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Creating Opportunities
through
Recreation Experiences

PARENT HANDBOOK

2015



Welcome to CORE Travel!

Thank you for choosing CORE Travel for your teen. Gahanna Parks & Recreation believes that CORE Travel provides a unique opportunity for teens to grow and develop as individuals and as leaders, interact with peers and adults, and foster resilience. The new, updated CORE Travel program is designed specifically for youth who have grown out of our Camp Friendship programs, but are still wanting to have fun, exciting adventures this summer. It is our hope to provide your camper with a camp experience that is action packed, providing opportunities for adventure, the development of new skills, and the promotion of confident citizenry.

How?

CORE Travel focuses on the specific developmental assets that mold caring, healthy, and responsible adults, all while providing campers opportunities for some amazing summer adventures! CORE Travel Staff promote activities that may push campers out of their comfort zones, while helping them to foster resilience. Teens are presented with a whole new set of challenges, some of which are easily accomplished, others which take persistence, grit, and teamwork. Because of our love for camp and our belief in the positive youth development philosophy, we do not take this responsibility of fostering teen development lightly, and are grateful for the opportunity to share in this growth with you and your teen.

At CORE Travel, our first priority is the safety and well-being of our campers. We are proud to uphold high standards that are supported by our program's policies and procedures, as well as by our staff of highly motivated, trained, and dedicated professionals.

On behalf of the entire CORE Travel staff, thank you for entrusting us with your teen. We take pride in providing high quality experiences for you and your camper, and look forward to another challenging and rewarding summer!

If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know!

Sara Crombie, MSW, LSW
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PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE

CORE Travel Core Belief & Mission

Our belief is that camp is the perfect outlet for teens to be teens, while simultaneously developing the resiliency necessary to successfully navigate the world around them. Not only do we provide the opportunity and support for youth to grow and develop as individuals, we create lifelong memories, lasting relationships, and foster a competent and confident citizenry.

CORE Travel Goals & Outcomes

- Challenge participants to develop independence, self-confidence, and resiliency
 - Learn new skills by participating in a variety of recreational experiences
 - Participant led programming
- Encourage participants to model teamwork, responsibility and other leadership qualities
 - Weekly programming, teambuilding activities, debriefing sessions
- Develop a sense of community and a belief in the importance of community service
 - Service learning projects incorporated throughout the summer
 - Preparing and sharing of meals while on overnight trips
- Instill an appreciation of the outdoors and an awareness of environmental stewardship
 - Various trips to parks and natural areas throughout Ohio during overnight trips
 - Outdoor skills sessions during various themed weeks (canoeing, trip planning, Leave No Trace principles, etc.)

Positive Youth Development – How We Achieve our Goals

The CORE Travel approach draws heavily from Positive Youth Development (PYD) philosophy. In a broad sense, youth development refers to the stages that youth go through to acquire the attitudes, competencies, values, and social skills they need to become successful adults. Youth move through each developmental stage, they acquire a set of personal assets, or supports, that help them face the challenges ahead and become resilient. More specifically, PYD strategies focus on giving youth the chance to form relationships with caring adults, build skills, exercise leadership, and help their communities.

PYD focuses on encouraging and nurturing these critical assets, rather than reducing particular risks or preventing specific problems. In other words, can we guarantee that your teen will never scrape a knee during a challenge course, make a bad decision, or experience minor conflict with another camper? **No.** But, we can assure you that our counselors will assist your teen in a developmentally appropriate way to stand up and try again, understand and learn from his/her mistakes, or resolve the conflict at hand.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Dates	Theme
June 9-11	High Ropes/ Adventure Elements
June 16-18	Kings Island
June 23-25	Paddling
July 14-16	Zip lining
July 28-July 30	Cedar Point

Hours

CORE Travel's programmed hours will vary by week, depending on the trips and planned activities. Each week will consist of two off-site nights where campers will spend the night either camping or in rustic accommodations. CORE Travel's extended hours run Tuesday from 7:00 AM to Thursday at 6:00 PM.

Where to Drop Off and Pick Up

Parents will drop their camper(s) off and pick them up at Friendship Park, 150 Oklahoma Ave. Drop off and pick up will take place at the Friendship Park Gazebo, unless otherwise noted by signs or communication from CORE Travel Staff. The Gazebo is where CORE Travel campers will store their gear and any needed equipment as well.

Daily Sign In & Out Procedures

Campers **MUST** be signed-in to camp every Tuesday morning, and signed-out every Thursday evening. **ABSOLUTELY NO EXCEPTIONS!!!**

Campers must be signed out by a person named on the Health History Form as a parent, guardian, second parent, second guardian, emergency contact, or additional authorized person, **ABSOLUTELY NO EXCEPTIONS!** ALL authorized persons must show appropriate identification (driver's license, photo ID with name) to remove a participant from CORE Travel, **ABSOLUTELY NO EXCEPTIONS!**

*You **MUST** show appropriate photo identification EVERY time you remove your teen from camp, even if CORE Travel Staff know you by name.*

Early Drop-Off/Late Pick-Up

Campers may not be not signed in before 7:00 AM Tuesday morning or signed out after 6:00 PM Thursday evening. It is your responsibility to make every effort to pick up your teen before closing time on Thursday. CORE Travel Staff have other responsibilities after this time, so please respect the staff in this matter. Drop-offs earlier than 7:00am and pick-ups later than 6:05pm will be assessed an additional fee.

Fee Structure

A flat fee of \$10.00 will be assessed to those individuals dropping off before 7:00 AM or picking up after 6:05 PM. In addition to the flat \$10.00 fee, a fee of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed. For example, a camper dropped off at 6:45 AM Tuesday will be assessed the flat \$10.00 plus an additional \$15.00 for the 15 minutes before 7:00 AM (bringing the total to \$25.00). Likewise, a camper picked up at 6:15 PM will be assessed the flat \$10.00 plus an additional \$10.00 for the 10 minutes between 6:05-6:15 PM (bringing the total to \$20.00).

Payment of Fees

Payment of all fees is expected at the time of drop-off or pick-up. Camp Staff will provide a written receipt for all fees paid. Campers will not be permitted to attend camp until ALL fees are paid.

Planned Absences/Sick Days

If your camper(s) will be missing camp for any reason (illness, vacation, appointments, etc.), please notify Camp and the Department of Parks and Recreation.

Overnight Trips

Campers will spend two nights off-site per week session. Campers leave their Friendship Park base site on Tuesday, stay overnight Tuesday night, have activities Wednesday, stay over Wednesday night, and return to the Friendship Park base site on Thursday. The activities and destination of overnight trips are based around the weekly CORE Travel theme.

More information about overnight trips will be provided as the summer approaches. Please check the Parks & Recreation Camp page at Gahanna.gov for more details. The weekly CORE Travel newsletter will also provide additional and more specific information about each overnight trip. These newsletters will be emailed to participants the week prior to each session.

Participant Driven

While weekly themes and general activities and destinations are pre-planned by CORE Travel Staff, the CORE Travel program is very participant driven. Campers are encouraged to take ownership over their summer experience, helping to decide and plan additional activities while on overnights, planning and preparing meals, as well as choosing new skills to learn and master.

CORE Travel T-shirts

One t-shirt is provided to each camper registered for CORE Travel. It is recommended that campers bring their CORE Travel t-shirt on trips so that they can be easily identified when traveling to or from the Friendship Park base site. Additional t-shirts can be purchased for \$8.00 each from camp staff.

Camper Age Requirements

Youth attending CORE Travel must be 12 years old on or before their first day of summer camp, and may remain at camp until the day before their 15th birthday.

Some 12 year olds are not ready for the added responsibility and expectations of the CORE Travel program. We ask that parents use their discretion when choosing to enroll their 12 year old in CORE Travel. In addition, if CORE Travel staff see and feel that a 12 year old camper is not ready for the added responsibility and expectations of CORE Travel, they may suggest the camper participate in the Camp Friendship program a little longer.

What to Bring to Camp

- **LUNCH:** Please send a healthy, substantial lunch with your camper for him/her to eat on Tuesday afternoon. This lunch SHOULD NOT REQUIRE REFRIGERATION and will allow for campers to eat on schedule, not being dependent on arrival at the trip destination or meal prepping equipment readiness. Campers will store their lunches with their personal trip gear while traveling to the overnight destination. ****All other meals and snacks will be provided.***
- **CLOSED TOE ATHLETIC SHOES:** Please send your camper in closed toe shoes appropriate for active outdoor play. Old tennis shoes are best, because they are already broken in and will get very dirty. Sandals, flip flops, and cros make everyday activities very difficult and put your camper at a greater risk to trip, fall, or sustain foot and ankle injuries.
- **WATER BOTTLE:** Please send a refillable water bottle with your camper. It is important to keep your camper hydrated, and water does the best job. Drinks with high sugar and/or caffeine content do not hydrate your camper as well as water.

- **OVERNIGHT NECESSITIES/GEAR & EQUIPMENT:** Packing lists will be provided before each CORE Travel session that will outline specific gear and equipment needed for the overnight trip. Please look for these details in the CORE Travel newsletter and other communication from the Camp Director.

Personal Belongings & Money – What NOT to Bring to Camp!

Campers are NOT to bring any personal belongings (not included on the packing list) or money to camp, including but not limited to the following:

- Personal Sports Equipment
- Animals
- Electronic Devices (hand held video games, iPods, etc.)
- Money
- Trading Cards, Collectibles, & Toys
- Alcohol and/or Drugs
- Weapons

CORE Travel maintains a no tolerance policy for possession of alcohol, drugs, or weapons. Proper authorities will be called, and disciplinary action will be taken.

CORE Travel campers are NOT permitted to bring cell phones to camp. CORE Travel Staff will be equipped with a Gahanna camp phone to be used for parent communication when needed. If you need to get a hold of your camper or he/she needs to get a hold of you, the CORE Travel camp phone will be available. This phone number will be sent out in the CORE Travel newsletters, as well as on emergency communication plans left with parents during overnight trips.

If your child brings personal belongings or money to CORE Travel, the City of Gahanna Department of Parks & Recreation is not responsible for any damaged or lost items.

Parent Access and Participation

Parents/guardians of children enrolled in CORE have unlimited access to the program during operational hours for the purpose of contacting the child and/or evaluating the premises or the care provided. However, due to the traveling and overnight nature of CORE Travel, convenient, local access is limited. If a parent/guardian wishes to visit the Friendship Park base site, he/she must sign-in as a visitor, upon entering the park and notify CORE Travel Staff of his/her presence. Parents may contact the Camp Director at 342-4250 to discuss any concerns regarding the CORE Travel program and available parent access. Your input for improvements to our program is encouraged and greatly appreciated!

Staff

CORE Travel is an environment in which all Camp Staff:

- Interact with families in a comfortable, respectful, welcoming way
- Treat participants with respect and listen to what they say
- Treat co-workers with respect and value their perspective
- Teach participants to interact with one another in positive ways
- Teach participants to make responsible choices and encourage positive outcomes
- Are sensitive to the culture and language of participants
- Strive to establish meaningful community collaborations
- Are energetic, positive, and have fun!

Each CORE Travel staff person is qualified and competent to provide wholesome leadership and direction to each child, according to his/her needs. All staff must meet the following requirements to be employed by CORE:

- At least 18 years of age
- Successful interview with the Camp Director
- Two positive reference checks and verification of previous work history
- Negative drug screen
- No record in the National Sex Offender Public Database
- No more than 6 points on driver license
- No criminal record on BCI fingerprint background check or FBI background check if lived out of state in past five years.
- Year-round camp staff who are continually employed by the City receive a BCI fingerprint background check and driver's license check annually.

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Parent Communication

CORE Travel Staff will notify parents/guardians of camper illness or injury via a phone call or written documentation in the ABC Log or an Incident Report. Due to the overnight nature of the CORE Travel program, minor incidents will be communicated to parents/guardians upon staff and camper's return to the Friendship Park base site on Thursday or at pick-up. For more serious incidents or concerns, CORE Travel Staff will notify parents/guardians as soon as possible after occurrence.

ABC Log

The ABC log is our parent/guardian notification system that allows for CORE Travel Staff to effectively communicate events that occur throughout the course of the session. **A**ccidents, **B**ehaviors, and **C**omments are logged throughout the day by Staff, and will then be communicated to parents/guardians upon returning to the Friendship Park base site. Such comments must then be read and initialed during sign-out by parents/guardians on Thursday. We try to communicate more than just negative incidents or behavior issues – our counselors are wonderful at recognizing camper achievements, and strive to communicate those just as frequently!

Behavior Management & Expectations

The CORE Travel program is highly interactive, participant driven, and mobile. CORE Travel campers will be charged with creating their own expectations and rules on the first day of the summer. However, CORE Travel campers are expected to model appropriate behavior **AT ALL TIMES** – CORE Travel campers are expected to:

- a. Use appropriate language.
- b. Be conscious of conversation topics.
- c. Listen and follow instructions.
- d. Ask for assistance when needed.
- e. Treat their counselors, fellow CORE Travel campers, and all other Parks & Recreation Staff and campers with respect.

Our staff, while discouraging inappropriate behaviors, focuses on providing positive reinforcement for acceptable behavior, and encourages learning as a natural part of growth and development. We want each camper to have a positive experience at camp and to experience as much of the camp session as possible.

Accordingly, the following actions will be taken when addressing behavior that is unacceptable in a camp environment:

1. **Reminder.** “Please ask before...”
2. **Verbal Warning.** Counselors will be sure the camper understands why they are receiving a warning. Parents may be notified via ABC log.
3. **Timeout with the CORE Travel Manager or Assistant Manager.** Incident is documented and parents are notified via phone.
4. **Camper is sent home for the CORE Travel program for the remainder of the session.** Parents will be notified and required to work with City of Gahanna Parks & Recreation staff to make arrangements to pick up their teen immediately.

*If a teen is sent home for the week **twice** during the camp season they will be expelled from camp for the remainder of the season with **no refund**.*

In addition, the following offenses may result in **immediate expulsion from CORE Travel for the remainder of the summer with no refund.**

- Physical Violence
- Possession of Alcohol, Drugs, or Tobacco – Products or Paraphernalia
- Possession of Weapons
- Physical, Verbal, and Cyber Bullying (including taunting, threats, blackmail, etc.)
- Leaving the Grounds Without Permission
- Nudity
- Any Other Criminal Act

Fighting

CORE Travel campers are **always** sent home for **at least** the remainder of the session after participating in a fight. It does not matter who started the fights, or who is to “blame,” all participants must go home – a fight will not start with only one participant. A camper may be removed for additional sessions or the remainder of the summer at the discretion of the Camp Director.

Inclement Weather

CORE Travel has specific inclement weather procedures for a multitude of circumstances that are revisited by Camp Staff, police, and fire on an annual basis. In case of severe weather, campers at the Friendship Park base site will be sheltered at the City of Gahanna’s Parks Complex (located across the parking lot at Friendship Park). While on overnight trips, CORE Travel staff will be able to check the local area weather, as well as be updated by City of Gahanna Parks & Recreation Staff. In cases of severe weather, CORE Travel schedules may be altered or trips may be cut short, whichever is safest and best for all campers and staff involved in the program.

Excessive Heat Policy

CORE Travel takes place mainly outside with limited or no access to air condition. When code red alerts and high temperature warnings are issued, program activities may be modified. Scheduled events may be substituted with alternative activities such as less active games, water play, and activities taking place under the shelter. Counselors are trained to recognize the signs and symptoms of heat-related illness and are provided with guidelines to prevent heat illness. Our guidelines are based on the heat index, a calculation that combines air temperature and relative humidity to more accurately describe what the temperature “feels like.”

Health & Wellness

All regularly scheduled CORE Travel Staff must have a valid CPR/First Aid/AED certification to be employed by Gahanna Parks & Recreation as a CORE Travel staff member. CORE Travel Staff are prepared to use basic first aid skills to address common camp injuries such as: scraped knees, insect bites, bee stings, bloody noses, and other small injuries that occur during active outdoor play. For specific Medical Standing Orders please contact the Department of Parks & Recreation at (614) 342-4250.

- CORE Travel Staff are authorized to perform the following: flush minor scrapes and cuts with water, clean minor scrapes and cuts with alcohol swabs, apply bandages when appropriate, distribute and assist with the application of cold packs when appropriate, distribute medications as indicated on Health History Forms, provide more advanced first-aid (within the scope of training) as requested by parent/guardian when accompanied by physician’s instructions (assist with epi pen, etc.).
- CORE Travel Staff are expected to call either a camper’s parent/guardian or 911, depending on the severity of the injury/illness, for any medical situation that requires treatment other than those listed above.
- CORE Travel Staff are expected to follow best practices to prevent disease transmission (use of gloves, hand washing, etc.) at all times when dealing with ANY medical situation.
- Incident forms will be completed after any treatment is provided and notes will then be recorded in the ABC log.

Medication

ALL medications (including over-the-counter or nonprescription drugs) to be administered at camp **MUST BE LISTED ON THE HEALTH HISTORY FORM AND SUBMITTED TO CORE TRAVEL STAFF BY A PARENT/GUARDIAN.** Parent/guardians are requested to bring enough medication to last the entire camp day. Medications **MUST** be kept in the original packaging/bottle that identifies the prescribing physician (if a prescription drug), the name of the medication, the dosage, and the frequency of administration—CORE Travel **WILL NOT ACCEPT OR ADMINISTER** any medications not in the original packaging/bottle. Medications that meet the above guidelines will be administered in the following way:

- All medications received by CORE Travel will be stored in a locked container (refrigeration available upon request) and administered according to the health history form and physician’s instructions by the CORE Travel Manager or another designated staff person.
- The CORE Travel staff member administering the medication will note the date/time that the medication was given on the Medication Administration Log.
- When at an off-site location, the camper’s assigned counselor(s) will carry those medications in a small first-aid kit and administer those medications appropriately, including updating the Medication Administration Log upon returning to camp.
- Parent/guardians may come to camp, sign-out their camper, give any medication they feel is appropriate, and then sign their camper back into the program.

If a camper brings medication to camp that is not listed on the health history form, AND/OR does not meet the above guidelines, AND/OR is not submitted to CORE Travel Staff (camper keeps in backpack or lunch bag) that medication will be stored in the locked medication container until a parent/guardian is able to retrieve it and WILL NOT be administered to the camper. In the case that said medication is necessary for the health and well-being of the camper, the parent/guardian will be contacted to come and administer said medications. At this time the camper's Health History Form must be updated on CampDocs or the camper will not be permitted to remain at CORE Travel.

Emergency Procedures

All CORE Travel Staff are charged with responding to emergencies. The general principles that govern all emergency situations apply:

- Evaluate the situation completely and as quickly as possible (call 911 if appropriate).
- Provide basic care consistent with training level.
- Take care of the most important conditions first--maintain open airway, control severe bleeding, and prevent shock.
- Redirect and engage campers not involved in the emergency in non-threatening, low impact activities until the emergency has passed or a debriefing takes place (with assigned mental health care professionals if necessary).

Child Abuse

Ohio Revised Code 2151.421—Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect

By state law, all agencies that provide youth's programming are required to report questionable bruises or marks that are repetitious and obvious to the staff. Likewise, should a child indicate to a staff member that abuse, either physical or sexual, is happening to them, it is our obligation to report the discussion to Franklin County Children's Services.

Program Evaluation

The City of Gahanna is committed to continually improving the quality of our camp programs. Surveys relating to all aspects of the CORE Travel program (programming, administration, facilities, staff, etc.) are utilized to ensure that an accurate assessment of the program is performed on an annual basis. In response to previous surveys, Camp Staff have implemented alternative sign-in/out procedures, incorporated more leadership activities, and provided for more camper participation in choosing program options. Additionally, the Department of Parks & Recreation welcomes your feedback at any time. Please contact the Camp Director with any questions, concerns or suggestions.

Refund and Credit Policy

ABSOLUTELY NO CREDITS, REFUNDS, OR TRANSFERS WILL BE ISSUED FOR CUSTOMER REQUESTED CANCELLATIONS AFTER MAY 22, 2015.

Gahanna does not offer customer-requested refunds for any programs, including Camp. Customer requested cancellations or transfers received on or before May 22, 2015 will receive department household credit *only*.

- Credits expire one year from the date issued.
- Customers using a household balance to register for a program will forfeit their credit, if they choose to un-enroll in the program.

All customer requested cancellations and changes are subject to a \$25 administrative fee.

- This includes transferring from one week of camp to another.
- If changes to registration are made more than one time, multiple administrative fees will apply.

Absolutely no credits or transfers will be issued for customer requested cancellations after May 22, 2015.

- This includes missing any portion of camp due to vacation, schedule conflict, or any non-emergency situation.

Refunds or credits for hardship and emergency situations must be requested by letter to the Department Director.

- *Hardship situations* are defined as a job transfer of 25 miles or more away or serious medical condition. Requests must be accompanied by proof and should be presented within 2 weeks of first occurrence impacting camp attendance.
- *Emergency situations* are defined as camper illness, injury, or medical emergency. Requests must be accompanied by proof and should be presented no less than one week prior to affecting camp attendance.

Additional Stipulations for refunds relative to "Full Summer" 10 week enrollments:

Due to the incentive offered for 10 Week Registrations, the refund schedule for any and all cancellations, changes, etc. is listed below and is in addition to general refund policies as outlined above:

- Change of weeks/location: \$25 administrative fee
- Cancellation of 1 week: No Refund/Credit (please give notification)
- Cancellation of 2-9 weeks: Each week will be credited at the non-special pricing, less the \$25 administrative fee charged for the change.

Please refer to the Camps page at Gahanna.gov for more details and specific information regarding the Summer Camp refund and credit policy.