

Essential Eligibility Criteria- City Kids Wilderness Project

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City Kids Wilderness Project provides youth with an opportunity to broaden horizons, build resiliency and ensure skills for success. We do this through outdoor and wilderness adventure, after school programming, and individual coaching. City Kids programs range from indoor classrooms activities, outdoor day programs, to multi-day wilderness trips in remote settings with a variety of activities. Inherent to the program structure for all participants is participation in multi-day backcountry trips.

The health and well-being of our participants and staff are top priorities. The wilderness environments City Kids programs live in and travel through are remote, dynamic, and physically and emotionally challenging. We are looking for participants who are in good health, physically and emotionally, and have an interest in being a part of a community. These environments along with the activities conducted and the living and traveling conditions encountered require each participant to be fully committed to and capable of working hard, taking responsibility for themselves, and working effectively in the group to achieve the goals of the program.

City Kids values diversity and a positive learning environment, but does not specialize in experiences for people with disabilities or with significant mental, emotional or behavioral challenges. City Kids staff are not therapists and are not trained in adaptive wilderness teaching skills.

Please read through the following list of essential eligibility criteria (“EEC”). These criteria are not intended to be exclusionary, but to honestly identify the basic and fundamental elements of participation – integrally tied to safety and risk management considerations.

These EEC do not encompass all criteria for participation in the City Kids program. These EEC are intended to be helpful and constructive for all participants who are considering attending our programs. An applicant’s final enrollment and participation in City Kids is conditioned on, among other things, participation in mandatory events, attending orientation and a review of all completed and signed forms.

The Essential Eligibility Criteria are applicable for all participants. A qualified person is one who can meet the EEC for participation in the program activity. If an applicant does not meet specific criteria, City Kids might be able to accommodate an applicant or participant, but will not do so if it significantly alters the fundamental nature of the course activity, jeopardizes the health and safety of City Kids participants, or places an undue administrative or financial burden on City Kids

These EEC are only intended to give overall information for City Kids activities and do not encompass every criteria or function of the various activities you may encounter on a given program. If you have any questions or concerns about the applicant’s ability to meet the criteria, please contact the City Kids office.

GENERAL ESSENTIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The following apply to all City Kids programs:

MOTIVATION & BEHAVIOR

- Come with an open mind and willingness to try new things.
- Maintain a positive attitude, even when challenged physically, mentally, or emotionally.
- Learn and practice Leave No Trace camping and travel techniques.
- Display tolerance, respect and compassion towards all, including wildlife.
- Willingness to solve interpersonal problems and accept differences of others.
- Work effectively as a member of a team despite stressful conditions. This includes taking personal responsibility for your belongings and behavior, effectively communicating ideas and concerns on an individual and group level, accepting differences, and possessing a willingness to put the needs of the group before those of the individual.
- Be willing and able to follow rules and obey authority figures.

PHYSICAL & MENTAL ABILITY

- Tolerate being outdoors for multiple days in all types of weather, at varying elevations from sea level to higher elevations of 7,000 to 14,000 ft., with a variety of stimuli, including bugs, extreme temperature changes, intense sunlight, wind, and storms.
- Perform necessary self-care in a remote and outdoor environment, including personal hygiene, adequate hydration, dressing appropriately for weather conditions and responsibility for and organization of personal gear.
- Tolerate changes in diet, group living, long days filled with mentally and physically challenging activities.
- Tolerate being several hours or up to two days away from medical facilities.
- Understand, recall and follow instructions given to you, individually, or the group, including directives regarding hazards/risks.
- Have the independent ability to perceive and respond to hazards/risks, and act reliably even when not directly supervised.
- Remain alert and focused for several hours at a time while traveling through wilderness and remote terrain and with challenging environmental factors (rain, snow wind, etc.)
- Be able to willingly and equally share responsibility for daily group chores. There can be no expectation that any other participants will be able to continually assume a greater share of the work or that an instructor can continually focus a greater share of his/her energy and time on one participant.
- Recognize and understand the hazards and risks posed by other community members, which include, but are not limited to, fatigue, state of mind, and actions that may influence judgment and decision-making.
- Be able to respond appropriately to stress or crisis such as when encountering large and/or potentially hazardous animals, severe weather, or a medical emergency.
- Effectively communicate to others potential hazards/risks, personal distress, injury, or need for assistance up to a distance of 50 meters, where darkness, high wind or other factors may impede communication.
- Participant must be able to enter and exit vehicle independently or with the assistance of a companion.

ACTIVITY SPECIFIC ESSENTIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The following explain essential eligibility criteria for certain specific activities. All activities are inherent to the City Kids program except biking & snow sports which can be optional.

CAMPING

- Be able to move independently about the campsite in order to participate in group activities, attend to toileting needs, and contribute to camping tasks as necessary.
- Learn skills and engage in tasks to support yourself and the group including those necessary for living in remote areas. This includes, but is not limited to: cooking, setting up and taking down camp, washing dishes, caring for group gear, packing dry bags and backpacks, rigging boats and camp site clean-up.

HIKING/BACKPACKING

- Carry 10-25 pounds daily for day hiking and 30-60 pounds daily for backpacking, for outdoor/wilderness trips ranging from several days to several weeks, depending upon the program.
- Able to travel each day wearing a loaded backpack over steep and uneven terrain, on and off trail, for up to 12 hours, from 1-10 miles and an elevation gain or loss of over 1500 feet, including sections of scrambling (three or four points of contact required), and crossing rivers and streams that do not have bridges.

PADDLING

- Wear all protective gear recommended or required, including a Personal Flotation Device (PFD or "life jacket") correctly.
- Able to enter or exit a wet or dry craft independently.
- Be able to perceive, understand and respond to audible commands given by a staff member, boating partner or communicate such commands to boating partners (such as in a tandem canoe, double sea kayak or paddle raft).
- Able to control a paddle and pull it through the water to steer and move the craft forward, including maneuvering a boat to maintain proper heading or avoid obstacles.
- Independently remain in an appropriate and safe body position for the craft (kneeling, sitting, or standing), while in or on the paddlecraft.
- In the event of a capsize or fall out of the watercraft, you must be able to:
 - Remain calm & follow instructions and independently
 - Get out from under the watercraft, attain and maintain correct body position if out of boat in a rapid or rough water
 - Endeavor to make progress to the shoreline or another boat and be able to perform self-rescue or cooperate with assisted rescue
 - Hold your breath while under water and, while in the water wearing a properly fitted lifejacket, be able to independently turn from a face down to a face up position keeping their head above water
 - Maintain a swimming position while manipulating equipment (such as a boat, paddle, or safety equipment)
 - Maneuver body and manipulate equipment to re-enter the craft

ROCK CLIMBING

- Wear all required protective equipment, including a climbing harness (seat, chest or full body) and climbing helmet.
- Independently, or with the assistance of a companion, communicate necessary climbing signals. These signals may include spoken signals, hand signals or a rope tug.
- Independently, or with the assistance of a companion, tie a series of knots and hitches and have the cognitive ability to apply them within the rock climbing system as directed.
- Independently maintain one's position on a climbing wall to attempt ascending.
- Maintain balance on uneven surfaces and keep an upright position independently or with the use of personal adaptive equipment.
- In order to belay the participant must be able to independently and reliably manipulate a climbing rope through a belay device such as an ATC or Gri-Gri, while maintain a firm grip on the climbing rope for the time it take the climber to ascend and descend the climb.

HORSEBACK RIDING

- Be able to mount and dismount a horse independently.
- Be able to rapidly dismount when directed to on short notice in any terrain in situations where a horse might be in distress and rapid dismount is necessary for the safety of the rider and horse. Assistance to remount may not possible in such situations.
- Be able to balance independently in the saddle while traveling over rugged steep mountainous terrain and negotiating obstacles such as rocks, deadfall, and mud.
- Be able to maintain balance on horse during river crossings with swift, deep, cold water and during -entry and exit of river when steep banks may be present and need to be negotiated.
- Control the horse by giving it signals to stop, move, turn left or right, and calm down. This is typically accomplished through leg, hand and/or voice signals.
- Be able to walk one to two miles on trail when or if horse is injured, ill or unable to carry a rider.

SERVICE PROJECTS

- Engage in service learning projects (for example: building, digging, lifting, painting, construction and clean-up), for 6-8 hours per day with tools such as shovels, axes and hoes.
- Be open and willing to interact with new and unfamiliar places or people.

SNOW SPORTS (OPTIONAL)

- Wear properly fitted equipment.
- Independently travel over and negotiate varied terrain (i.e., different snow depth and density encountered) and visually identify routes & hazards.

BIKING (OPTIONAL)

- Wear a properly fitted cycling helmet for the duration of the course.
- Travel competently and independently on a bicycle over on pavement and gravel, including pedaling, steering and stopping.
- Independently mount, dismount, sit and balance on the bike for the duration of the course.