

2009 GIRLS' WILDERNESS PROGRAM

12-DAY LEADERSHIP COURSE

July 31 – August 11, 2009

Ages 15-18, or entering 10th-12th grades

Experience. Empower. Lead.

Leadership is the ability to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward success. The Leadership Course is for girls who want a more advanced backcountry experience combined with the objective of sharpening their leadership skills and using their voice with confidence. You'll rock climb near Steamboat Springs, then embark on an extended backpacking trip in the stunning Mt. Zirkel Wilderness Area. This twelve-day course allows time to form an especially tight knit group in which to explore leadership style, personal goals and develop skills you can use at school and work. You will progressively take on full responsibility for leading your expedition by developing your map & compass, orienteering, and backcountry safety skills. Includes a follow-up community project that will involve leading others. Some previous backpacking experience required.

Welcome to the Girls' Wilderness Program!

If you've already taken a course with us, you know that you can expect your course to be fun, challenging, and out of the ordinary! As with all Girls' Wilderness courses, it's about having a great adventure, but it's also about learning things about yourself and other people that you can take home and use in your life. On the Leadership Course, you have the chance to really practice your outdoor skills and make decisions as a team.

Leadership involves the commitment to being the best person you can be, of having the integrity to engage honestly with others, and to speak truthfully about your perceptions and beliefs. If this describes the person you strive to be, and you also love to be in the mountains, this is the course for you. The longer format provides time to hone your wilderness skills while also having a chance to explore and practice the personal and inter-personal skills involved in effective leadership.

Who Else is Going to Be On My Course?

Everyone brings unique life experiences and perspectives to the course. Because of the advanced nature of the Leadership Course, a recommendation from an adult who knows you is required. It can be a teacher, coach, adult friend, or staff from a previous Women's Wilderness course. Previous participation on a Wilderness Expedition course or some other backpacking experience is recommended.

What Will I Do on the Leadership Course?

The first two days will be spent at "rock camp" outside Steamboat Springs, near Rabbit Ears Pass. At rock camp you will learn or review belaying skills, and will focus on developing the personal courage and teamwork involved with rock climbing. From there, you will head west to the Mt. Zirkel Wilderness Area to spend the next nine days on an extended backpacking and mountaineering expedition. Depending on weather, two or three peak climbs will be attempted, and time allowed for an overnight solo experience.

Where Are We Going?

The spectacular Mt. Zirkel Wilderness Area, nestled in the Sawtooth Range north of Steamboat Springs, encompasses 140,000 acres of pristine alpine terrain in Colorado's Routt National Forest. Elevations range from 7,000 to 12,180 feet atop Mt. Zirkel. Characterized by beautiful broad valleys and numerous alpine lakes and cirques, this rugged area straddles the Continental Divide and is home to elk, bald eagles, sandhill cranes, osprey, peregrine falcons and marmots. Mount Zirkel is approximately 4 hours from Boulder.

What About Fitness?

The Leadership Course is more physically challenging than the other Girls' Wilderness Courses, so to enjoy it the most you will want to be in good physical condition. Since you will be carrying nine days worth of food, you can expect a heavy pack, and the distances covered are greater than those of the Wilderness Expedition. If you are not already getting regular aerobic exercise, you will want to start some conditioning at least two months before your course. Please call us if you want some suggestions on getting ready for this course.

What Will I Eat?

Spending all day outside will work up your appetite, and we'll provide meals and snacks that taste good and give you the energy you'll need for twelve days of hiking, backpacking and rock climbing. Meals are simple and hearty with lots of variety. We'll also make sure to pack enough dessert for everyone! We can accommodate some common dietary restrictions; please let us know if you have specific dietary needs.

What Should I Bring?

You will receive a "What to Bring" list with your enrollment packet. Women's Wilderness will provide all group gear (tents, stoves, sleeping bags, sleeping pads and backpacks), and we have outdoor clothing and hiking boots to loan. Plan to bring everything you have from the "What to Bring" list to your pre-trip meeting (held the night before we depart) and we'll help you with the rest. If borrowing a pack from TWWI, please bring your items in whatever bag is convenient for you!

How will I carry everything?

One of the beauties of a backpacking trip is that you will be entirely self-sufficient during your course. This means that when you move from camp to camp, you'll be hiking with a backpack that weighs about 30-40 pounds. Women's Wilderness has a good selection of adjustable packs, and staff will fit your pack just for you so it's comfortable. Since this course is an introduction to backpacking for most participants, we'll hike at a pace that works for everyone and take frequent breaks.

Course Expectations

We expect that you will come to your course with a willingness to learn, an open mind, ready to make new friends and have tons of fun! You can expect that we will listen to your needs and interests, and those of your group, and adapt the itinerary and course content accordingly. Your rights and decisions will always be respected, and no girl is ever forced or "talked into" doing something she doesn't want to do.

Itinerary

Each course is different, and the itinerary can easily change to accommodate the needs of each group. While weather sometimes influences our schedule, here's an itinerary of a typical Leadership course:

Day One	Leave from our office in Boulder at 8:00 am. Drive to the camping area near Steamboat Springs, about a three-hour drive. In the afternoon you will learn or review belaying, and begin to share your hopes and intentions for the course.
Day Two	A full day of rock climbing.
Day Three	Rock climb and rappel at a more challenging site. In the afternoon, you will pack up and drive to the Mt. Zirkel Wilderness Area.
Days Four through Eleven	Pack up the backpacks and go! Traveling through the mountains with your group, you'll learn how to navigate using map and compass, how to make decisions as a group, and how to take care of the wilderness environment. You will practice leadership by gradually assuming all the responsibilities and decisions of your expedition, learn to use an ice axe on early summer snow, travel off-trail using your map and compass skills, and wade in the many beautiful lakes. You may do an overnight solo, and there will be time for journal writing, art projects, games, and hanging out.
Day Twelve	After a closing ceremony, unload the packs and head back to Boulder.

Pre-Trip Meeting

There will be a Pre-Trip Meeting for Leadership Course participants so you can take an active role in preparing for your trip:

For Girls: 4:00 to 6:00 pm on the afternoon before your course starts at the TWWI Office.

This meeting gives you a chance to meet the staff and other girls on the course, make sure you have what you need, and borrow clothing and hiking boots if you need them. You'll also spend some time planning your course and looking at maps of your route.

For Parents: 5:30-6:00 pm, on the afternoon before the course starts at the TWWI Office.

Your parents will have a chance to meet the staff and to get questions answered about the course.

Community Project

By the end of your course you will be part of a strong and competent team, with the ability to make a positive change in your community. A community project will be scheduled for your group after your return. This day is considered part of the course, so plan on getting together with your group to catch up and use your collective energy to help others. The project will involve using your newly developed leadership skills on a project that involves conservation, environmental issues, and leading others.

Community Project Date:

August 12, 2008

Slideshow and Pizza Party

A celebration slideshow and pizza party will be scheduled in late August for all participants, their families and friends.

Cost

The cost of the Leadership Course is \$1420. Full and partial financial aid is available for participants from low- and middle-income families, and scholarships are determined on a case-by-case basis. Please request a financial aid form if you would like to apply.