



## Essential Eligibility Criteria for Campers on Backpacking Trips

Camp Wojtyla is a wilderness camp; this designation entails atypical living factors and expectations that participants and their families must be aware of before attending these programs. The following sections outline Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC) for all Camp Wojtyla backcountry trips:

### SAFETY AND JUDGMENT

Each participant must...

1. Be able to follow verbal directions given by the group instructors
2. Recall and understand hazards and risks previously explained or pointed out by instructors. These basic environmental hazards include, but are not limited to, falling objects/rocks, loose rock and unstable surfaces, rugged steep and uneven terrain, cliff edges, moving water (fast or slow) such as rivers, creeks; and potentially hazardous animals and insects.
3. Be able to effectively alert and warn others of potential or impending dangers such as falling rocks, aggressive animals, or other environmental hazards.
4. Be able to effectively signal or notify program instructors or other course members of personal distress, injury, or need for assistance.
5. Act reliably around above stated hazards to minimize risk even if not directly supervised.
6. Be able to stay alert and to focus attention for up to several hours at a time while traveling in wilderness terrain, attending activities, or receiving instructions.
7. 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.

### TEAM-ORIENTED BEHAVIOR

Each participant must...

1. Work effectively as a member of a team despite potentially stressful and difficult conditions. Trips involve living in close quarters with limited personal time. Trips may require problem solving on an interpersonal or group level as well as a willingness to accept differences.
2. Contribute to a safe learning environment—no verbal or physical inappropriate behavior of others is tolerated for any reason.
3. Be able to willingly and equally share responsibility with group mates in daily group chores (setting up tents, cooking, dishes, etc.). Each participant may not do an equal share each day, but over a period of several days each student should do a proportionate share. All campers are learning the skills and being challenged by the conditions and activities; there can be no expectation that any other camper 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 camper.
4. Effectively communicate ideas and concerns on an individual and group level.

5. Have the cognitive ability to learn necessary skills given normal time limitations of a CW trip.
6. Be open to participating within a Christian environment. While CW does not require campers to be believing or practicing Catholics, trips are faith-based and participants are expected to be respectful during group activities and discussions.

#### OUTDOOR SKILLS: *CAMPING*

Each participant must...

1. Learn and competently perform the fundamental camping skills of finding a campsite, setting up a shelter, and cooking with a camp stove.
2. Remain adequately hydrated, fed, and properly dressed so as to remain generally healthy and be able to avoid environmental injuries such as hypothermia, heat illness, sunburn or frostbite.
3. Be able to move about the campsite in order to attend activities, attend to toileting needs, and contribute to camping tasks as necessary.
4. Live in a physically demanding backcountry environment for the uninterrupted period of the course length, which can range from 4-12 days. Conditions of this environment may vary from cold (below 40° F) to hot (above 90° F) depending on course location and month and may include, but is not limited to, rain, snow or hail, uninterrupted sun and/or wind, or the absence thereof. The remoteness is such that it may require at minimum 1 mile travel, but up to or exceeding an entire day of travel (for longer expeditions), to reach the nearest roadhead and advanced medical care.

#### OUTDOOR SKILLS: *WILDERNESS HIKING*

Each participant must...

1. At minimum, be able to travel over and negotiate through varied wilderness terrain with a backpack weighing up to or exceeding 50 pounds or 40% of body weight.
  - a. Travel conditions may include, but are not limited to, rough, rugged, uneven steep and sloping terrain; human made and animal made trails; rocky terrain that may range from smooth bedrock to extensive areas of large rock boulders (boulder fields); needing to cross rivers and creeks without the aid of bridges; ascending, descending or traversing slopes covered in snow, rocks or vegetation; bushwhacking off-trail through thick standing and/or downed vegetation. Any and all travel can occur during periods of inclement weather or nighttime hours.
  - b. Travel distances can range from less than one mile to more than eight miles in one day. On average, a week-long backpacking trip travels up to or exceeds 25 miles during the program.
  - c. Travel duration can range from less than one hour to more than 12 hours in one day and occur on successive days.

- d. Although groups will often be able to take hourly breaks or camp early if weather becomes hazardous, occasionally this is not possible. Examples include: descending/ascending a boulder choked gully; descending a peak with a threatening thunderstorm; descending a mountain pass in similar conditions.
- 2. Have average strength and endurance and basic balance and agility to travel through such terrain with a backpack.
- 3. Have the ability to have a third point of contact for balance purposes, such as with hand(s) on boulder fields or ascending or descending slopes.

OUTDOOR SKILLS: ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

Each participant must...

- 1. Learn and then practice Leave No Trace camping and travel techniques explained by instructors.

**My child and I have read this document and understand the living conditions and expectations of Camp Wojtyla programs. We understand that if the participant is not able to meet these conditions, CW Staff have the right to send the participant home before the end of the program.**

Participant First and Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's First and Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Signature (if over 18) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_