



GROUP LEADER INFORMATION PACK

Day School Excursions

Located in rural Cobbitty (one hour southwest of Sydney), Teen Ranch is a non-denominational Christian camp, registered as a non-profit charitable organisation, and has been in continuous operation since 1961. Our site is situated on the Nepean River overlooking the beautiful Camden Valley. Each year Teen Ranch greets approximately 5000 campers through its many camps. The full-time staff team consists of 30 people, and the volunteers number over 120 every year.

The following information has been compiled to make your time at Teen Ranch as safe and enjoyable as possible.

OUR STAFF

We pride ourselves in providing enthusiastic Christian staff who have a deep commitment to the mission of Teen Ranch. Our school camps are fully programmed by our staff who are qualified and experienced in their various specialised areas. This means we will:

- Tailor your camp to your specific aims and objectives through our customised pre-camp liaison
- Provide Programmers who will oversee your camp, ensuring its smooth running
- Run all specialised activities by appropriately trained activity staff
- Organise and run evening activities
- Prepare, serve and oversee all meals
- Clean up after mealtimes
- Provide 24 hour emergency assistance
- Open our swimming pool at various scheduled times when a qualified lifeguard will be on duty
- Run the daily Christian Discovery sessions

MEALS

All meals are prepared on site in a commercial kitchen by qualified catering staff.

Special dietary requirements can be catered for, providing all relevant information is supplied at least **one week** prior to arrival.

Students are asked not to bring food or drinks to Teen Ranch (unless for specific dietary requirements) as it can attract vermin and also creates significant untidiness in cabins.

FACILITIES

We have full toilet and shower facilities available to campers

ORGANISING YOUR CAMP: One camp, many options

We have residential, all day and regular afternoon formats to suit all needs

Escape: Enjoy a fun and challenging outdoor experience

Expand: Achieve curriculum outcomes in a unique learning environment

Excel: Develop specialized skills

Extend: Leadership and interpersonal skill development

Some schools use their time at camp to achieve specific objectives and outcomes for students. Others are happy to utilise the experience of Teen Ranch staff to create a program that is appropriate and challenging for students.

STREAMLINED PRE-CAMP LIAISON PROCESS

Initial enquiries are generally handled by the main office. Once a group has selected dates and a deposit has secured the booking, details will then be passed to the Program Co-ordinator. They will then contact the group leader approximately four to six weeks prior to the camp to discuss the program details. They will require activity choices as explained below and will seek to incorporate specific program requirements individual groups may have where possible. The Program Co-ordinator will then draw up a draft program for your consultation, and when both they and the group leader are satisfied, a final program will be confirmed.

Please do not show the finalised program to students.

ACTIVITIES

Every school will have a number of activity sessions incorporated into their program, dependant on their length of stay and size of group. Students are to be divided into activity groups (no more than 24 students per group) and will rotate around the activities, so all students will participate in the activities run at that specific camp. A number of sample programs are available from our website www.teenranch.com.au/schools

Group leaders have a degree of choice in which activities they wish to participate. There are two restrictions governing that choice:

- 1) For Health and Safety reasons, those participating in activities must meet the age criteria;
- 2) Due to specialist staffing requirements, no more than **two** activities can be chosen from List A.

ACTIVITY	AGE CRITERIA	COMMENTS
LIST A:		
Canoeing	Year 5 and above	Younger campers will canoe in base area only
High Ropes	Year 8 and above	
Horses	Year 5 and above: riding in corral Year 4 and below: led rides only	
Ropes Tower	Year 6 and above	
LIST B:		
Archery	Generally Year 5 and above	Younger campers may have trouble pulling bow string back
Giant Swing	No restrictions	
Challenge Course	No restrictions	
Pool Games	No restrictions	

Canoeing

The aim of this activity is to instruct the participants in the basic aspects of canoeing and to provide the opportunity for them to experience canoeing in a safe and supervised environment. There is often the opportunity for a swim in the river at some point through the activity session.

High Ropes

The aim of this activity is to instruct and supervise participants in their use of the eight high elements of the challenge ropes course. This activity is an excellent context to assist participants in overcoming fear, assessing risk and developing trust, balance, confidence and accountability. Instructors ensure a physically and psychologically safe environment for all participants.

Horse Riding

Activity includes such aspects as safety when dealing with horses, grooming, and basic riding instruction limited to the corral (no trail rides). This activity seeks to increase the confidence of participants when dealing with horses and to create a safe environment in which they can enjoy themselves. It gives participants the opportunity for improving skills and growing in competence.

Ropes Tower

The aim of this activity is to instruct participants in basic climbing and belaying skills and provide an opportunity for them to use these skills safely in a supervised environment on an outdoor artificial climbing facility. It is an excellent activity for improving confidence and developing trust, teamwork, accountability and sense of responsibility.

Archery

The aim of an archery session is to instruct and supervise participants in acquiring the skills of archery in a safe environment. The participants will be given multiple opportunities to develop this skill in the session.

Giant Swing

The participant is seated in a customized harness and suspended by four 10m cables. A crowd haul system is used to raise them. The participant activates a self release mechanism to begin the swing. This activity develops skills in assessing risk, decision making and working as a team, as well as being a lot of fun!

The Challenge Course

The challenge course is a series of initiative based tasks which the participants cannot solve unless they work together as a team. The course is designed to develop positive group interaction amongst participants, highlighting the need for communication, cooperation, decision making, problem solving and observation of rules to reach a common goal.

Pool Games

Pool games consists of a number of planned team based challenges that develop water safety skills in participants as well as increasing their confidence around water. There is also the opportunity for some supervised free time towards the end of the session. 'Pool games' can be used as a stand alone activity; however, the pool is usually open during specific periods of free time. The pool is solar-heated and is suitable for use during the warmer 8 months of the year.

ROLE OF TEACHERS

Expectations of Group leaders:

- 1) Activity group allocation is completed prior to arrival at Teen Ranch (see Attachment 2 for Activity Group details)
- 2) Teen Ranch provides accredited staff for each activity however we require at least one teacher/leader to accompany each group to the activities. For example, if you have four activity groups, then there must be at least four teachers/leaders at camp to supervise each of the activity groups. The maximum size of activity groups is 24, so minimum supervision ratio is 1:24
- 3) Teachers/leaders are also responsible for ensuring that all campers are present at designated meeting times, e.g. meal times, night activities
- 4) To ensure the safety of guests, trampolines may only be used under teachers/leaders supervision. If you are unable to provide adequate supervision the trampolines will be unavailable
- 5) For pool supervision, we will provide at least one qualified lifeguard. However, a general supervising ratio of 1:20 is needed and we may ask group leaders to assist in meeting this ratio
- 6) Please enforce and abide by Teen Ranch's no alcohol, no drugs and no smoking policy
- 7) Please familiarise yourself with Attachment 1 detailing Emergency Response, First Aid and Evacuation Procedures. To enable teachers to deal effectively with emergency situations, we require at least one mobile to be brought to Teen Ranch and independent means of transport if group is travelling by coach

To assist you:

- 1) A key for the cabins and windows will be provided for you so that you can lock your rooms and open the young people's rooms if they accidentally get locked. Please ensure this key is returned to the Programmer at the end of the camp
- 2) Tea, coffee, fruit and are available for you at any time in the dining hall. There is a lounge available to teachers on request
- 3) At the end of a mealtime or when the whole group is together the Programmer will always give you a chance to talk to the students

WHAT CAMPERS SHOULD BRING

- All bedding, bottom sheet and pillow plus either sleeping bag or doona
- Enclosed shoes
- Long pants for horse riding (if applicable)
- Old clothes and second pair of enclosed shoes for canoeing (if applicable)
- Swimmers for the pool (if applicable)
- Casual clothes
- Sunscreen and hat
- Insect repellent
- Torch
- Towel and toiletries
- Rain wear
- Warm jumper for evenings
- Pocket money for snack bar and souvenir shop

TRAVEL

Teen Ranch is ideally located only one hours travel southwest of Sydney. A larger scale map of our location can be viewed at our website www.teenranch.com.au/contact.php.



For groups travelling by bus, we strongly recommend that at least one leader travels by car for emergency purposes, as transport of students to and from medical services is the responsibility of the school.

Attachment 1

EMERGENCY RESPONSE, FIRST AID AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES¹ School groups at Teen Ranch

- Teen Ranch has emergency response procedures in place for reasonably foreseeable emergencies
- Schools maintain the primary responsibility for duty of care to students². As such:
 - All minor first aid situations are the responsibility of the school
 - Major first aid or emergency scenarios can be divided into two categories and have the following responses:
 - Scenarios that occur during Teen Ranch supervised activities
 - In these scenarios, Teen Ranch staff have been trained to assume primary responsibility for safety of participants until such a time that responsibility can be safely handed back to the school delegate.
 - Scenarios occurring at all other times
 - In these scenarios, responsibility remains with the school. Teen Ranch supports the right for schools to phone emergency services when deemed appropriate by the school. Teen Ranch requires that the Programmer be informed immediately (day or night) to provide logistical advice and assistance.
- To fulfill their duty of care in relation to first aid and seeking medical attention where necessary, schools should provide the following:
 - independent transport and communication (i.e. **a car and mobile phone**) – several medical centres and two hospitals are within 15 minutes drive of Teen Ranch
 - at least one (1) member of staff who possesses current accreditation in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and emergency care³
- Transport to/from Teen Ranch remains the sole responsibility of the school (e.g. arrival/departure, visit to hospital)
- In the event of an evacuation procedure, schools are to maintain responsibility for students with assistance from the Programmer. Other Teen Ranch staff will respond under the direction of the Teen Ranch Staff Co-ordinator.
- Regarding communication with the media and other offsite entities, the following guidelines are to be followed in the event of an emergency:
 - there is to be no contact with the media until jointly agreed with Teen Ranch Management
 - School superiors should be informed immediately in the event of an emergency. All other phone calls should be kept to a minimum whilst an emergency is current. The intention is
 - to prevent unnecessary escalation of the situation until its severity has been correctly assessed and appropriate action has been taken
 - that land lines are kept clear for communicating with the necessary emergency services to limit the potential for parents or members of the public to arrive and interfere with an efficient emergency response

¹ In accordance with NSW Department of Education and Training (DET) Excursion Policy (as at 27/10/2004) available at: https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_admin/excursions/excursion_pol/PD20040010.shtml

² As outlined in DET Excursion Policy Section 5

³ As required by DET Excursion Policy Section 6.3.1

Attachment 2

ACTIVITY GROUP LISTS

One major change in procedure is in regard to information Teen Ranch requires prior to arriving for camp at Teen Ranch.

It is now essential that group leaders send the Program Co-ordinator a complete list naming all leaders and campers who will be in attendance (either partly or wholly) of their camp **at least one week prior** to the commencement of the camp. This list should be arranged into activity groups. Along with a list of names, to ensure that our duty of care to guests is met, it is also essential that group leaders supply Teen Ranch with a briefing of all necessary medical and behavioral issues that would affect campers' participation in activities. If water based activities (canoeing or the pool) will be undertaken during the camp, please also indicate any weak or non swimmers in the group. Also, for catering purposes please include any dietary requirements. Please be assured that this information is treated with confidentiality and is only see by management, programmers, activity instructors and kitchen supervisors. Here is a brief example of the type of information we expect:

NAME	ACTIVITY GROUP	ALLERGI ES	MEDICAL PROBLEMS	BEHAVIOURAL ISSUES	DIETARY REQUIREMENT S
Ann Aitken	1	Penicillin		Non-swimmer	Vegetarian
Bill Black	1			ADHD	
Chris Cole	1 Leader		Severe asthma		Lactose intolerant
Dawn Dyer	2		Impaired hearing	Weak swimmer	
Eric Evans	2	Mosquito Bites			No red meat
Fiona Fry	2 Leader				
George Gates	3		Diabetic-insulin dependant	Requires firm boundaries to be set	
Harry Hill	3				
Irene Ivans	3 Leader	Mild hayfever			No seafood