



# *Parent Guide*

Emerald Cove Outdoor Science Institute (ECOS Institute) is located in the beautiful San Bernardino Mountains, at multiple locations near the town of Running Springs. ECOS Institute is at an elevation of 6,500 feet and is surrounded by the San Bernardino National Forest, providing a unique opportunity to study the natural environment. Students hike established trails, investigate geological features, observe wildlife, and compare plant adaptations. During the evenings, students study the night sky through telescopes and use their senses to experience the forest at night. The curriculum is aligned with state standards and supports teaching back at school.

Our students learn new songs and games, participate in line dances, and may also create and perform science or nature oriented skits at skit night. Learning responsibility and cooperation through group living, and practicing courtesy and table manners at meals, are some of the ways students develop their social skills.

Living in the mountains allows the students to develop an awareness and appreciation of their environment. They learn that the choices they make can have a positive effect on their world. Students are asked to limit their impact on trails, respect wildlife, take short showers and recycle. Students go home knowing more about the natural world and themselves.

## **STAFF**

- ECOS Institute Staff are carefully interviewed, referenced, and fingerprinted.
- Staff are certified in first aid and CPR.
- They receive ongoing training and evaluation.
- They enjoy working with children!

## **ACCOMMODATIONS**

- Students stay in cabins with central heating, electricity and bathrooms with running water.
- They sleep on bunk beds and shower daily.
- Students clean their cabins daily.
- Boys and girls live in separate cabins.
- Instructors live in the cabins with the students.

## **FOOD**

- All food served at ECOS is nut-free.
- Meals meet USDA guidelines for the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program.
- Seconds are available for most items.
- A salad bar and fresh fruit are available.
- Students, teachers and staff enjoy their meals together.
- Table manners and polite conversation are emphasized.

## **MISSING HOME**

- Most students who are missing home overcome it and have a successful week.
- If your child is experiencing separation anxiety, ECOS staff and visiting teachers will provide counseling and encourage them to work through it.
- If they continue to have trouble adjusting, you will be contacted.



## HEALTH CARE

- A nurse is in charge of all healthcare related issues, including administering medications, if needed.
- Minor illnesses or injuries will be treated on site.
- If your child has something more serious, such as a fever, you will be contacted and may be asked to pick up your child.
- If your child wets the bed, please note it when you register your child (confidential) and send extra bedding. If this occurs, it is handled discreetly.
- In case of a medical emergency, you will be contacted and your child's transport to a nearby medical facility will be arranged.
- Due to distance and possible severe weather, transport to a medical facility could take over an hour.



## COMMUNICATION

**PHONE: (949) 298-ECOS**

**WEBSITE: [www.ecosinstitute.com](http://www.ecosinstitute.com)**

**EMAIL: [info@ecosinstitute.com](mailto:info@ecosinstitute.com)**

- Telephones are not available for student use. You will be called if there is a concern regarding your child.
- Letters are encouraged and can be given to your teachers to bring to ECOS.
- If you choose to send letters in the mail, they should be mailed the week prior to attending. Address the envelope with:  
ECOS Institute  
[Student Name & School]  
P.O. Box 3048  
Running Springs, CA 92382
- Express/overnight mail is not recommended.
- DO NOT send mail to the physical address of the camp.

## LOCATION (this is NOT the mailing address)

Camp Cedar Crest  
33325 Camp Cedar Crest Rd.  
Running Springs, CA 92382

## TRANSPORTATION

- Each school arranges its own transportation.
- Buses are scheduled to arrive at ECOS Institute at 10:30 a.m. on the first day and depart at 11 a.m. on the last day. (Wednesday arrival are 11:00am, and Wednesday departures are 10:30am)
- Under special circumstances, if you need to drop off your child late or pick them up early, please contact your school and ECOS Institute.
- In the event of illness, or a severe or ongoing behavior problem, you may be required to pick up your child.

## **TUITION**

- ECOS receives payment from your school, not from individual families.
- Total cost to families varies from school to school, due to differences in discounts, transportation costs, and other considerations. Please refer to your school for information about total cost.
- If your child attends a partial week, your school will be charged a prorated fee.
- Schools will be charged full tuition for students dismissed for disciplinary reasons.
- Schools will be charged full tuition for students who leave ECOS and then return.

## **EMERGENCIES**

- In the event of an emergency, the site maintains enough food, water and supplies to sustain a group for several days.
- ECOS Institute will keep your child's school updated. Please contact your child's school for information, in order to keep ECOS Institute's phone lines open.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS**

- A child with special needs is defined as one who, due to an emotional or physical condition, may require individualized care or medical attention.
- Some examples are: diabetes, routine nebulizer use, mobility challenges, casts, emotional challenges and severe food allergies.
- If your child has a special need/condition, please inform your school at least 6 weeks prior to attending.
- If your child requires a full-time aide at school, they will require one at ECOS Institute. Due to the additional challenges of an overnight experience, students who do not require an aide at school may still require an aide at ECOS Institute.
- Students with serious foot/ankle/leg injuries will need a Physician's approval to attend ECOS Institute, as activities require mobility on uneven, mountainous terrain, often in ice and snow. **CRUTCHES ARE NOT PERMITTED.** Walking boots may be allowed if approved by Physician.



## **SPECIAL DIET REQUESTS**

If your child has food restrictions that require a special accommodation from the camp kitchen, you can choose from several options during online registration.

If you do not find an appropriate special diet option, please contact your school for more information.

Please do not send supplemental food for your child, unless specifically authorized by your school.



# Behavior Agreement

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

1. Be courteous and polite
  - A. Respect others' space and be considerate of others' belongings (**do not invade others' privacy**)
  - B. Do not harass others, fight, or use inappropriate language (**bullying of any kind is not tolerated**)
  - C. Be a good team member; share and take turns
  - D. Be a good listener; follow directions
  - E. Share in the work; show good sportsmanship
  - F. Be a steward of the environment: Do not pick plants; stay on the trails; respect wildlife
2. Be committed
  - A. Plan to stay for the entire trip
  - B. Participate in the lessons and activities
3. Follow ECOS Institute safety rules
  - A. Walk, don't run
  - B. Stay on established trails
  - C. Stay with your supervising adult and the group
  - D. Do not throw objects (rocks, snow, sticks, etc.)
  - E. Do not carry walking sticks on trails
4. Leave these items at home
  - A. Food, gum, candy
  - B. Money and valuables
  - C. Cell phones, smart watches, radios, electronic games, earbuds, etc.
  - D. Curling irons and makeup
  - E. Anything which could cause injury to you or another person (e.g., knives, razors, or drugs)
  - F. Any items not allowed at your school

## Implementation of Standards

1. Students review standards with their parents and teacher before the trip, and with ECOS staff upon arrival
2. Failure to follow standards set at ECOS Institute will result in the following :
  - A. A conference will be held with the student.
  - B. If problems continue, the student will be removed from an activity.
  - C. If the problem is not resolved, a phone conference will be held with the ECOS director, classroom teacher, and the parent or guardian.
  - D. If the problem is still not resolved, the parent will be required to take the student home.
  - E. **Extreme behavior that presents a high risk to physical or emotional safety may result in immediate dismissal.**

## Parent Agreement

I have reviewed the ECOS Institute Behavior Standards with my child. Should there be any serious difficulty with following the expectations, I support the implementation process outlined above and, if necessary, will bring my child home.

Parent/Guardian's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## Student Agreement

I have reviewed the ECOS Institute Behavior Standards and will follow the standards outlined. I understand that I may lose my privilege to attend ECOS Institute if I fail to follow them.

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_



# ECOS Preparation Checklist

1. Complete the online **STUDENT REGISTRATION** (found at [www.ecosinstitute.com/parents](http://www.ecosinstitute.com/parents))

➤ **Your child cannot attend without a completed online registration.**

2. Does your child take scheduled medication that you plan to send to ECOS?

If yes, download the **ECOS MEDICATION AUTHORIZATION** form (find online OR at your school) and submit to your physician for completion.

➤ You and the authorizing physician must sign this form (faxed copies are accepted).

➤ **We cannot administer any scheduled medication without a completed, signed form.**

➤ If you would like your child to carry their inhaler or Epi-Pen, fill out the “Consent to Carry” section.

➤ All medications must be in the original containers and clearly labeled.

➤ The information on the Rx label must match the information on the form, such as dosage and schedule. Your school will need the medications and the completed form prior to the morning of departure.

➤ **District/school medication forms are NOT sufficient for ECOS Institute.**

3. Do not send over-the-counter (OTC) medications listed in the online registration portal, unless your child takes these medications on a prescribed schedule. Scheduled OTC medications require a completed **ECOS MEDICATION AUTHORIZATION** form.

4. Does your child have a special need or condition that may require individualized care or medical attention?

➤ If yes, complete and sign the **RELEASE FOR A STUDENT WITH A SPECIAL NEED/CONDITION** form.

➤ If your child is under medical supervision for the need or condition, the physician must also sign.

➤ If your child requires a full-time aide at school, s/he will require one at ECOS Institute. Due to the additional challenges of an overnight experience, students who do not require an aide at school may require an aide at ECOS Institute. Your school is responsible for providing the aide.

➤ If your child has a special need/condition, please inform your school at least 6 weeks prior to attending. You may also contact us.

➤ Students with serious foot/ankle/leg injuries will need a Physician’s approval to attend ECOS Institute, as activities require mobility on uneven, mountainous terrain, often in ice and snow. **CRUTCHES ARE NOT PERMITTED.** Walking boots may be allowed if approved by Physician.

6. Does your child have a special diet?

If Yes, submit the special diet request when you register your child online. You will be able to choose ONE of the following: Gluten-free, egg-free, dairy-free, pork-free, vegan. Vegetarians can choose the vegan option and then choose to take dairy and eggs as they wish. If none of these options is sufficient for your child’s dietary restrictions, you may be authorized by your school to send supplemental food.

7. Pack for ECOS Institute. See the following **Packing Checklist**.

8. Morning of departure

1. Students should wear pants, walking shoes and bring a jacket on the bus

2. Students are screened for health before departure. Your child may be excluded from participation for:

a. Temperature of 100.4° or higher

b. Signs and symptoms of a communicable disease or condition

c. Crutches

# Packing Checklist

When packing, some things to consider are:

- The mountains can be 20°- 30° colder than where you live.  
Pro Tip: Check the forecast for zip code 92341 at [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov)
- Dressing in layers is better than wearing one bulky item.
- In rain/snow, bring outer layers that repel water. Cotton outer layers will absorb water and remain cold/wet.

## Two pieces of luggage only:

1. Sleeping bag/bedroll and pillow wrapped in plastic bag, labeled with name and school
2. Suitcase/duffel bag labeled with name and school

- Label everything with your child's name, especially jacket, water bottle, and camera.
- On the bus trip the first day, wear pants and walking shoes, and bring a jacket.
- Some rain ponchos, rubber boots, jackets, hats & gloves are available to borrow.
- ECOS Institute is not responsible for any lost, damaged or stolen items.

## ESSENTIALS:

- Sleeping bag or bedroll (sheets & blankets) & Pillow
- Heavy, warm jacket (a sweatshirt is not a jacket!)
- Long & short sleeve shirts (no tank tops)
- Sweater/sweatshirt
- Jeans/sturdy pants (Not just leggings)
- Socks & Underwear
- Hat (for warmth & sun protection)
- Shoes (comfortable walking shoes/hiking boots with tread & closed toe)
- Gloves
- Pajamas (or just shorts and a t-shirt!)
- Towel
- Toiletry kit: comb/brush, soap, shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, lip balm, sanitary supplies (if needed)

## ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR WINTER:

- Water-Resistant outer layers (jacket and pants)
- Long underwear/sweats/tights
- Waterproof hiking boots or snow boots
- Extra thick socks
- Good gloves

## PLEASE DO NOT BRING:

- Electronics (cellphones, games, radios, smart watches, earbuds, airtags, etc.)
- Money or valuables
- Food, candy or gum
- Make-up, cologne/perfume, hairspray, etc.
- Dangerous items (knives, lighters, etc.)

## OPTIONAL:

- Flashlight
- Camera (not a cell phone) Hair dryer
- Sunglasses & sunblock
- Leggings (may be allowed during warmer weather)
- Slippers or shower shoes
- Letter writing materials (including stamped envelope)
- Photos of family
- Stuffed animals!
- Book and game (non-electronic)