



Sherwood Forest Program Description by Grade Level

Grade refers to the grade a child will complete before summer.

Programming notes for all grades:

- All campers live and sleep in cabins in groups of approximately six to twelve campers. Each cabin group has two or more group leaders. At least one Group Leader who identifies as the same gender as the campers, lives and sleeps in the cabin with the children.
- Sherwood has a progressive wilderness tripping program, which includes outdoor backpacking and hiking in which all campers participate. It starts in 1st grade with a night under the stars!
- Life jackets are required for all individuals (children and adults), regardless of their swimming ability, while in or on a lake or river.

Discovery – Mini Camp – 1st and 2nd graders, 7-day program-

Mini Camp is designed as an introduction to residential camping to help children take their first steps toward independence. Typically, children this age have not spent many nights (if any) away from home or family.

Campers will:

- Focus on discovering the joys of camping through a variety of activities
- Participate in activities as a group
- Spend at least one night sleeping outside under the stars
- Help cook a balanced meal over an open fire

*Year-round activities typically include one fall and one spring activity. Examples, Halloween weekend at camp, a day or evening at the zoo, etc.

Explorers – 3rd graders, 14-day program

The 3rd grade Explorer program is designed as an introduction to residential camping to help children develop independence and build friendships. Campers will:

- Focus on discovering the joys of camping through a variety of activities
- Participate in our 3rd grade Book Club designed to make books come alive
- Learn to cook balanced meals over an open fire
- Hike on our camp property to a campsite
- Participate in an overnight up our valley where each person sleeps in an individual tarp shelter
- Take a day trip to the river where they can splash and explore

*Year-round activities typically include two fall and one spring activity. Examples, a reading activity at a bookstore or the library, Halloween weekend at camp, day trip to a local park, etc.

Explorers – 4th Grade, 14-day program

The 4th grade Explorer program is designed to help campers develop connections to camp, their peers, and the natural environment. Campers will:

- Participate in the first year of Earth Club which provides opportunity for scientific exploration with a focus on nature and the outdoors
- Progress to the next level of our backpacking and hiking program by participating in one or two overnight trips on our camp property
- Be introduced to canoeing and stand-up paddle boards on our lake
- Cook a balanced meal over an open fire
- Participate in day trip to the river or a day float trip in a raft, depending on the campers' skills and abilities

*Year-round activities typically include two fall and one spring activity, such as a full day hike in local parks, a visit to an outdoor environmental science event, a trip to camp, etc.

Explorers – 5th Grade, 14-day program

The 5th grade Explorer program is designed to help campers continue to focus on connecting with peers and learning in nature and the outdoors. Camper will:

- Demonstrate independence, decision-making, goal setting, and accomplishing goals
- Participate in the second and final year of Earth Club, which brings teaching life science through hands on activities
- Progress to the next level of our backpacking and hiking program by participating in a day hike, one overnight trip on our camp property, and one hiking overnight at a local State or National Park
- Participate in a day trip on the river in canoes.
- Cook balanced meals over an open fire

*Year-round activities typically include two fall and one spring activity, exploring local parks, visiting the Science Center, animal sanctuaries, or a trip to camp, etc.

Leadership Training Program – 6th to 9th graders, 28-day program

Throughout their four years in the Leadership Training program, youth work on the following skills: responsibility, self-discipline, effective communication, problem-solving, and teamwork. The Leadership Training Program is a year-round initiative, centered around a residential summer camp experience. Our progressive outdoor backpacking and hiking program culminates through their four years in a series of multi-day backpacking, hiking, and river excursions, providing participants with hands-on leadership and outdoor skills development. Youth in this program are expected to fully participate in all components.

Challenge (6th grade)

The Challenge program is designed to help campers focus on identifying individual strengths and gaining a greater understanding of oneself. This is the first year of our Leadership Training Program and is the last year we will accept new campers. Campers will:

- Work to discover their personal strengths and assets as well as areas for growth and learning. Campers do this through intensive outdoor-focused experiences that encourage them to stretch outside their comfort zones and explore new aspects of themselves
- Participate in team building and outdoor survival skill development designed to help them be better equipped for their multi-day wilderness trips
- Learn and implement 'Leave No Trace' principles, basic trail etiquette, and wildlife awareness
- Participate in short river and hiking trips to prepare for their extended trip
- Complete an extended two-day hike in the Mark Twain National Forest on the Ozark Trail
- Complete a three-day, extended river trip on the beautiful and spring fed Current River

Trek (7th grade)

The Trek program provides campers with an opportunity to choose between two tracks, wilderness trek and art trek. Both “treks” are designed to harness the leadership capabilities of campers by teaching them essential life skills, teamwork, cooperation, communication, and work ethic. The overall focus is helping youth feel competent in using their talents to strengthen a team and demonstrate their ability to lead, make decisions, and work as part of a team to achieve a larger goal. Campers will:

Wilderness Trek

- Acquire team building and outdoor survival skill development to help them be better equipped for their multi-day wilderness trip
- Learn and implement Leave No Trace Principles, basic trail etiquette, basic wilderness first aid, trail and navigation markers, and wildlife awareness
- Complete an extended four-day hike in the Mark Twain National Forest on the Ozark Trail
- Complete a four-day extended river trip on the spring fed and beautiful Current River

Art Trek

- Accomplish a goal as a team or camp community through the production of a play and/or other larger scale creative or performing art projects
- Design and build the set, plan rehearsals, run the technical elements of the performance, cast actors, design and make costumes, etc.
- Collaborate with theatre and art professionals to learn more about the field and career path
- Gain an appreciation for the arts through hands-on experience and reflection
- Form an effective team through daily collaboration
- Participate in outdoor/wilderness-based activities such as campouts and hikes with their peers

Adventure (8th Grade)

The focus of the Adventure program is to help youth learn about their local communities, their role within those communities, and how their individual and team strengths benefit that community. Campers will:

- Begin thinking about life during and after high school
- Collaborate to plan a trip and/or overnight to explore the Missouri region (often including college tours, immersive outdoor experiences, and community service projects)
- Visit historic sites

Journey (9th Grade)

As the final year of the Leadership Training Program, Journey campers are seen as role models in our camp community and as such we hold them to high standards of responsibility, decision-making, and leadership. In this program, we help youth identify their interests for life after high school and continue learning about their role within local and national communities. Campers will:

- Continue learning about the importance of agency and self-determination
- Expand civic engagement beyond camp with a multi-day trip outside of camp
- Travel outside the State of Missouri to visit colleges and universities
- Visit historic sites
- Participate in community service projects
- Complete their goals and objectives while at camp

Supports for Success – Once children have graduated from our Leadership Training Program, they enter the Supports for Success Program. This program works with children in 10th grade to 5 years past high school graduation.

Counselor-in-Training (CIT) – Leadership Training graduates completing the 10th or 11th grades have the opportunity to return to camp and work. The CIT Coordinator will work with them to help transition from a camper to a staff member.