ASCENDIGO

Winter Adventures



PARENT HANDBOOK

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About Ascendigo Adventures

Since 2004, Ascendigo Summer Adventure programs have supported hundreds of children and adults living with autism or other differences by providing a unique and rich summer camp experience. It was formerly known as Extreme Sports Camp. Ascendigo is 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 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 participants (their children) can accomplish. This includes Skiing and Snowboarding. Yet, we routinely observe campers making progress in these competencies as they enjoy the fun and supportive context of our Ascendigo Summer Adventures and Winter Adventures.

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

Ascendigo Winter Adventures

Ascendigo's Winter Adventure Program is made possible by support and partnership with Aspen-Snowmass. When you register for a lesson through Ascendigo's website, you reserve a private lesson with an Aspen Snowmass Ski Professional who has been certified by Ascendigo's Adaptive Training Team. These Ski Professionals are expertly trained by Aspen Snowmass in modern ski practices, as well as Ascendigo's adaptive techniques. Ascendigo's certification process is designed to help Ski Professionals deliver successful lessons and fun experiences to people of all abilities. Please note that Ascendigo specializes in working with athletes who have cognitive, behavioral, and social differences. If necessary, our adaptive ski colleagues at Challenge Aspen are better equipped to deliver lessons to individuals with physical differences.

Essential Eligibility Criteria

While Ascendigo will take every reasonable step to accommodate your athletes' individual needs, we may not be able to serve everyone. With the help of their instructor, athletes must be able to safely utilize the facilities and equipment necessary for the lessons. Likewise, athletes must be able to safely be in public spaces and not present a significant danger to themselves, their ski professional, or the public. We understand that people with ASD or similar conditions may experience challenging behavior and health conditions at times. Ascendigo will attempt to mitigate these challenges with our experienced staff, however, we reserve the right to suspend or deny services if Ascendigo deems the athlete's behavior or condition too dangerous to manage.

Products and Programs

Adaptive Ski School

Full Day Private Lessons (9am-3pm):

Description: *Enjoy skiing and riding with personalized coaching, teaching, and guiding to fit your athlete's unique needs and goals. Lessons include private instruction from 9am-3pm, access to discounted lift tickets, and 40% off the athlete's rental gear at Four Mountain Sports. Extra buddy support is available if a 2:1 ratio is needed to facilitate safety.*

Pricing:

Early/Late Season:	December 1-20, April 10-20	**$650.00**
Peak Season:	December 21-January 5, February 14-20, March 2-30	**$685.00**
Base Rate :	January 4- February 13, April 1-10	**$670.00**
Service Fee:	A $25.00 service fee will be added to all transactions	**$25.00**

Half Day Private Lessons (9am-12pm): $520.00 (Available upon request)

Description: *Enjoy 3 hours of skiing and riding with personalized coaching, teaching, and guiding to fit your athlete's unique needs and goals. Lessons include private instruction from 9am-12pm or 12:30-3:30pm, access to discounted lift tickets, and 40% off the athlete's rental gear at Four Mountain Sports. Please note that half-day lessons are NOT available during peak seasons dates. Please contact clong@ascendigo.org to request a half day lesson. Extra buddy support is available if a 2:1 ratio is needed to facilitate safety.*

Private Lesson Add-On Buddy Support: $225.00 (on top of lesson price)

Description: *Add-On Buddies are additional support for your athlete if they need more than 1:1 support. Sometimes, extra buddy support is necessary for safety, comfort, or if your athlete needs ample physical support or supervision. Please note, Ascendigo reserves the right to require an extra buddy at the family's expense if Ascendigo deems it necessary for the safety of the athlete, Ski Professional, or the public.*

Après Ski Custom Care Program: $100/hour + customized activity fees

Description: *To complement Ascendigo's private ski lessons, we are offering custom care immediately after the conclusion of your skier's lesson. Capped at 1-2 participants per day, Après Ski Custom Care allows your participant to continue enjoying the company and fun of hanging with their Ascendigo friends while offering your family respite care during the evening. This program is customized to your skier and their unique abilities and interests. Activities include but are not limited to ice skating, rock climbing, dinner, swimming, etc. The Ascendigo team needs ample time to staff and plan for Custom Care programming – reservations are required one-week prior to time of service. Eligibility: Ascendigo Winter Adventures participants and siblings 5+.*

AVSC Ski Buddy Programs (RFV Locals Only)

Ski Buddy Support: **$125/day; $100/half-day**

Description: *Ascendigo can provide a ski (or snowboard) buddy that will help your child integrate into an Aspen Valley Ski and Snowboard Club (AVSC) group lesson. We provide a buddy whose responsibility is to support your athlete with socialization, behavioral management, and lesson integration. Ski buddies do NOT teach skiing or snowboarding but act as additional support to the Aspen Skiing Company group lesson instructor. Availability is limited, so please reach out to hhermes@ascendigo.org asap to discuss options for your athlete. Financial Aid is available for this program.*

General Ski Buddy Support
$225/day; $165/half-day

Description: *Ascendigo provides ski buddy support for individuals that are enrolled in a group ski lesson or would like to have 1:1 support on the mountain. Ski Buddies* ***do not*** *teach ski lessons but support with behavior management, mountain navigation, and activities of daily living (ADL) support. General Ski Buddy support is offered across all four of Aspen's mountains – Aspen, Snowmass, Buttermilk, and Highlands. To qualify for 1:1 support outside of a group lesson, the participant must be an advanced skier/rider. Buddy services are subject to approval based off the participant's skill level. Ski Buddies have limited availability – ample notice is required to secure a buddy for your ski days. To inquire, please email Caroline Long – clong@ascendigo.org.*

Registration

When you are ready to book your lessons, visit our Winter Adventures Website. For a step-by-step guide, please see our Registration Guide.

Please note that we need a minimum of 72 hours advance notice to book a lesson. Even then, availability is limited during peak seasons (holidays, spring break, etc.), so we cannot guarantee lesson availability until you hear confirmation from us. Please book early!

During the registration process, you may request a specific ski instructor. If you don't have a specific instructor to request, we will find one for you based on your athlete's unique needs.

After you have registered online, you aren't quite done yet! We will need you to fill out some paperwork and information (supplemental forms) about your athlete so that we are prepared to support them as best we can. You may access your supplemental forms **HERE.** Lastly, you will receive an Adobe packet to your email that contains important waivers that **must** be filled out prior to your lessons.

You may also see below for some quick registration tips. If you need help with registration, paperwork, or waivers, please email clong@ascendigo.org.

Lodging:

For your stay at Aspen Snowmass Resorts, we encourage you to book your lodging early to get ideal lodging and the best prices. Ascendigo encourages you to stay as close to your ski mountain as you can so that the transition to skiing is quick and easy.

If you prefer options that are slightly more affordable, we encourage you to book at the Element Hotel in Basalt Colorado. Element Hotel employes many people living with autism and other special needs and are a wonderful partner to Ascendigo.

Logistics:

Connecting with your Ski Pro: After you have registered for your lesson, completed your supplemental forms, and filled out your adobe waivers, you will receive a final email confirming your lesson booking and connecting you with your athlete's ski professional. At that time, you and the Ski Professional may connect about a specific meeting time and location to start the first day of your lessons.

Getting your gear & tickets:

Rental Gear: On the first day of lessons, your Ski Professional can help your athlete get fit with gear if you need to rent it. We encourage you to rent at Four Mountain Sports (located at all Aspen Snowmass Mountains). Ascendigo athletes

are eligible for 40% off their entire rental package. Simply notify the cashier at the location, and they will discount the products for the student.

Tickets: Lift tickets can be picked up at any Aspen Snowmass ticket office. Like rental gear, your Ski Professional can assist in redeeming your athlete's lift tickets. If you choose to redeem your tickets without help, your final confirmation email from Caroline (clong@ascendigo.org) will contain your order number that a ticket agent can use to redeem your tickets.

Food/Lunch:

Please send your athlete with at least $30.00 to purchase lunch at one of the on-mountain restaurants. Additionally, send any snacks or snack recommendations to ensure a successful lesson. If your athlete will be packing a lunch, please communicate this information with the ski instructor prior to the start of the lesson.

FAQs

Q: How should I pack and dress for a day on the mountain?

A: **Packing List** – click here to access the Aspen Snowmass recommended pack list. Additionally, please pack any fidgets/preferred items that may help your skier have a successful lesson.

Q: My child has never been on skis/ a snowboard before, is that okay?

A: Yes! Ascendigo has experience working with people of all abilities whether your athlete is a "never ever" or an advanced black diamond snow sport athlete.

Q: My athlete will get cold, tired, or frustrated. How do you navigate those challenges?

A: Ascendigo pros are trained to pace lessons to maximize the enjoyment and success of their athletes. This may mean that your athlete takes several play breaks, enjoys a hot drink in the lodge, and checks out Snowmass's amazing tubing hill in between learning to ski or ride.

Q: What is your cancelation policy?

A: Please see our cancelation policy **HERE.** We require 72 hours advance notice to protect our Ski Pros' wages.

Q: Can the skier's siblings/family join in on the lesson?

A: No, Ascending's contract with Aspen Ski Co specifies that these lessons are for one skier only. You can coordinate meet-up times to check in throughout the lesson with your Ski Pro, but we ask that you please not join in on the lesson.

Q: Should I tip my Ski Pro?

A: While tipping is not required, it is a Snowsports industry norm to tip your instructor for their hard work. Most people tip 15%-20%.

Q: Are tickets and rentals included?

A: No. However, we can offer discounts on both! Our lift tickets options are $125.00 discounted adaptive tickets, or $25.00 scholarship tickets. For rentals, you may get your athlete's gear from Four Mountain Sports and receive a 40% discount. *Please note, discounted tickets and rentals are for Ascendigo athletes only!*

Risks & Policies

Risk: Ascendigo and Aspen Snowmass put an immense amount of effort into managing risk and making our programs accessible to athletes of all abilities. That said, it is important to be transparent with our families that skiing and snowboarding are inherently dangerous activities, and that serious injury or death could occur.

Colorado state law states that a skier or rider assumes the risk of any injury to person or property resulting from any of the inherent dangers and risks of skiing and may not recover from any ski area operator for any injury resulting from any of the inherent dangers and risks of skiing, including changing weather conditions, existing and changing snow conditions, bare spots, rocks, stumps, trees, cliffs, extreme terrain, jumps and freestyle terrain, collision with natural objects, man made objects or other skiers, variations in terrain, and the failure of skiers to ski within their own abilities.

You may review the full Colorado Ski Safety Act Here

Retention Harnesses:

Seizure Retention Policy (Harness) states that all participants with a history of seizures within the past 3 years must wear a retention harness while riding a chairlift. If a family wishes to decline the use of a retention harness, they must provide a note from the athletes primary physician and sign the Additional Retention Harness Waiver. Ascendigo also reserves the right to require a retention harness or to deny chairlift access in the event a participant displays aggressive, unpredictable, or erratic behavior.

We look forward to supporting your athletes on the mountain this year, please reach out to our administrator if you have any questions or concerns at clong@asendigo.org!

