



ELEVATING THE SPECTRUM
FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM

Summer Camp Overview & Parent Handbook

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SUMMER CAMP OVERVIEW

Welcome to Ascendigo Adventures!

Since 2004, Ascendigo's Summer Adventures program has provided hundreds of children and adults on the autism spectrum with a unique and rich summer camp experience. Formerly known as Extreme Sports Camp, Ascendigo is located in Aspen's Roaring Fork Valley. In keeping with the intense outdoor recreational ethos of the area, Ascendigo takes full advantage of this beautiful environment by supporting our campers in learning and enjoying local outdoor sports and many other activities.

Ascendigo offers a unique combination of fun, positivity, and challenge to stretch our campers in all our sports and activity instruction. The Ascendigo Way incorporates a Naturalistic Developmental Behavioral Intervention (NDBI) approach in teaching our campers to participate in sports, gain independence in skills, and grow socially. NDBIs are a group of evidence-based methods utilizing the principles of applied behavior analysis with developmental science. Our teaching and behavior support methods have been developed in collaboration with Diane Osaki, OTR, Founding Member of Thrive Autism Collaborative in Denver, Colorado. Diane is a sought-after expert in autism and the Early Start Denver Model, a well-studied NDBI for young children with autism.

Many parents are surprised by what our campers (their children) are able to accomplish: wakeboarding behind a power-boat, being an active crew member on a white-water raft, riding a horse, climbing a rock wall, completing an Alpine hike or even riding a bike. Yet, we routinely observe campers making progress in these competencies as they enjoy the fun and supportive context of Ascendigo Summer Adventures.

We are very excited for this year's camp season. Each summer we evolve, and are rewarded by the friendships, progress and confidence we see in our campers at the end of each session. We are also excited for our new friends when their parents see the positive effect on their child and learn what they have accomplished.

1: For more complete program description, we strongly recommend reading the Camp Overview first.

Summer Camp Overview

Ascendigo Autism Services

Ascendigo Autism Services is a growing and dynamic non-profit organization dedicated to empowering individuals on the autism spectrum to lead increasingly rich, self-actualized, and socially integrated lives. Our summer camp program is just one piece of a much larger effort.

We offer a growing suite of services designed to enhance the lives of individuals living anywhere on the autism spectrum, and their families. In addition to our Adventures programs, we work year-round with children and adults providing personal growth opportunities including outdoor recreation, behavioral therapy, school consultation, community integration, employment supports, as well as full-time residential services.

Ascendigo Adventures, in addition to our Summer Camp, offers many other activities and programs throughout the year. A few of our current programs include:

Winter Adventures— Private and group ski/snowboard lessons and camps in partnership with Aspen Ski Company. We work hand in hand with Aspen Ski Company to train Ski Pros in our Ascendigo Method.

Adventure Club — Offering a wide range of outdoor activities and social skill building for our local ASD friends ages 7-17. This program operates almost year-round. In the winter months we team up with Aspen Valley Ski and Snowboard Club to offer inclusive group ski lessons.

Adventures Travel Camp Series— Based off of the ideals from our Summer Camp, this travel series takes us on the road across the country. We have hosted camps in Denver, CO; Flagstaff, AZ; Austin, TX and will continue to expand our reach.

Ascendigo's Summer Camp program in 2021 is based this year 2021 at our Crystal Springs Ranch located at 2009 County Rd 100 Carbondale CO, 81623.

This will be the new meeting place. Parents will drop off and pick up their campers at the ranch.

Drop off time: 8:45am Pick Up Time: 4:15pm

Camp Season & Sessions

Ascendigo will offer 7 consecutive weeks of day camp sessions, between June 28th and August 13th. Camp sessions are 5 days long- Monday through Friday from 8:45am to 4:15pm.

Different from past summers, Ascendigo will be based at **Crystal Springs Ranch located at 2009 County Rd 100 Carbondale CO, 81623.**

Campers have the option to do any portion of the summer from a single week to all the sessions, based on availability. Neurotypical siblings and friends (NTSF) are welcome to participate in the Youth/Teen division (7-17), however, they will not receive 1:1 support. Campers may attend with an aide to assist them. In this circumstance the camper MAY not be paired with an Adventures Camp Coach.

Dates for Summer Camp Sessions:

Week 1: June 28-July 2 (Monday- Friday)

Week 2: July 5 -July 9 (Monday- Friday)

Week 3: July 12-July 16 (Monday- Friday)

Week 4: July 19-July 23 (Monday- Friday)

Week 5: July 26-July 30 (Monday- Friday)

Week 6: August 2-August 6 (Monday- Friday)

Week 7: August 9-August 13 (Monday- Friday)

Monday Check In: On the first Monday of camp, please meet at 8:00am to go over any needs or paperwork, this also serves as an opportunity for our staff to meet our campers and their parent(s). This is an important step to make sure we gather as much information as possible about each camper's unique needs and preferences and gather information that our intake forms may not fully capture. The remainder of the week (Tuesday- Friday) check in will be at the same location at 8:45am.

Camp Check In includes meeting our leadership team as well as:

1. Camp Administrator
 - a. Registration verification and sign-in
 - b. Ascendigo Coach assignment
2. Camp Nurse
 - a. Health history review (inform Nurse of any prior injuries and/or physical conditions that might increase camper's risk in any of our sports and activities)
 - b. Medications review and check-in
3. Ascendigo Coaches
 - a. Behavioral History Review
 - b. Behavioral Plan Review (if camper has one)
 - c. Special concerns
 - d.

Day Camp

To prioritize the health and safety for staff and athletes in the era of COVID-19, we have taken numerous precautions such as: reduced camp capacity, socially distanced transportation, and a reduction to day programs only (no over-night stay). Our day camp will run Monday-Friday from 8:45am to 4:15pm.

Ascendigo will NOT provide food. The family will be asked to pack a nutritious cold lunch and snacks for their athlete each day. Families will pack camper's lunch, and snacks daily.

¹: Please refer to APPENDIX: B CHECK IN/CHECK OUT SCHEDULE for details Review any special camper interests and/or limitations

Life at Camp

Weekday Schedule

Each day, we will meet at Crystal Springs Ranch for a morning check-in. From there, athletes and their coaches are transported to the site of the scheduled sport (Please see schedule on pg. 12*). We ask that campers have a full balanced breakfast prior to being dropped off and bring a healthy lunch/snacks as well as a water bottle.

Weekday Sports & Activities

Ascendigo's primary weekday activities consist of these sport programs. 2021's sports primarily consist of the Lake Program (motorboat powered wake boarding, surfing, and tubing), the Alpine Program (rock climbing, hiking), and the Ranch Program (horseback riding and other ranch activities and skills) — see descriptions below. During the week, each camper will experience each of the sports in order to gain skills and exposure to a variety of adventure sports.

Each sport is led by an experienced, certified sport specialist who is also experienced in supporting campers on the autism spectrum.

Sport Program Descriptions:

Alpine Program: Our primary alpine activities are rock climbing and hiking. Based on the capabilities and interests of each session's campers, the progressions are designed to bring each individual toward his or her highest capability in climbing, rope skills, hiking, and appreciation for the alpine environment. Ascendigo utilizes a variety of outdoor climbing sites throughout the Roaring Fork Valley. The terrain is chosen to match the individual camper's skills and varies from beginner to expert level challenge. All climbing is supervised by certified climbing specialists. Other fun and immersive experiences in the Alpine Program, in addition to the ropes courses include slacklining for balance and confidence and a rope swing to assist the camper in gaining comfort in wearing a harness.



Sport Program Descriptions:

Lake Program: Ascendigo offers a progression of motor-powered lake sports starting with riding in the boat, and then graduating, based on the capacity of the camper, to tubing, knee boarding, and ultimately wakeboarding. Located at Rifle Gap, this is one of our most popular programs.



Ranch Program: The therapeutic benefits of being around and riding horses are well-known, especially for individuals with autism. Ascendigo's Ranch Program provides a tremendous opportunity for exposure and skill-building. Immersed in the ranch environment, campers are exposed to horsemanship, animals and activities that are fun and challenging, while they develop competence and confidence in important foundational life skills. Our ranch is in Missouri Heights, about 15 minutes from CMC—Spring Valley Campus, high above the Roaring Fork Valley.



PARENT HANDBOOK¹

Signing Up & Getting Ready

Registration for camp sessions is available through our website at www.ascendigo.org. Online registration and creditcard processing is provided by Active.com.

Detailed registration instructions are available at our registration portal, and support is available at ibustamante@ascendigo.org or call us Monday through Friday between 9:00am and 4:00pm MST.

Should you have questions- feel free to reach us at 970-927-3143 and by selecting "Adventures" from the operator menu. If we do not answer (COVID has impacted our office hours), please leave a voicemail and follow up with an email

Registration involves four steps:

To sign your camper up for Ascendigo's Summer Camp, we will ask you to

1. Provide basic camper and parent information
2. Select the camper's week from one of the available sessions. If a session is unavailable, you can be added to a waitlist by emailing ibustamante@ascendigo.org Approve our basic contract and releases
3. Provide 50% down payment for the chosen session(s) by credit card.

Completing all four steps above is required to hold your camper's spot(s) and selected core sport(s). More complete financial information and options are available through the registration portal.

Completing registration requires that all forms and waivers be completed at least three (3) weeks prior to the start of camp. Please note: a doctor must sign the medical form each year. Camper's must submit a signed, current form or they will NOT be allowed at camp per Colorado Regulations.

Many campers especially the first time campers are anxious about the transition. We also often see that the parent(s) are even more anxious. Camper's behaviors often increase around their parent(s) and they react to the parent's emotional state. In most cases, the camper's

¹: the word "Parent" herein refers to the person legally authorized to agree to the terms under which Ascendigo provides camp services. Depending on circumstances, this could be a parent, a legal guardian, or the camper her/himself.

anxiety level diminishes greatly after the parent has gone and the camper is with his/her new friends and staff.

Our advice to parents is the same as for most overnight camps:

- Talk with your camper periodically before the camp, and to the extent you are able, discuss any fear or concerns your camper has.
- We strongly discourage parent visits during a session for our overnight campers. Exceptions can be made for campers staying for multiple sessions, but please discuss this beforehand with our Adventures Director to ensure it is in the best interest of the camper.

What to Bring

Please refer to APPENDIX D: CAMPER PACKING LIST to view our recommended packing list.

Camper Cash Policy

We recommend providing \$50 per week discretionary cash for incidentals or special circumstances. Any cash will be collected a check in and tracked by the Camp Administrator and Coaches. Unused cash will be returned at the end of camp.

Prescriptions, OTC Medications, & Supplements

Our campers often have many medications and supplements to take daily, or multiple times per day. As our camp continues to grow, we want to ensure that our campers continue to receive safe and accurate medication administration.

All prescriptions, over-the-counter (OTC) medications, and supplements must be in their original packaging and will be delivered to our camp nurse at Check In.

Aides at Camp

A family may send a participant with an aide or assistant. That aide must follow all Ascendigo rules and regulations while the participant is in our care from 8:45am-4:15pm. A participant with an aide will receive sports instruction and support from the Ascendigo team, but may not be paired at a 1:1 ratio like participants who do not have an aide.

Policies, Procedures, and Expectations

Parents wanting their camper to reduce a routine of using a preferred activity, such as recreational use of computer or tablet, or to improve their diet, should do so over time outside camp. Please do not suddenly take away, or expect us to take away, a preferred activity or routinely eaten food that happen to be available on campus. The transition to camp may already prove stressful and adding additional change to routines is not a recipe for a successful experience.

Parent Check In & Check Out

You child’s safety and security are our highest priority. Only those adults listed on the Parent Authorization Form for Camper Pick Up will be allowed to drop off, pick-up, or sign out a client. Parents or Legally Authorized Guardians are expected to drop off and pick up at the Crystal Springs Ranch at the beginning and end of each camp day for daytime campers.

Ascendigo will NOT assume care for any camper:

- After 5:00pm
- Who has not provided a current medical form signed by a physician.
- For whom all required forms and waivers have not been completed, or
- For whom we have not received completed payment.

Important notes for parents and caregivers of Day Campers

Day Campers need to check in on Monday at Crystal Springs Ranch by 8:00am. Exceptions to this can be made with prior notice.

Campers will attend only during the day and not spend the night

Campers

New campers need to check in on Monday at Crystal Springs Ranch by 8:00am. Exceptions to this can only be made with prior notice the day before.

Drop-off at Ranch

- Please make sure your camper arrives on time each day.
- Please provide a packed lunch/snacks for each day.

- Many of our activities involve travel from the ranch to the location of the activity. If you arrive more than 30 minutes late, or if it is not practical to integrate the late-arriving camper into any of the day’s activities, we regret that we may not be able to accommodate the camper that day. We cannot offer a refund for the day when this occurs.

Pick-ups

- Please pick your day camper up on time.
- Please call us if you will be late. We understand that delays occur due to traffic, accident, weather, etc., and Ascendigo will allow a 15-minute grace period for such delays, providing you call to let us know.
- After 30 minutes, staff will notify the Adventures Director or a supervisory level staff member who will advise staff on where to go as they continue to wait.
- After 90 minutes, we will call other emergency contacts listed. As a last resort we will call the local Child or Adult Protection Services, as appropriate, to report the situation.
- Ascendigo will not release a camper to a parent or caregiver who we reasonably believe to be impaired (under the influence of alcohol or drugs), until the Adventures Director personally determines that such a release does not put the client at risk.

Parent Communications During Camp

.....With Staff

We strongly encourage parents to take the time to communicate with their camper’s Coach at Check In and at the end of their stay. You will learn much about your camper’s experience and progress if you take advantage of this opportunity before you hit the road. Please bear in mind that your camper might have several coaches during the week acting as a team. While we try to have the same people meeting you at the beginning and end of each session, sometimes work schedules or other matters prevent it. Therefore, the coach you meet at check in may be a different member of your camper’s team than whom you meet with at the end of the session. If you wish to contact your camper’s Coach, the preferred method is text. Our staff is instructed not to answer calls during activities, and to respond to texts only when it is safe to do so and when it will not disrupt

...With Campers

Live parent contact with a camper often increases homesickness and behaviors and can distract attention from the activity and learning. Although we occasionally make exceptions based on how a given camper reacts, we typically discourage phone calls, emails, or texts during the session. Additionally, emailing and texting tends to increase campers' awareness of, and demand for, screen time. Please remember, there is no cell service at many of our activity venues anyway. We understand your concern— please be confident that your child is in good hands!

Risk Management

Our second priority at Summer Camp is fun, followed by personal development. However, our primary concern is managing risks. There is no such thing as perfect safety, especially with the risks inherent in outdoor, sport and integrated community activities.

Emergency Policy: Ascendigo maintains and continuously upgrades our Emergency Protocols. A link to our current Emergency Procedures and Protocols can be found on the Summer Camp home page. In general, our Supervisors and Directors are directed to:

- Intervene between the person or persons at risk and the source of the risk,
- Anyone who requires immediate first aid will receive rapid and appropriate transport to emergency care,
- Contact the Adventures Director or President/CEO as soon as it is practicable,
- Assure that all other campers continue to have adequate supervision and care while the staff dealing with the situation has their attention focused elsewhere.
- More minor illnesses or injuries, the Ascendigo Nurse will be contacted and will treat and assess for further medical treatment.

The Adventures Director or Executive Director will contact the designated camper emergency contact as soon as possible, while personally seeing to the care of the injured or ill person.

We will always attempt, with the support of our BCBA and other experienced behavioral staff, to come up with approaches to mitigate each particular camper's aggressive and/or self-injurious behaviors, including identifying antecedents and triggers, using redirection, and changing

up communication protocols. Campers with a known history of aggressive episodes shall be separated from other campers by, at a minimum, an interposed staff member, in activities where participants are physically close to one another.

Ascendigo seeks to accommodate everyone on the autism spectrum, provided they are sufficiently medically stable to participate in our program. To that end, we will always attempt, with the support of our BCBA and other experienced staff, to come up with approaches to mitigate each particular camper's aggressive and/or self-injurious behaviors, including identifying antecedents and triggers, using redirection, and changing up communication protocols. However, Ascendigo reserves the right to immediately withdraw any camper from Summer Camp in the event that the camper acts out uncontrollably against campus, vendor, or public property or employees such that Ascendigo's continued working relationship with a needed partner is put at risk.

The Ascendigo Nurse or a physician that examines an ill camper advises us that the camper is likely to be contagious or unlikely to be able to recover in time to complete the session. In this case, Ascendigo will endeavor to find another suitable session for your camper.

Electronics at Camp

We attempt to reduce the use of electronics as much as possible for each camper during Summer Camp. Our supervisors have some discretion in this in order to meet each camper where they are, and move forward from there, especially when a camper relies on an electronic device for communication.

Here are our camp policies regarding electronics:

- Communication assistive devices are always welcome and should be in water resistant cases if needed while participating in a water sport.
- Our goal is to minimize screen time to only what is necessary for each camper's needs.
- To set up your camper and our staff for success, we strongly encourage you to begin reducing your camper's screen time at home, prior to camp.
- We do have scheduled free time where campers may access Wi-Fi.
- Phones can pose a distraction in our immersive outdoor activities and learning environment. Many of these environments put phones at high risk for damage or loss and some of our activity venues lack

cellular coverage. If a camper can forego bringing a phone during a session, so much the better.



We therefore prohibit our staff from providing direct autism related services outside of Ascendigo. Examples of prohibited activities include being a roommate of a client, taking a leave from Ascendigo to work for a family, or entering into any other conflict of interest.

Ascendigo staff specifically agree in their employment contracts to be subject to restrictive covenants which put them at both risk of termination and litigation if they provide direct services to any current or former client of Ascendigo while on staff, or within a year of working with Ascendigo.

Staff

Our staff is dedicated to the well-being of the families and camper in our care. We constantly recruit the best team members we can find that align with our vision and who can contribute to and increase the scope and quality of services we provide. In addition to the ASD care, experience, training, and intuition we look for, we identify specialty skills in physical and outdoor education, special education, and mountain sports. We train all of our staff continuously to increase their effectiveness and professionalism.

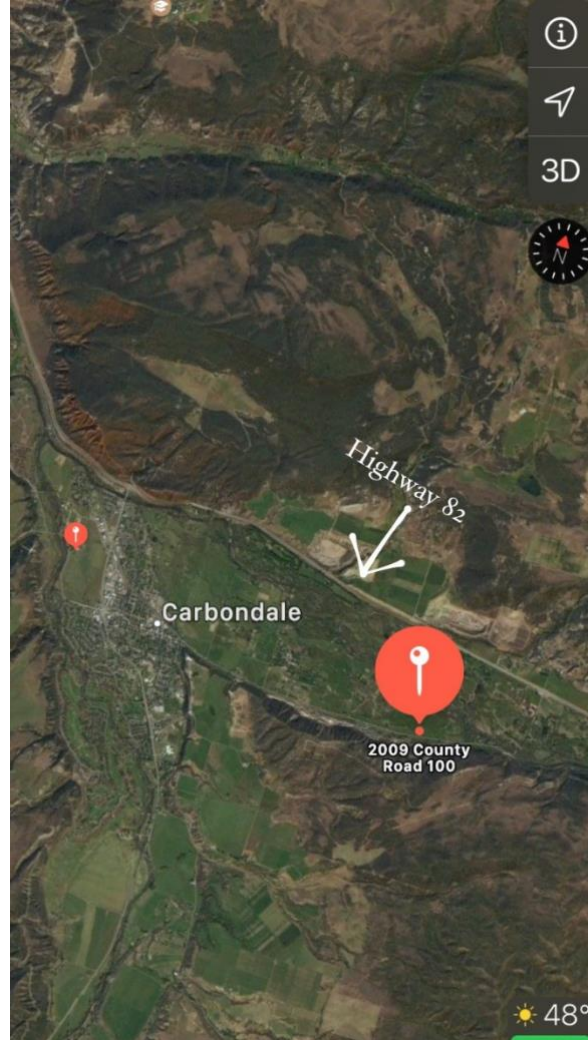
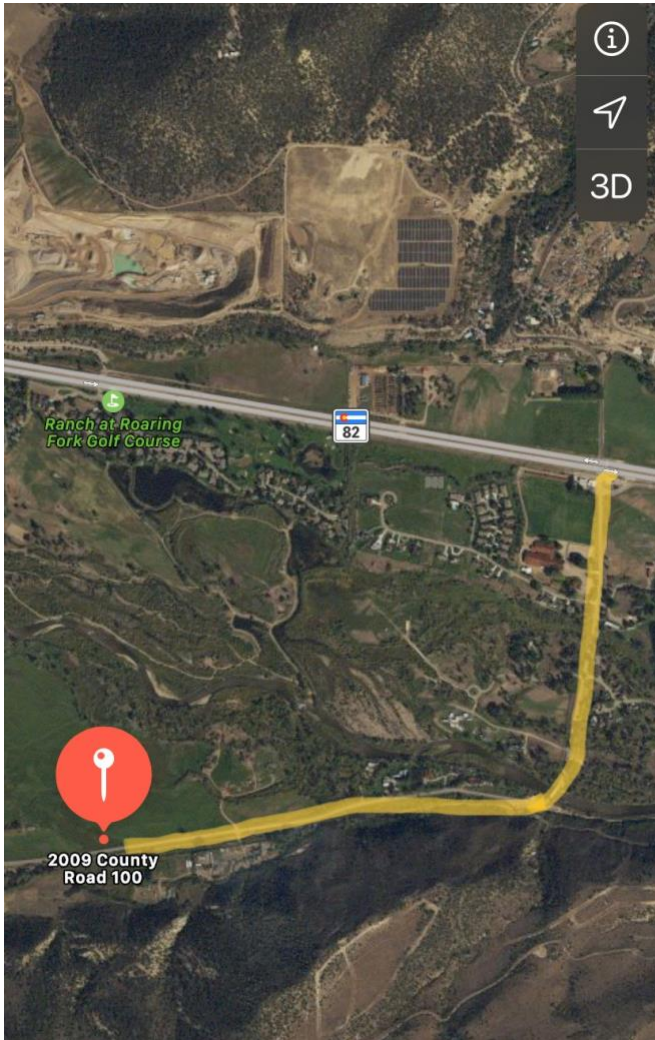
Trained and caring staff are both our greatest and most expensive resource. This is a key factor in differentiating our services from low-intensity/low-progress programs. It is also why our programs and services are as expensive as they are to deliver.

Client/Family & Staff

Staff may not independently provide any services to clients which are available to clients within Ascendigo or provide any support for ASD clients outside of Ascendigo hours, unless through Ascendigo. Exceptions require the express written

permission of the President & CEO. Parents agree not to attempt to hire Ascendigo staff either directly or indirectly for any autism or client care related services.

Ascendigo spends a great deal of time and resources to recruit, develop, and retain the most capable staff possible. We understand that our staff members are attractive candidates to families who would like to personally hire staff directly to help their family full or part time. However, allowing parents to hire people from our team has proven to negatively affect our ability to take care of all our clients.



APPENDIX B: CHECK IN/CHECK OUT SCHEDULE

Below you will find the Check In and Check Out times for Summer Camp. Check In and Check Out location will be at the
Crystal River Ranch.
2009 County Rd 100, Carbondale CO 81623

Week 1 – Week 7

Check In Time	Day Camp: All Sports (MONDAY)
	8:00AM
	Day Camp: All Sports (TUESDAY-FRIDAY)
	8:45:AM

Check Out Time	Day Campers
	Mon-Fri Lunch- 12:00-1:00pm Pick Up- 4:15pm

APPENDIX C: CORE SPORTS SCHEDULES

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:45am	Drop-Off	Drop-Off	Drop-Off	Drop-Off	Drop-Off
9:00am	TRAVEL	TRAVEL	TRAVEL	TRAVEL	TRAVEL
9:30am	Ranch	Ranch	Lake	Ranch	TRAVEL
10:00am					Rock Climbing
10:30am					
11:00am					
11:30am					
12:00pm	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:30pm					
1:00pm	TRAVEL	TRAVEL	Lake	TRAVEL	TRAVEL
1:30pm	Lake	Rock Climbing		Rock Climbing	Lake
2:00pm					
2:30pm					
3:00pm					
3:30pm	TRAVEL	TRAVEL	TRAVEL	TRAVEL	TRAVEL
4:15pm	Pick Up	Pick Up	Pick Up	Pick Up	Pick Up

Alternating
AM and PM

Lake = With
Boats

It's never too early to start thinking about what to pack! If you have questions, it's a good idea to contact us early.

GEAR

- Baseball cap or full brim hat
- Sunglasses and sunglass strap for water sports
- 1-liter water bottle (for daily hydration)
- **Day pack** (small backpack to carry water, beach towel, change of clothes, snacks, sunscreen, etc. to different daily activities.)
- Bath towel and beach towel or quick dry pack towel (for lake and river sports)
- Sunscreen -you will need this EVERYDAY
- Vitamins (must be on med form and signed by physician)

CLOTHING

- Rain Jacket and Rain Pants **REQUIRED** (waterproof)
- Long sleeved fleece hoodie or pullover (cool mornings & evenings) **NO COTTON**
- 2 pairs long pants (activewear materials)
- 2 pairs of shorts
- 3 – 5 short sleeved shirts Pajamas
- Underwear and socks (include at least 2 pairs of hiking socks)
- Bathing Suit: **Girls**- 2 one-piece bathing suits (racing-type suits) **Boys**- 2 pairs board shorts
- Rash guard top –Light colored long sleeved (protection from the mountain elements and temperatures)
- Swim Goggles (*Optional*)

SHOES

- 1 pair – sneakers or low top hiking shoes (hiking and daily wear)
- 1 pair – sandals or water shoes – must have heel straps (no flip flops) for lake & river sports

TRAVEL

Driving: follow directions to get to

Crystal Springs Ranch located at 2009 County Rd 100 Carbondale CO, 81623.

Flying into Denver:

You can take the Colorado Mountain Express (CME) from the Denver Airport to the Crystal Springs Ranch where we can pick you up. Please arrange with us in advance. Other nearby airports: Aspen, Eagle, Grand Junction.

If you have questions, please call or email, we'd be happy to help!

970-319-5097 or ibustamante@ascendigo.org