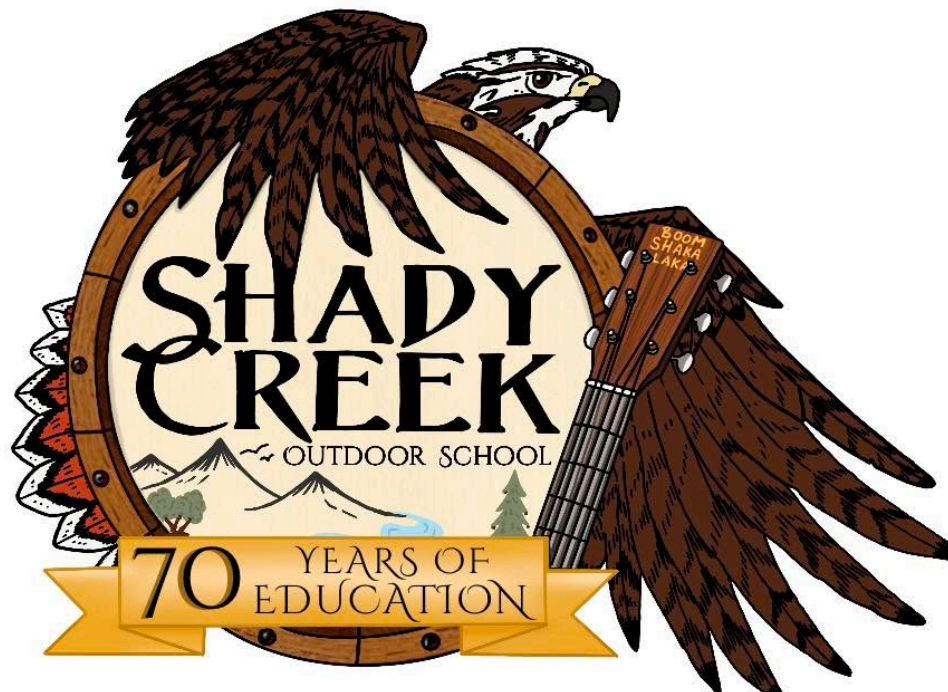


SHADY CREEK OUTDOOR SCHOOL

Parent & Family Guide



Celebrating 70 Years of Outdoor Learning

Welcome to Shady Creek!

Dear Families,

Welcome to Shady Creek Outdoor School!

For nearly 70 years, students have traveled to the Sierra Nevada foothills to experience hands-on science, outdoor adventure, teamwork, independence, and personal growth at Shady Creek. Throughout the week, students explore forest ecosystems, participate in outdoor classes, build friendships, and discover new confidence in themselves.

We know that outdoor school is often one of the biggest milestones of the elementary school experience. For some students, this may be their first time away from home for multiple nights. It is completely normal for both students and families to feel excited, nervous, and full of questions.

This guide is designed to help prepare your family for a safe, successful, and unforgettable week at Shady Creek. We are honored to be part of your child's educational journey and cannot wait to welcome them to camp.

Christopher Little

Director, Shady Creek Outdoor School



What is Shady Creek?

Located in the beautiful Sierra Nevada foothills near Nevada City, California, Shady Creek Outdoor School provides immersive outdoor science education for thousands of students every year.

Students spend four days and three nights learning through direct experience in nature. Classes are taught by experienced naturalists and are supported by classroom teachers and trained cabin leaders.

Students Experience:

- Hands-on outdoor science classes that align with state science standards
- Hiking around, exploring and learning about our beautiful forest ecosystem
- Team-building activities
- Evening programs; Night Hike, Skit Night and Fun Night
- Recreation, outdoor games and arts & crafts
- Nature music and silly camp songs
- Building a cabin community
- Delicious meals and snacks
- Leadership, independence and personal growth



A Typical Day at Shady Creek

Morning:

- Wake up and cabin cleanup
- Breakfast in the dining hall
- Morning classes and hike

Afternoon:

- Lunch and music
- Afternoon classes and hike
- Snack and recreation
- Rest and cabin cleanup

Evening:

- Dinner with cabin groups
- Shower time
- Evening program (Night Hikes, Skit Night & Fun Night)
- Evening snack
- Reflection and cabin time
- Lights out and rest

Typical Daily Schedule:

Time	Activity
7:15 a.m.	Wake up
8:00 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 a.m.	Morning classes
11:30 a.m.	Lunch
12:50 p.m.	Music
1:20 p.m.	Afternoon classes
3:50 p.m.	Snack
4:00 p.m.	Recreation
5:00 p.m.	Showers & cleanup
6:00 p.m.	Dinner
7:15 p.m.	Evening program
8:45 p.m.	Get ready for bed
9:15 p.m.	Lights out



Packing Checklist

Please write your student's name and school on all items.

You are allowed ONE SUITCASE and ONE BEDROLL. You must know how to pack your suitcase and bedding. Students will have to do this for themselves on the return trip.

Proper clothing is extremely important!

Please do not feel that these articles of clothing must be new. Old clothes that you're not afraid to get a little dirty will be ideal. We do stress cleanliness, so it will be necessary to pack enough to allow for a fresh set of clothes each day.

REQUIRED ITEMS

Bedding & Sleeping

- ☐ Sleeping bag or blankets
- ☐ Pillow and pillowcase
- ☐ Twin fitted sheet (recommended)

Clothing

- ☐ **Warm** jacket or coat (wool if possible--it's warmer than anything else, even when wet!)
- ☐ **Waterproof** rain jacket or poncho (or a large plastic garbage bag to cut holes for arms / head)
- ☐ Sweatshirts or sweaters
- ☐ Long pants
- ☐ Shorts (for hot weather months)
- ☐ T-shirts (long & short sleeve)
- ☐ Undergarments
- ☐ Socks (pack extra in case they get wet)
- ☐ Sleeping clothes
- ☐ Two pairs of shoes (closed toe: no crocs, 1 pair water repellent if possible)

Toiletries

- ☐ Toothbrush & toothpaste
- ☐ Body wash & shampoo / conditioner
- ☐ Towel & washcloth
- ☐ Hairbrush / comb & hair ties
- ☐ Non- Spray Deodorant (no perfume or body spray)
- ☐ Lip balm / Chapstick

Outdoor Essentials

- ☐ Reusable water bottle (**VERY IMPORTANT!**)
- ☐ Hiking Backpack
- ☐ Flashlight with extra batteries
- ☐ Sunscreen, Sunglasses & Sunhat
- ☐ Gloves / mittens, warm hat, & long underwear

OPTIONAL ITEMS

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Books, magazine or comic | ☐ Pencils, notebooks, envelopes, stamps |
| ☐ Kleenex (travel size) | ☐ Dirty clothes bag |
| ☐ Binoculars | ☐ Extra trash bag for bedding |
| ☐ Musical instrument | ☐ Insect Repellent |
| ☐ Small games for cabin time (Uno, cards, puzzle etc.) | ☐ Shower Shoes or slippers for inside cabin |
| ☐ Small cabin decorations (no glitter or messy items) | ☐ Wrist watch |
| ☐ Face masks or other personal care items | ☐ Belt |
| ☐ Sleeping mask & earplugs | ☐ Stuffed animal or pictures of family / pets |

PLEASE DO NOT BRING

- Phones or electronics
- Smart watches
- Disposable cameras
- Knives or weapons
- Clothing or other items that are inappropriate for school
- Makeup, hair spray or hair dryers / straighteners
- Cologne or perfume
- Valuables, money or jewelry
- Sports equipment
- Medications (DO NOT SEND IN STUDENTS LUGGAGE, turn into teacher)
- **Food of any kind, candy or gum**



Weather at Shady Creek

Mountain weather can change quickly. Students should come prepared for:

- Rain
- Mud
- Cold mornings
- Warm afternoons
- Rapid temperature changes

Even when weather is pleasant in the valley, conditions at Shady Creek may be cold and wet so come prepared with warm clothing and lots of layers.

Shady Creek is located in Nevada City, Ca at about 2,000 feet of elevation. Check the weather for our area in the days leading up to the trip so you can pack accordingly. We are below the snow line so we do not receive consistent winter snowfall but we do typically experience at least one or two storms each year that bring snow so it's best to be prepared for anything. Our motto at Shady Creek is "there is no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing" so come prepared. Dry = warm, warm = happy!

We strongly recommend:

- Waterproof outer layers
- Extra socks
- Multiple clothing layers
- Proper footwear and an extra pair of shoes
- If possible, test out your gear before the trip to make sure it will keep you warm and dry
- Families do not need to purchase new or expensive gear. Borrowed items, thrift store finds, and older outdoor clothing work great.



Helping Students Prepare Emotionally

Outdoor school is an exciting experience — and it is also normal for students to feel nervous.

It's Totally Normal To Feel:

- Excited
- Nervous
- Curious
- Homesick
- Brave
- Unsure
- Proud

How Families Can Help Set Their Student Up For Success:

- Speak positively about outdoor school and the experiences they will have.
- Tell them about a positive experience you had away from home at their age.
- Tell them how proud you are of them for stepping out of their comfort zone.
- Encourage independence before camp. Challenge them to keep their room clean for a full week without help or reminder or get ready for bed completely on their own.
- Have them spend a night away from home before the trip if possible.
- Help students practice packing, organizing and carrying their luggage.
- Avoid “rescue language” such as “If you get sad, I’ll come pick you up”.
- Send letters to outdoor school with the students’ teacher to remind them how proud you are of them and how excited you are to hear about all the fun things they did at outdoor school when they return home.
- Remind students that the Shady Creek staff, their classroom teachers and cabin leader are there to support them! They are not alone!

Homesickness Support

Our staff are experienced in helping students adjust to camp life. Students stay active, connected, and supported throughout the week. In most cases, homesickness improves quickly once students settle into routines and activities.



Health & Safety

Student safety is our highest priority. Shady Creek operates under the Sutter County Superintendent of Schools and follows organized camp safety regulations and health procedures. Our kitchen and camp are also inspected annually by the Nevada County Environmental & Public Health Departments to ensure we meet the standards laid out for Organized Camps. Shady Creek is also certified by the California Outdoor Education Association (COSA) through their Residential Outdoor Science School (ROSS) certification process designed to ensure a high-quality, safe, and academic learning environment.

Safety Systems Include:

- CPR / First Aid / AED trained staff
- Health Supervisor on site 24 hours a day
- Emergency response procedures
- Infection control procedures
- Structured student supervision
- Cabin leader oversight
- Daily health monitoring
- Student / Teacher check-ins

Medication Information

If your student needs to take any medications — including prescription, over-the-counter, vitamins and supplements — please have their doctor complete and sign the Medication Authorization Form (page 4 of the student health and registration packet) and turn the completed form into your student's teacher.

Please ensure medications are:

- Clearly labeled with students name, teacher's name and school
- In original containers / packaging (no exceptions)
- Accompanied by the Shady Creek Medication Authorization form (page 4 of student health & registration form) filled out and signed by the student's physician.
- Turned into student teacher or school prior to arriving at outdoor school. **DO NOT SEND MEDICATIONS IN STUDENT LUGGAGE.**

Illness or Injury at Camp

If a student becomes seriously ill or injured, families and school personnel will be contacted immediately by either the health supervisor and / or the student's teacher.



Mailing Letters

Students love receiving letters from home! This can be a great opportunity to share how proud you are of your student and share how excited you are to hear about their experience.

Please turn in letters through your student's teacher / school prior to camp whenever possible. Check with your student's teacher to see when the last day to turn in letters will be.

If students would like to send mail home via the postal service while at camp please send a pre-addressed envelope with postage so they can write home and send it in the mail.

Emergency Communication

If an emergency occurs involving your student, families will be contacted directly.

Please note:

- **Students should not bring phones or electronic devices.**
 - A week at Shady Creek is an excellent opportunity for students to disconnect from technology and connect with their peers, cabin leaders and nature!
 - Plus... we have very limited cell service here so calls & texts don't go through.
- Direct parent calls to students are generally not permitted except in emergencies. Please check in with your student's teacher if you have more questions about communicating with your student or receiving updates while they are at camp.



Student Responsibility

Students are expected to:

- Respect others, themselves and our facilities
- Follow safety expectations
- Participate positively and bring a positive attitude
- Care for cabins and shared spaces
- Listen to cabin leaders, staff and teachers
- Follow the Shady Creek rules and the rules of their school

Outdoor school is a wonderful opportunity for students to practice responsibility, independence, and teamwork.

Discipline and Refund Policy

Please be advised that all rules of the student's school apply while at outdoor school along with Shady Creek's safety rules. Shady Creek utilizes a 2 strike disciplinary system called the G.O. Policy. Parents or Guardians will be notified of disciplinary infractions whenever possible. If multiple infractions, or severe infractions occur, it may be possible that a student will be sent home early from outdoor school. Shady Creek does not issue reimbursements or credit schools for students who are sent home because of illness, disciplinary issues, or any other situation that may require your student to leave Shady Creek early.



Frequently Asked Questions

Can students bring phones?

No. Phones and electronic devices should remain at home. This is a very rare opportunity for students to disconnect from technology and connect with nature and their peers.

What if my student gets homesick?

Our staff are experienced in helping students adjust. Most homesickness passes quickly once students become involved in activities.

Can I visit my student while they are at Shady Creek?

To help students fully engage in the outdoor school experience please do not plan to visit while your student is at outdoor school. If parents want to visit Shady Creek prior to their student's stay, such arrangements can be made. Students adjust best when they are fully immersed in camp routines and activities.

Where & When do I pick up my student after camp?

Please check with your attending school.

What happens if it rains?

Outdoor school continues rain or shine! Students should come prepared with waterproof clothing and extra layers. We modify our schedule, but we do operate in all weather conditions.

Can students bring snacks?

Snacks are not permitted inside the cabins or with the students due to allergy concerns and to keep critters out of the cabins. Please do not send snacks in your student's bag or they will be taken away and given to the student's teacher to hold onto for the week.

Will students shower?

Yes! Students have scheduled private shower time on full camp days.

What if my student takes medication?

If your student needs to take any medications — including prescription, over-the-counter medications, vitamins and supplements — please have their doctor complete and sign the Medication Authorization Form (page 4 of the student health and registration packet) and turn the completed form into your student's teacher. **DO NOT SEND IN LUGGAGE!**

What if my student requires dietary accommodation?

If your student has major food allergies, food aversions or requires any major accommodations to their food please check in with your student's teacher to see if a meal accommodation form is required.



Celebrating 70 Years of Outdoor Learning

For generations, Shady Creek has helped students:

- Discover confidence
- Build friendships
- Experience nature
- Learn environmental stewardship
- Develop independence
- Create lifelong memories

We are proud to continue this tradition of outdoor education and look forward to welcoming your student to camp. Thank you for partnering with us to make this an incredible experience for your student!

Contact Information

Shady Creek Outdoor School

18601 Pathfinder Way, Nevada City, CA 95959

Phone: (530) 822-2470

Website: <https://www.shadycreek.org/>

