

EARTH EXPLORE ADVENTURES

Student Application 2009





To apply for an Earth Explore Adventure, please remit a \$400 deposit with this completed and signed application form. Full tuition is due April 1st, 2009. Applications are processed on a first-come, first-served basis. Space is limited. We encourage you to send in your application as soon as possible. Please give to your local teacher, or mail to: Earth Explore Adventures, 4831 Lucy Ct., Santa Rosa, CA 95405-7461.

Student Information

Program Choice (Hawaii, Alaska, Italy, California, Rockies)		Adult T-shirt size (S,M,L,XL)	
Student's First Name	Last Name	Preferred Name	Gender
Street Address			
City	State	Zip	
Home Phone	Parent Cell	Parent Email	
Birth Date	Current Grade	School Name	School City
		School Ends	

Parent/Guardian Information

Father's Name	Mother's Name
Address	Address
Home Phone	Home Phone
Cell Phone	Cell Phone

Student References (two adults who know you)

Name	Name
Relationship/Phone Number	Relationship/Phone Number
Emergency Contact (if parents are not available)	Phone Number

Let's hear about you!

Hobbies, activities, and interests?	
Why do you want to take part in Earth Explore?	
Parents: Please list any allergies or special food needs.	
Group Teacher/Leader Name (if known)	Parents: Like to recommend a teacher?

Yes, I'd like to take part!

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$400 as a deposit toward participating in the program. All checks should be made payable to Earth Explore.

Deposit will be made by credit card.

Type of card (Visa/Mastercard/Discover)	Amount authorized (balance will be billed)
Card Number	Exp. Date
CVV#	Name on card
Signature	<input type="checkbox"/> I authorize equal monthly charges to my credit card.

I understand that participation in an Earth Explore Adventure requires the enthusiastic participation of each group member. I understand that disruptive behavior or the use or possession of any prohibited substance are grounds for dismissal from the program. I have read, understand, and agree to the program Terms and Conditions (available online), including the Assumption of Risk/Release of Liability, as well as the Student Rules and Guidelines.

Parent/Guardian Signature	Student Signature
Date	

EARTH EXPLORE Enrollment Agreement

Terms and Conditions

Application Guidelines Payment Schedule

Tuition: Includes all educational activities, all meals, all accommodations, motorcoach transportation, preparation materials, travel credentials, high school credit tuition, adult supervision and guidance. Group round trip airfare is not included. (See *Air Arrangements below*.)

To Apply: Fill out the attached application form and mail it to the National Office, or apply online. Include a \$400 deposit. The application must be signed by the applicant and his/her parent or guardian. Applications are processed on a first-come, first-served basis. Space is limited in each group to approximately thirty-five participants. We encourage you to submit your application as soon as possible to help ensure that you travel with the local group, and on a date that is most convenient. Following teacher approval, the deposit is applied toward the full cost of the program. An additional \$400.00 payment is due sixty days after the application is received.

Upon acceptance of your application, the balance is due and payable no later than April 1st. Applications submitted after April 1st must be accompanied by full payment. There are no final deadlines for submitting applications, but because of space limitations, we encourage students to apply as early as possible. Program tuition may be adjusted in the spring due to increases or decreases imposed by program content and logistical partners, fuel or currency surcharges. All payments must be made in U.S. Dollars. Credit card payments subject to a 3% fee.

Refund Policy

The operation of travel programs requires significant costs to be incurred long before the actual date of program departure. With this in mind, the following cancellations and refund policy will apply.

Upon application, \$100.00 of the deposit will become non-refundable. Thirty days after application, \$200.00 of the deposit will be retained if the student withdraws in writing before April 1st. An applicant who withdraws in writing on or after April 1st, but before May 1st, will be refunded their entire tuition less the \$400.00 deposit. If the notice of cancellation is received in writing on or after May 1st but before June 1st, the participant will forfeit the \$400.00 deposit plus 50% of the total program cost. If the notice of cancellation is received in writing on or after June 1st, no refund will be made. Group travel arrangements must often be made months in advance. Therefore, unless the Earth Explore National Office receives a written notice of cancellation before April 1st, student and his/her parents or guardians agree to pay for any air tickets purchased on the participant's behalf as part of participation in an Earth Explore program.

Due to strict operational timelines, any applicant whose tuition is not fully paid by April 15th may lose their space and be asked to travel on a later departure date. Both the parent/guardian and the participant should understand that Earth Explore has the right to terminate the participation of any group member who violates our Student Rules and Guidelines. In this event, no refund will be granted. Should a participant withdraw voluntarily, for whatever reason, after the start of the program, no refund will be granted. If a participant must be sent home due to illness or accident incurred on the program, Earth Explore will refund that portion of the tuition which is not considered an operating expense, or which has not already been committed to an outfitter for a contracted activity.

Our goal is to follow the itineraries described in the literature. It is understood that poor weather, mechanical or scheduling difficulties and unforeseen problems may cause alterations to the itinerary. If an area or activity must be cancelled for any reason, every attempt will be made to replace it with a similar one. If Earth Explore is forced to cancel or shorten a student program due to an act of god or other circumstance out of its control, participants and all interested parties understand and agree that program refunds will be limited to the monies recoverable from program partners at the time the cancellation decision was made.

Interview and Acceptance Policy

If not known directly by the teacher organizing the group, applicants to the Earth Explore program may be interviewed to determine their eligibility. This interview will assess the student's maturity and ability to participate successfully with a larger group on an extended travel program. At the interview, or at any time through participation, a student may be removed from the program for actions inconsistent with successful group dynamics. These include but are not limited to violent or aggressive actions, a repeated inability to follow program rules, and disruptive or distracting behavior. Students and parents/guardians agree to abide by the decisions of the local Leader(s) and the Earth Explore National Office regarding student acceptance and participation.

Approximately two months after applying, students will be contacted by their local Leader(s) and invited to the first Preparation Session. For most groups, an average of 4 meetings will be scheduled prior to departure to prepare students for their participation. The National Office will provide Leaders with Preparation Session curriculum materials that will be reviewed at these

meetings. After acceptance, in the months before departure, each participant will receive general program information, travel information, newsletters and a medical form. The medical form must be filled out and signed by a physician/assistant certifying that the participant is in good physical and mental condition. Both the medical form and any release forms must be returned to our office no later than May 15th.

Assumption of Risk/Release of Liability

The student and parents/guardians understand and agree that any outdoor educational and adventure program involves an inherent element of risk, and hereby agree to assume all risks and responsibilities associated with this program. By agreeing to participate in an Earth Explore program, the participant, and his/her parents, guardians and all other interested parties and assigns agree to hold harmless, indemnify and forever release Earth Explore LLC, Earth Explore Foundation, their directors, officers, affiliates, agents and content providers, from any and all claims, liabilities, actions or causes of action, damages, costs and expenses arising from, or relating to, participation in an Earth Explore program. This release and indemnity agreement includes all losses caused or alleged to be caused, in whole or in part, by Earth Explore or its authorized representatives.

Earth Explore Policies

Travel dates are to be considered as preliminary until final groupings are completed in April. Upon signing the program application, the parents/guardians and student agree to, and are bound by, the Student Rules and Guidelines as explained in the application materials. Earth Explore's overriding consideration is the safety and well being of all participants. Earth Explore does not tolerate the possession or use of tobacco products, illegal drugs or alcohol, or violent, disrespectful or aggressive behavior of any kind, or behavior that is hazardous to the safety of a participant or others. If a participant is found possessing the above or engaging in any one of these activities or behaviors, he/she may be removed from the program. If this takes place during travel, no refunds will be granted and removal will be at parent's/guardian's expense. Participant and parents/guardians agree to allow Earth Explore the rights to limited use of the applicant's likeness, comments, and/or submitted materials for educational and outreach purposes related to the Earth Explore program, unless participant indicates in writing otherwise.

Medical Treatment

While traveling, all Earth Explore participants are covered under a group accident insurance policy. Parent/guardians are required to submit a completed Health Form for each participant, fully and completely listing details of any pre-existing treatment or condition, medical, behavioral, or otherwise, especially those that might impact the student's participation in, or behavior on an Earth Explore program. Earth Explore leaders and staff shall have the right to give first aid or other assistance to any Earth Explore participant. Additionally, leaders and staff are permitted to use any and all information provided about a participant, including medical information, to assist and protect that participant in any way they deem most appropriate. Earth Explore staff shall also have the right to retain the services of a physician, or if necessary, to hospitalize a participant of an Earth Explore program. Any expenses beyond those covered, as well as any costs incurred by Earth Explore staff while accompanying the participant, and expenses relating to rejoining the group or returning home, shall be paid by the parent/guardian.

Medical, Personal Property and Program Cancellation Insurance

In addition to the included accident insurance, all participants must be covered by medical insurance. We recommend that you check with your insurance carrier as to whether the student will be covered for a program of this nature. If not, we request that you purchase medical insurance specifically for your Earth Explore program. In addition, Earth Explore insurance does not cover theft, loss or damage to the personal property and equipment of program participants. We suggest you confirm that your insurance coverage includes items of this nature. Finally, we encourage you to consider program cancellation and interruption insurance. Program cancellation and interruption insurance reimburses you for nonrefundable air and land costs should you have to cancel the trip for unforeseen reasons.

Air Arrangements

Earth Explore works with airline group desks to arrange roundtrip air transportation for each group of ten (10) or more participants. Groups of less than ten (10) participants are responsible for making their own air arrangements, based upon arrival and departure requirements provided by Earth Explore. For groups of ten (10) or more, airfares and schedules are generally published when arrangements are completed in the winter and spring. Group airfares provided will be generally price competitive with any available, however it should be understood that spot "sales" on a given flight may be lower. Group air arrangements have the advantage of protecting the group in the event of flight change or cancellation. Any group costs incurred due to air travel delays or disruptions, whether rooming, meals or transportation-related, will be the responsibility of the parents/guardians of participants. Due to the requirements of group travel involving minors, we do not allow air deviations. It is understood that Earth Explore is not responsible for program disruptions due to flight delays, schedule changes, cancellations, or any other actions of the airlines upon which Earth Explore groups travel.

FAQ'S

Answers to the questions most frequently asked by parents.

What is an Adventure to Planet Earth?

Our Adventures are fun, hands-on educational travel experiences that use the planet as a classroom. The common bond in all of our Adventures is a study of Planet Earth; its animals, cultures, habitats, ecosystems and dynamic landscapes. All of our Adventures take place in spectacular and exotic locations. We believe that the more young people enjoy and learn about their planet, the more they will be inspired to protect it for future generations.

What is the age range of Earth Explore participants?

Depending on the program, any student currently in the 5th through 9th grades is eligible to take part. Occasionally, we accept students who fall outside these age guidelines based upon their interest and other factors.

Who are the Leaders, and how are they chosen?

Earth Explore Leaders are outstanding teachers who come from the same schools as our students. The teachers apply and choose an Adventure on which to lead their students. To qualify, Leaders generally must have experience with students outside the classroom, be active and outdoors oriented, be talented educators, and have a good sense of humor. Once they apply, our teachers also supply recommendations from their principal and at least one parent.

How are students recommended to Earth Explore Adventures?

Students are introduced to one of our Adventures by a teacher they know in their own school or a neighboring school. Teachers have the ability to invite those students they feel would enjoy and benefit from the experience, and parents have the confidence of knowing who recommended their child, and with whom he or she will travel.

Interested students may also share Adventure information with a favorite teacher, who can register as a Leader if they choose.

Can my school form its own group?

Yes. Many teachers choose to register together and work and travel as a team. In addition, teachers may form a full or partial group from their own school (or district) provided there is space at the time of group formation.

What are the dates?

Our date assignments are based upon your local school closure dates. Departure dates range from June 10th to July 15th, and are usually scheduled within two weeks of the date school ends. Groupings and dates are preliminary until finalized in April.

How do the students travel?

The size of each group is kept to approximately 25-35 students and 3-5 Educator/Leaders to ensure the most rewarding, hands-on experience for each participant. Earth Explore arranges group air transportation for all participants.

Students travel together with their local Leader(s) from the time they leave the local departure city until return. Upon arrival, students on most Adventures board a deluxe 47-passenger coach and are joined by their Travel Manager, who accompanies the group during its entire program. The coaches are normally equipped with video systems, and we limit uninterrupted travel time to approximately two hours on any given day.

What are the hotels like?

All of our groups stay in tourist class hotels, with students generally sharing a room with two roommates. Most of our hotels have pools. In some locations we partner with universities like the University of Hawaii and the University of Alaska, allowing our students the opportunity to stay in university dorms.

In other locations students may have the opportunity to stay in cabins, bunkhouses, or tent cabins, such as at a Rocky Mountain guest ranch, or while in Yosemite, Grand Teton or Yellowstone. There is generally no camping on the Earth Explore program.

What are the activities like?

At all times, our focus is hands-on learning and adventure. That means our students don't sit on the sidelines, but dive in. Depending on the program, they may be exploring jungle temples, sighting whales, hiking mountain trails, digging in fossil quarries, kayaking, exploring ocean tide pools or coral reefs, rafting or taking part in interactive programs.

Is there pre-travel preparation?

Yes. Earth Explore provides structured pre-departure sessions to our teachers which they present to our students. The interactive sessions help to bond the group, and cover lots of travel-related information.

Who is the Travel Manager?

This person is an additional staff member who is charged with handling all program logistics on-site during the Adventure. This includes hotel check-in and checkout, coordination with program locations and venues, and trouble shooting. This leaves Leaders free to devote their time and attention completely to the students.

What items do the students need while traveling?

Earth Explore provides a custom travel cap, photo credentials, T-shirt, field journal, luggage tags and other items for students. Our spring newsletter includes a packing list covering everything students need to bring.

What is a typical day like?

The day begins at around 7:30 or 8:00 AM when our students rise and prepare for breakfast and the morning meeting. Following breakfast, students set off for a day of adventures, which typically involve an organized morning activity, lunch, and another afternoon activity.

The day ends at dinner and the evening group meeting, at which the day's activities are discussed, the next day is reviewed. Time may be allotted for games or other group activities. Often there is a chance for swimming at the hotel, socializing with friends, and other free time activities before the Leaders conduct room checks and lights go out.

How about supervision?

Our adult to student ratio is the lowest in the travel field. One adult Leader is in charge of 6 to 8 students (depending on the Adventure). One to two Travel Managers also accompany each group. Finally, our partners add additional resource persons (educators, guides) at each venue, bringing the activity ratio to approximately 1 adult to 5 students.

Additionally, our Leaders follow a Travel Handbook that covers rules for group travel and addresses all travel contingencies, including proper supervision at hotels, free time rules, and all other Leader-related issues. These rules are reviewed with parents at meetings in the months prior to travel.

Can I travel with a friend?

Most likely the answer is yes. This depends upon whether your local group has reached capacity by the time that friend contacts us. We allow all participating students to invite friends or siblings for joint participation. Space on the program is allotted on a first-come, first-served basis.

Student Rules and Guidelines

Students and parents/guardians agree that group travel requires certain rules and guidelines be followed by each participant to insure the safety & enjoyment of all.

Students and parents/guardians agree to abide by and support reasonable expectations of students concerning discipline, participation, and respect for themselves and others.

Students and parents/guardians understand that Earth Explore considers the safety of its participants to be its primary and overriding consideration. They further agree to abide by and support program rules designed to insure safe and successful group travel.

Students and parents/guardians agree that the full and enthusiastic participation of each student during pre-travel activities, and during the program itself, is essential to a rewarding and successful learning experience.

Students and parents/guardians agree that alcohol, tobacco and illegal drug use or possession of any kind are grounds for removal from the program. Further, they understand that violent, aggressive, disruptive or disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated and are grounds for removal from the program at any time.

Students and parents/guardians confirm that the goal of their participation is the enjoyment and education of the student, and that serious or repeated violations of program rules may result in the student's early return home, or removal from the program, at the parents/guardians expense.