

## Wilderness Safety

Experience and deep rooted concern for the well being of each student has made MHYR one of the safest wilderness program in the United States. While there are inherent risks with running a wilderness program, MHYR has developed safety protocols that ensure the students will have the greatest outdoor experience possible while maintaining physically and emotional safety. The purpose of this page is to address the subject of Wilderness Safety. Your child will be safer in the MHYR Wilderness Program than with their at risk behaviors remaining at home.

Becoming one of the safest Wilderness programs in the industry was not an overnight process. The combined experience of our wilderness staff amounts to decades of training and refining safety protocols. Most parents that send their child to MHYR, feel like they are sending their child to a much safer environment than leaving their child in the current at risk situation at home. Typical at-risk behaviors that lead parents to enroll their child in MHYR are drug and alcohol abuse, dare devil behaviors, school failure, impulsive actions, defiance to authority, family emotional trauma, lack of observing family boundaries, and minor criminal activity.

MHYR has a highly trained medical team that provides ongoing health services for students. Each group of students are supervised by staff that are trained in Wilderness First Responder, Medication Administration, CPR, and First Aid. A Licensed Physician visits students once a month for a medical checkup. In addition, students receive a medical checkup by a nurse every two weeks. Every precaution is taken to make sure that every student that enters the MHYR program is more than physically capable of performing the challenging yet safe activities of the program.

MHYR operates safely 365 days a year in an outdoor setting. MHYR staff are trained to deal with the unique challenges of an outdoor setting in all types of weather. MHYR staff are given every resource to act professionally in any safety situation they may encounter. The MHYR program field has easy access to nearby medical facilities. MHYR works hand in hand with local law enforcement, Life Flight (helicopter), and Colorado State agencies, and has developed emergency plans should a student need immediate evacuation for emergency reasons. Students can be transported to nearby Hospitals and Emergency centers in a quick and effective manner.

The State of Colorado holds the MHYR program to strict safety guidelines, which extend to the emotional and mental well being of each student. On an annual basis the State of Colorado visits our program field and assesses our compliance to their strict regulations. MHYR has passed every year with flying colors. In most areas MHYR implements tighter safety protocols than required by the State of Colorado because experience has taught us that certain tighter protocols are required to ensure the utmost level of safety.

One major point that sets MHYR's Wilderness Program apart from other Wilderness Programs is the use of base camps in place of hiking everyday and setting up a new camp daily. Experience has taught our program that most major health problems and emergencies arise during extreme hiking in remote locations.

MHYR has never had a death or loss of student in the program due to our hiking and safety protocol. Students do not hike during extreme cold or hot weather conditions. While MHYR still believes in and incorporates hiking into the students program for physical, emotional, and mental benefits that come from hiking, MHYR only performs hikes to and from well established base camps located near easy access dirt roads. MHYR base camps have large waterproof canvas type tents made by Cabela, which keep the students safe from the elements of nature.

Why have a program in the Wilderness if there are inherent risks? While a Wilderness Program can emulate all of the aspects of an indoor Residential Treatment Center (RTC) including academics, therapy, sports, etc, an RTC cannot emulate the physical, emotional, and mental benefits of an inspiring wilderness backdrop. Unless a person has experienced an extended stay in the wilderness (3 or more weeks) they cannot imagine the amazing and miraculous effect the wilderness can and does have on the overall well being and development of character and confidence in a student. Again, this effect cannot be reproduced anywhere else and because of this the MHYR has a stunning success rate of 87%+. Most students that graduate from the MHYR program have fond memories and develop a close relationship with the wilderness that will last a lifetime.

If you have more questions regarding the safety of your child in the MHYR program we invite you to call us at 866-781-2450.