

**Exploring New Horizons Outdoor Schools
at SEMPERVIRENS**
20161 Big Basin Hwy.
Boulder Creek, CA 95006
(831) 338-3077

Dear Parents/Guardians of students serving as cabin counselors,

Sempervirens is a program of Exploring New Horizons Outdoor Schools, a nonprofit environmental education organization that conducts a residential outdoor school for numerous school districts. We have worked with more than 85,000 students and 7,000 high school counselors over the past 20 years. The week long program is an intensive experience for both the students and the counselors. Our program uses the natural environment as a laboratory where the animal and plant interactions can be more closely studied. Outdoor investigations also lead us to learn more about others and ourselves. The Sempervirens program is a unique and worthwhile educational and social experience for everyone involved.

An extremely important role in our outdoor school program is filled by high school students who volunteer a week of their time to serve as cabin counselors for the younger students. Cabin counselors are responsible for the care and well being of 7-10 students on a 24-hour-a-day basis for the entire week. Counselors, along with staff naturalists and classroom teachers, accompany their students on the discovery walks and assist in the learning process. Additionally, the counselors supervise the students during non-instructional parts of the day, such as recreation, cabin time, and bedtime. The position of cabin counselor is not easy to fill and it demands a great deal of responsibility, competence, and commitment.

Your son or daughter may be selected by the Sempervirens staff and their high school to serve as a counselor for the outdoor school. The counselors' job is challenging, requiring lots of patience and tolerance, a cheerful disposition and a consistently positive outlook. The counselors will spend many hours each day with their students and will have very little time to themselves. Despite the difficulties, or perhaps because of them, the counselors and their "children" develop very strong bonds. Friendships started at the outdoor school often last a lifetime.

There is no cost to the counselors for their stay at the outdoor school. Counselors will receive transportation to and from the outdoor school, room and board during their stay, as well as accident and health insurance while they are on site. High school students also receive full credit for their week at the outdoor school, but they are responsible for any assignments that they might miss while they are away. They should check with all of their teachers prior to attending the outdoor school.

The outdoor school program is an extension of the classroom for both the counselors and the younger students. We often will hear counselors stating that they have learned more about the environment than the students did. Perhaps even more important are the lessons that they've learned about themselves!

Thank you for allowing your son or daughter to serve as one of our outdoor school counselors. The learning and growing potential of the outdoor school program is greatly enhanced by the involvement of the high school students, and the program would be next to impossible without their invaluable participation.

If you have any questions regarding the outdoor school program and/or the counselor position, please feel free to contact one of the directors at the outdoor school site.

Sincerely,

Jacob Sackin
Program Director
Exploring New Horizons Outdoor Schools
at SEMPERVIRENS
www.exploringnewhorizons.org