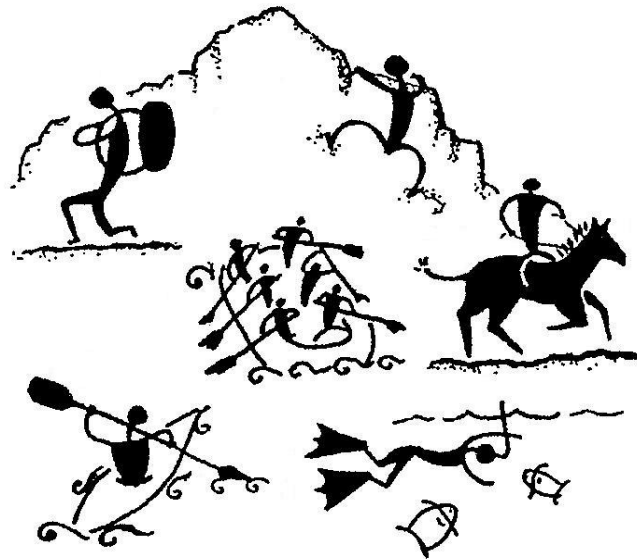
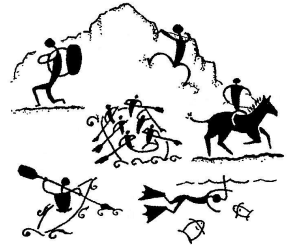


# SOAR

## Parent Handbook



**Spring Family Weekend  
2010**



Dear Parents,

We would like to welcome you and your child to SOAR! You are about to embark on an exciting weekend adventure with your child, and it is important for you to prepare ahead of time to ensure this is a successful experience for all. You are giving your child a wonderful gift by enrolling them in one of SOAR's programs.

SOAR is accredited by the American Camp Association, a group comprised of community and camp professionals who are dedicated to enriching the lives of children and adults through the camp experience. ACA defines "camp" as "a sustained experience that provides a creative, recreational, and educational opportunity in group living in the out-of-doors. It utilizes trained leadership and the resources of the natural surroundings to contribute to each camper's mental, physical, social, and spiritual growth."

More specifically, we believe camp is one of the best ways to teach pre-teens and teens to be successful, independent, and self-sufficient in a close cooperative learning community that is supportive of their individual gifts and differences. Our goal is to give campers a wide range of activities, skills, and experiences that will not only challenge them while they are here at SOAR, but will also relate to their experiences at home and in the classroom. After campers return home, parents frequently comment to us about how much their children have grown, not only physically, but in their attitudes and self-esteem. These are important and positive changes we strive to instill in our campers while on their SOAR adventures.

We look forward to providing your camper with a weekend of fun, friends, and unforgettable memories!

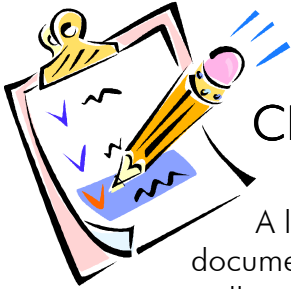
Sincerely,

Jonathan Jones  
Executive Director

John Willson  
Director of AD/HD & LD Programs

## Table of Contents

Letter to Parents .....	2
Checklist for Parents.....	4
Packing for Camp.....	5
Camp Packing List .....	5
Weekend Gear List .....	6
Appearance Guidelines .....	7
Birthdays at Camp .....	7
Health & Personal Well-Being .....	7
Parent Notification of Injury and/or Illness .....	7
Personal Hygiene.....	8
Medication.....	8
Insurance .....	8
Participant Discontinuation of the Program .....	8
Transportation Policies and Procedures .....	8
Financial Information .....	9
Inbrief & Debrief Process .....	9
Driving Directions to SOAR.....	10
Driving Directions to Balsam Mountain Inn.....	10
When You Arrive at SOAR .....	11



## CHECKLIST FOR PARENTS

A lot of information is needed to prepare for your child's SOAR adventure. The following document is the entire set of paperwork required by SOAR. Please use the checklist below to ensure all necessary steps have been completed. You will only need to complete one set of forms per child each calendar year. We must receive forms for each child attending. Feel free to contact our Admissions office if you have any questions at 828-456-3435.

- Complete the Student Forms Packet  
**IMPORTANT:** You will need to complete pages 1-3 only once. Please complete pages 4-6 for **each child** coming to camp (**including all siblings**). Only complete page 7 (Student Goals Worksheet) for the primary camper, i.e. the camper diagnosed with LD and/or ADHD, etc.. (You may have more than one primary camper)
- Have the Student Physical Form completed (page 4) for each child. Note: This form should be signed by your doctor, indicating a physical has been completed in the past 24 months. Please check with your physician to determine the date of your child's last exam, as you may not need to schedule a new physical.
- Have the Parent Permission to Treat section (page 6) notarized.  
Note: A notary will be available during registration at Balsam Base
- Attach a copy of each child's immunization records
- Attach a copy of your insurance card
- Submit Final payment to Catey Terry (via mail, online or by phone)
- Review Parent Weekend Schedule

**Once you have completed the forms, please fax all forms to our electronic fax:  
801-820-3050 ATTN: Cate Munro**

**Please submit all forms at least two weeks prior to the course.**

If you do not have access to a fax, you may mail the information to:

SOAR

Attn: Cate Munro

P.O. Box 388

Balsam, NC 28707

## Time to start gearing up for camp!

This handbook contains information that you will need to be ready for camp. Please take a few minutes to read through everything. It's all important, and if you are familiar with the information you can save time and questions later on. Keep this information handy so you can refer to it later.



Plan to make camp preparation a joint effort. Spend time as a family discussing camp policies and procedures. Carefully read through all information and forms contained in this packet. **Complete the forms and return them as soon as possible so we can make plans for your camper.** We make staffing, trip, and class plans based on the information on these forms, so don't delay in sending them back!

### Packing for camp

As you begin your planning and packing for camp, keep in mind that storage space is limited. Don't over pack! We have carefully selected each item on the gear list to ensure your child will have everything he or she needs while on their course. All items on the gear list are required unless stated otherwise. Each camper will have a limited amount of space in the cabins and on the vans to store their belongings.

**Be sure to label all of your child's belongings, including clothing, cameras, gear...everything!** (An excellent label source is [Campbound.com](http://Campbound.com)) While we make every effort to help your child keep track of their belongings, we cannot be responsible for items that are lost. *Note: SOAR will return labeled items of \$25 value or greater. Items will be mailed C.O.D. SOAR is not responsible for returning items which are not labeled.*



### Camp Packing List

On the following page you will find the gear list for your child. Parents should wear comfortable, casual clothes, and bring clothes and shoes that can get wet while rafting. Otherwise plan on bringing what you would normally bring for a weekend in the mountains! If you have any questions about gear, please feel free to contact the admissions office at (828) 456-3435. For more information on gear, please look at our Gear Guide on the website at [www.soarnc.org/gearguides/gearguide.html](http://www.soarnc.org/gearguides/gearguide.html).

### **Do Not Bring**

Cigarettes, drugs, alcohol, sparklers/fireworks, weapons (including knives), hair dyes, expensive or valuable jewelry, skateboards, cell phones, computers, pagers, boom boxes, CD players or radios with speakers, walkmans, Discmans, or hand held video games.

# SPRING FAMILY WEEKEND ADVENTURE GEAR LIST

## PACK NECESSITIES

- Daypack (book bag)
- Sleeping Bag
- Pillow (optional)
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Insect Repellent
- Poncho or Rain Suit
- Canteen/Water Bottle
- Whistle
- Flashlight
- Extra Batteries

## CLOTHING

- Light-weight Hiking Boots
- Tennis Shoe
- Socks, cotton (2 pair)
- Socks, wool (1 pair)
- Pants or Jeans (1 pair)
- Shorts (1 pair)
- Shirt, long sleeve (1)
- T-shirts (2)
- Underwear (3 pair)
- Hat (synthetic or wool)
- Windbreaker (rain jacket can double for this)
- Bandana

## COOKING UTENSILS

- Eating Utensils
- Plastic Cup
- Plastic Bowl and/or plate

## BATH ARTICLES

- Bath Towel (1)
- Wash Cloth (1)
- Soap & Soap Box
- Toothbrush & Toothpaste
- Shampoo
- Deodorant

## FOR WHITEWATER RAFTING (This includes the Parents!)

- Water shoes
- Swimsuit
- Quick Dry Shirt

## NOTES:

1. All clothing and personal effects should be labeled.
2. Jewelry, valuable watches and radios should be left at home.
3. All knives must be left at home.
4. Please do not bring food for this course.

## Appearance Guidelines

SOAR is dedicated to providing students with meaningful summer experiences that allow them to learn and grow. To that end, we feel an obligation to insure each person feels comfortable in his or her attire and is not overly distracted by the clothing of those around them. Therefore, we have formalized our dress and personal appearance code. This dress code takes into consideration the need for self-expression, while also eliminating distractions that might undermine our students' experiences.

Staff and students are not permitted to wear provocative clothing. Male staff and students are not permitted to wear pants that expose their underwear or clothing with rips and tears in inappropriate places. Additionally, shirts are required unless involved in water activities. Female staff and students are not permitted to wear: short-shorts, tube tops, belly shirts or any garment that exposes an excessive degree of cleavage or the midriff area, pants that expose their underwear, or clothing with rips or tears in inappropriate places. Uncovered bathing suits should be reserved for water activities and must be either a one-piece bathing suit or bikini with ½ inch straps. String bikinis are not permitted.

Clothing that depicts violence, drugs, alcohol, or sexualized references is unacceptable. Staff and students are not permitted to wear torn clothing while at base or in public. Large key chains, cell phones, or beepers should be left at home. Significant appearance changes while at camp are not permitted. These include but are not limited to the following: drastic changes in hair style or color, piercings of any kind, and henna (temporary) tattoos. We thank you in advance for your cooperation.

## Birthdays at Camp

If a camper has a birthday during camp, the cook will bake a special cake for the dinner meal, and we'll sing happy birthday. If campers are out in the field for their birthday, the course director will make arrangements for a birthday surprise for your child.

## Health and Personal Well-Being

The number one concern for us at SOAR is the health and well-being of our community. All SOAR instructors are certified in First Aid and CPR, and they receive training in all of our wilderness and adventure activities. You will be notified if your child is ill or injured and needs to be taken to the hospital.

## Parent Notification of Injury and/or Illness

Parents are typically notified of student injuries and illness under the following circumstances:

1. When the injury or illness requires medical care beyond the scope of staff certification.
2. When the student is to be seen by anyone other than SOAR staff for medical care.
3. When an illness or injury results in the student being separated from the group for a significant length of time (i.e.: more than one day).
4. When an illness or injury requires a student be removed from the course.
5. To obtain permission for administration of over-the-counter medication not included in SOAR's first aid kit (e.g.: cough or cold medication).

## **Personal Hygiene**

SOAR is a wilderness adventure program, not a traditional residential camp. SOAR staff provide opportunities for daily hygiene needs to be met, such as tooth brushing, hand washing, foot care, etc. We will encourage and model proper hygiene.

## **Medication**

Proper administration of prescription medication, over-the-counter drugs, and vitamins is critical, and we need your assistance. If your child will be on any prescription medication during the course, please send each medication in the **original prescription container** (no pill dispensers please). Include *only* a two-day surplus. *Note: Each medication should be listed separately on the Medical Information Form.* Please notify SOAR if you will be initiating changes to your child's medication schedule during the 4 weeks prior to the course. SOAR staff receive training on all aspects of medication administration, including information about the common types taken by LD and AD/HD youth, their purpose and contraindications, and a standard protocol for administering the medication. SOAR instructors will review your child's medication information during the inbrief process.

## **Insurance**

If an accident or injury does occur, your child will be transported to the nearest medical facility. Any charges for sickness related to doctor or hospital visits or prescription medications will be the sole responsibility of the parent. Family health insurance information must be written on the camper's medical form, and a copy of your insurance and prescription card (if applicable) must be on file with SOAR.

## **Participant Discontinuation of the Program**

There are occasional instances in which SOAR students may need to leave or may be asked to leave from a SOAR course. These instances include, but are not limited to:

1. illness or injury
2. the student's profile and behavior upon arrival are inconsistent with the information presented in the application materials
3. the student requires an inordinate amount of one-on-one attention from SOAR staff
4. the student displays continual aggressive behavior toward other students, self, or staff
5. the student displays inappropriate sexual behavior
6. the student uses illegal drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products

SOAR reserves the right to remove students from the program due to these and other issues deemed appropriate to maintain the safety of SOAR students and staff and the integrity of the program. SOAR also recognizes that families may need to remove students from the program due to family emergencies, etc. While we will make all attempts to facilitate a speedy removal of the student from the field (normally 4-6 hours), families should be aware that evacuations may take as long as 24 hours due to distance from the trailhead.

## **Transportation Policies and Procedures**

Students and families will be transported in 15-passenger vans. In order to keep our families abreast of SOAR's continued commitment to the safety of our students during transport, we have posted our Transportation Policies and Procedures on our website at [www.soarnc.org](http://www.soarnc.org) under the "General Info" tab. If you have any questions regarding our protocols, feel free to contact us.

## Financial Information

### **Registration Fee:**

Families will be required to submit a \$50, *non-refundable registration* fee along with their application for admission. We accept check, Mastercard, Visa, and Discover. The registration fee will be refunded only if the camper is not accepted. If a camper must cancel a course, the registration fee may be used for another course during the current season or during the next season.

### **Tuition Balance:**

The balance of all tuition fees is due one month before the start of the first course. We encourage you to send your final payment via check or money order, but we will also accept Visa, Mastercard, and Discover. Tuition payments can be made on our website by logging into your online account. You may also call in credit card information to Catey Terry at 828-456-3435.

### **Cancellations:**

Upon cancellation, the tuition balance will be refunded on the following schedule:

- Prior to 60 days                      Full refund
- Between 30 and 60 days            50% refund
- Between 15 and 30 days            25% refund
- Within 15 days of course            No Refund

SOAR reserves the right to cancel a course due to insufficient enrollment.

### **Tipping:**

This practice is NOT permitted at SOAR. Please share your appreciation in person or send a note to those persons you wish to thank. Some parents choose to contribute to the scholarship fund as a way of expressing extra thanks.

## Inbrief and Debrief Process

The inbrief and debrief meetings are crucial to all of SOAR's programs. Your inbrief will occur upon your arrival. **This process can take up to a half hour, so please take this into consideration when making your travel plans.** During the inbrief, you will meet with the primary camper's counselors to review their medications and goals for the weekend program, as well as ask any last minute questions you may have. During this time your other campers will be with our counselors playing group games.

During the debrief, you will review your child's experience on the course. While it is crucial for your child to participate in this process, you may call the admissions office to request time alone with your child's counselors.

Please review the arrival and departure times below:

Arrive Friday from 5:00pm to 6:00pm

Depart Sunday from at 2:00pm

## Driving Directions to SOAR

Directions to SOAR can also be found on our website: [www.soarnc.org](http://www.soarnc.org). **DO NOT USE MAPQUEST as this will not provide you with accurate directions!!!!**

NOTE: Due to limited parking, we discourage families from driving motor homes, boats, or long trailers to Balsam Base Camp.

From Points North & East/Asheville (approximately one hour):

**Take I-40 West. Take Exit 27 (Highway 19/23/74).**

**Following Route 23/74 you pass:** Waynesville, Hazelwood, W. Waynesville (approx. 5 miles to Blue Ridge Parkway), Rest Area on left, Blue Ridge Parkway entrance on right.

**Directly after** the Blue Ridge Parkway Overpass, you turn right onto **Rosemount Road**. There is a SOAR sign there as well. Follow Rosemount Road approximately 2 miles (the first mile is paved, the second mile is gravel). The gravel section begins with a sharp right turn at Rosemount Cottages. **At every fork in the gravel road, go right.** The road dead-ends at SOAR's Balsam Base.

From Points West (approximately 2 hours from Knoxville):

**Take I-40 East. Take Exit #27 (Routes 19/23/74) to Waynesville.**

**Following Route 23/74 you pass:** Waynesville, Hazelwood, W. Waynesville (approx. 5 miles to Blue Ridge Parkway), Rest Area on left, Blue Ridge Parkway entrance on right.

**Directly after** the Blue Ridge Parkway Overpass, you turn right onto **Rosemount Road**. There is a SOAR sign there as well. Follow Rosemount Road approximately 2 miles (the first mile is paved, the second mile is gravel). The gravel section begins with a sharp right turn at Rosemount Cottages. **At every fork in the gravel road, go right.** The road dead-ends at SOAR's Balsam Base.

From Points South/Atlanta (approximately 3 hours):

**Proceed north on I-85 to I-985.** Continue north past Gainesville to the Clarksville area. **I-985 merges with Highway 441.** Stay on 441 through Clayton and Dillard. Just south of Franklin, NC take the 441 bypass, which directs you around the Franklin area. **Continue on 441 through Dillsboro to NC Highway 23/74.** Proceed East on 23/74 about nine miles to Balsam.

**Just before** crossing under the Blue Ridge Parkway, turn left onto **Rosemount Road**. Follow Rosemount Road approximately 2 miles (the first mile is paved, the second mile is gravel). The gravel section begins with a sharp right turn at Rosemount Cottages. **At every fork in the road, go right.** The road dead-ends at SOAR's Balsam Base.

## Driving Directions from SOAR to the Balsam Mountain Inn:

From SOAR, follow Rosemount Road down to **HWY 19/23/74**. Turn Right onto the highway, and get in the left lane prepare for your first left turn. **Turn left onto Candlestick Lane** (this road loops back around to the highway). On Candlestick lane, take your first Right turn onto **Cabin Flats Road**. Follow Cabin Flats past the Post Office and just over the railroad tracks. **Turn Left** to enter the Balsam Mountain Inn drive.

## When You Arrive at SOAR...

...a staff member will be waiting to greet you once you pull into base. You will be shown where to park and will be led into the registration area. One of the members from our admissions team will sign you in, and ensure you have all necessary forms turned in. There will also be a chance for you to grab a quick snack before beginning your inbrief process. Once you are checked in, you will be led down to meet with one of your instructors. During the inbrief, you will review the primary camper's medication (if applicable), discuss goals for the course, and talk about any last minute questions you may have. After the inbrief is completed, you will be led to your cabin where you can store your gear. Once the entire group has arrived (around 6 pm), we will have a quick orientation and then dinner will be provided.

After dinner, the parents will breakout into the Parent Meetings, and the students will settle into their groups. This will be a great chance for campers to get to know the other people in their group. Campers will then meet to review what will take place over weekend, and will also be the time to form a group contract detailing the group's goals.

The next two days are a whirlwind. The entire group will meet Saturday for an incredible day of rafting. Parents will be able to raft as a family, and may be with other families in a boat. Sunday will provide opportunities for the family to play games and incentives as a group, before departing for back home. You will have the chance to try out all kinds of awesome and fun activities. It will be an adventure you will never forget!

**We thank you for all your cooperation and patience with all of these details! Getting ready for camp is a huge task, even more so for us here at SOAR. The more you can do ahead of time the better. If you have questions, please feel free to contact us. Thank you so much for your consideration. We look forward to meeting you soon!**