensure that they are lice free. If your camper has or has been exposed to head lice in the days leading up to camp, please notify the camp office prior to their arrival. This will be handled discreetly, but helps camp greatly in making sure lice does not spread through camp.

Below we have provided some helpful information about head lice and how to identify it.

What is Head Lice? Head lice are small grayish-white insects, which are found in the hair, behind the ears, and on the nape of the neck. They live on human blood and their bites cause itching and scratching. These bites can lead to infection.

How Can They Be Recognized? The adult louse is about the size of a sesame seed. They attach their eggs (called nits) to strands of hair close to the scalp. Nits are tiny, pearl gray, oval shaped specks that are attached firmly to the hair. Nits look much like spots of dandruff, but cannot be easily removed from the hair strand to which they are attached. Nits normally hatch in 7-10 days. Frequent scratching of the head is usually the first clue of an infestation.

CAMP PAPERWORK

All of the paperwork resides in your CampInTouch account, which can be accessed by choosing the CampInTouch login button from our [website](#). 

Once you have logged in to your CampInTouch account, please choose 'Forms & Documents'. This is where you will see the list of forms. Most forms are completed and submitted online, with the exception of the following:

Please download, print, and complete the four forms listed below. Once completed, please scan, save as a pdf, and upload to your CampInTouch account by logging in, choosing 'Forms & Documents', and clicking on the 'Upload File' icon to the right of the title of the Form.

- Physician's Examination Form – All Campers are required to have a physical no more than 12 months prior to coming to camp. This form must be completed by your child's physician.
- Parent Authorization Form – Use this form to supply your camper's health insurance information by attaching a copy of the covered individual's medical card and prescription card. THIS FORM MUST BE SIGNED BY A PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN.
- Terms and Conditions Agreement Form- Once you have read the Parent Orientation Packet, please complete this form.
- Friendship Request Form – Bunk requests will be considered ONLY after ALL paperwork has been submitted.

The following forms are submitted electronically from your CampInTouch account:

- Camper Application – Already completed upon registration
- Health History – Provides vital information regarding your child’s health
- Transportation – Confirms how your child arrives and departs camp. In some cases, this information is already populated for you, but you must still log in and hit the ‘Submit’ button.
- Canteen Form – Allows you to allocate additional spending money for your camper at the camp store
- ACA Donation Form – Lets us know how to handle remaining canteen balances.
- Rafting/Senior Day Forms – To be completed for our Senior age division campers only, ages 13+ and/or entering 8th grade or higher.

FORMS ARE DUE AS FOLLOWS:

Sessions 1, 1A, CIT 1&2

Session 2

Sessions 3, CIT 3&4

Sessions 4, 4A, 4B

March 1, 2016

April 1, 2016

May 1, 2016

June 1, 2016

If enrolling after the due date, all forms are due immediately upon registration.

PACKING

PACKING TIPS: Clothing may be packed in duffel bags, suitcases or trunks. Trunks should be standard size (16x16x30) so that they fit underneath the bed. Most campers use duffel bags and suitcases.

This is camp. Clothing will get heavily soiled. Campers will lose items. Parents, PLEASE do not send your camper with their finest clothing.

Be sure that **every** item is marked with your camper’s name in indelible ink, or printed name tags securely sewn or ironed onto the articles.

LOST AND FOUND: Children should be told to assume responsibility for their own belongings, as the **CAMP IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST ARTICLES**. Lost and Found is centrally located on the dining patio. Each day during meal times we announce and display the found items. **If the campers do not claim any items by the close of the session the items are donated to a charitable organization. River Way will not return any items to you after the close of camp,** and this is why we stress camper responsibility and why we suggest no expensive clothing, electronics and jewelry be sent with your camper.

Please see the following page for a suggested packing list.

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST

(based on a two-week session)

Clothing

5 pairs of shorts	2 pairs of jeans
7 t-shirts	2 pair pajamas
7 pairs underwear	baseball cap/sun hat
7 pairs socks	hoodie & sweat pants
1 pair closed-toe shoes (sneakers are fine)	2 pair flip flops/sandals
2 swim suits (no extreme bikinis)	Themed items for theme days (optional)
1 set of nice clothing for dances (optional)	

Toiletries

shower gel/soap	brush/comb
toothbrush & toothpaste	shampoo & conditioner
kleenex	sunscreen & lip balm
small plastic container to hold toiletries	deodorant
hand lotion	

Bedding & Linens

(required for domestic campers; provided for international campers)

1 sleeping bag and 1 twin size fitted sheet, **or** 1 twin sheet set (fitted & flat) with 1 blanket. Although sleeping bags are recommended, they are not required; however, some outcamp activities require a warm sleeping bag. If you do send your camper with a sleeping bag, please be sure to clearly label both the bag and its case (if applicable) with your camper's name.

1 pillow	2 pillow cases
3 wash clothes	2 beach towels
2 bath towels	1 laundry bag (pillow case ok)

Miscellaneous

flashlight & batteries	water bottle
stationary & stamps	sun glasses
addressed & stamped envelopes (Buckaroos)	postcards
pens/pencils	small, quiet indoor game
camera	small backpack