

# **TREE CLIMBERS**

Leadership Guide

## **Table of Contents**

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Schedule.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Tree Climber Rally.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Helpful Tips for Dads.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Guidelines for Fathers &amp; Sons.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Dining Hall Policies and Procedures.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Fathers' Forum.....</b>	<b>11</b>

## **Introduction**

Thank you for taking the time to be part of Northern Frontier's ministry. The next three days can turn into memories that will last a lifetime. So many of our Tree Climber campers return home with stories that are shared with future generations. These memories become warm touchstones that a father and son can reflect on during strained times. They serve as "proof of caring."

The Tree Climber program builds relationships between a father and his son. It's a simple program designed for pairs to interact and grow spiritually, emotionally, mentally, physically, and socially. As the Tree Climber Coordinator, you give the dads the knowledge and tools they need to model biblical manhood. We aim to build up the father in his son's eyes. They are "in the know" about what's coming next so they can be experts to their sons as the session unfolds.

The Tree Climber schedule at Northern Frontier includes special activities that are done together, such as the low ropes course, shooting at the rifle range, hiking to the waterfall, and much more. Fathers and sons will also enjoy spending time at the waterfront, having meals in our dining hall, attending nightly campfires, and exploring God's word. The key is that they do these things "together." Men should be encouraged to be with their boys as much as possible.

Dads have a unique experience when they come to camp. We often receive testimonies of impatient fathers driving to camp, wondering what could have convinced them to forfeit three days of work. Yet after a few hours at camp, this impatience melts. Their stern faces turn soft, and their eyes open wider. A smiling and adventurous spirit replaces a stubborn, quiet demeanor. Men begin to let their guard down, embracing relationships with the other fathers, and end their session, eager to return again.

Each evening, when the sons go to bed, the dads are invited to the Dining Hall for a snack. The camaraderie is strong and encouraging. There's little need to facilitate a conversation. Instead, allow for the flow of organic, unforced conversation. These times are often characterized by laughter and story-telling between the dads.

Above all, have fun and let the boys enjoy the time with their dad.

# Schedule

## Daily Schedule

Below you will find the daily schedule with helpful details. In general, this is how the program functions. After the daily schedule, you will find short descriptions of the differences between specific days.

<b>7:45</b>	<b>Wake up!</b>	Be very quiet until reveille. Line up with the Stockade for flag raising at 8:00. Clean the cabin and make your beds.
<b>8:30</b>	<b>Breakfast</b>	Send waiters to the Dining Hall 15 minutes before meal time. Stay in the Dining Hall until dismissed.
<b>9:15</b>	<b>Woody's Checkup</b>	Explore God's word as Father & Son. Material is provided with activities, memory verses, and questions for discussion.
<b>10:30</b>	<b>Tree Climber Activity</b>	Activities are determined ahead of time. A backup plan should be in place when expecting inclement weather.
<b>1:00</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	Send waiters to the Dining Hall 15 minutes before meal time. Stay in the Dining Hall until dismissed.
<b>1:45</b>	<b>Rest Time</b>	This is an opportunity for sons to rest. If a nap is unnecessary, this is an opportunity for pairs to rest in God's creation by walking around or playing a game on the field.
<b>2:15</b>	<b>Fathers' Forum</b>	The Tree Climber Assistant leads the sons in games while the fathers join on the Stockade Porch.
<b>3:00</b>	<b>Father &amp; Son Time</b>	The store will be open during this time every day but Sunday. Afterward, head down to the Waterfront for fishing, swimming, and boating.
<b>6:00</b>	<b>Dinner</b>	Send waiters to the Dining Hall 15 minutes before meal time. Stay in the Dining Hall until dismissed.
<b>7:00</b>	<b>Tree Climber Activity</b>	Activities are determined ahead of time. A backup plan should be in place when expecting inclement weather.
<b>8:30</b>	<b>Campfire</b>	Prepare for campfire 15 minutes ahead of time. Consider wearing long pants and applying bug spray. Bring a flashlight for the walk back. It's important to arrive early.
<b>9:30</b>	<b>Bedtime</b>	Read or recite Woody's Verse. Talk about the message shared during the evening's campfire. Fathers & Sons pray and then get ready for bed.
<b>10:00</b>	<b>Snack</b>	The Tree Climber Assistant stays behind to monitor the sons. Fathers are invited for a snack and time of fellowship in the Dining Hall.

## **Session A**

### **Saturday Schedule**

#### **1:30 – Lunch**

Lunch is at 1:30 on Saturday. Due to our change-over schedule, this is a half-hour later than normal. Because of this, you will have less time in the afternoon.

#### **2:15 – Tree Climber Rally**

At 2:15, instead of the usual Father's Forum, you'll have a Tree Climber Rally and meet at Woody's Tree. There, you'll review the general guidelines, policies, and procedures to follow while staying at Northern Frontier.

#### **3:00 – Camp Tour & Store**

For Father & Son Time, everyone will change into swimsuits and be guided through a camp tour. Stop by the store along the way since it won't be open again until Monday.

#### **3:30 – Tree Climber Activity**

This is a great opportunity to head to the craft shop since you're already in the area. The projects are designed to take about 60 to 90 minutes to complete, so plan your time appropriately.

#### **5:00 – Swim Test**

It's important to arrive at the Waterfront on time for your swim tests. The waterfront has a tight schedule on Saturday since all our campers receive swim tests. The next item on the schedule is Dinner, and the Waterfront shuts down at 5:30, so you will have plenty of time.

#### **7:00 – Fathers' Forum**

On the first day, you'll have a Fathers' Forum in the evening. This allows the dads to spend time with each other during the day before engaging in their evening discussion.

### **Sunday Schedule**

#### **10:30 – Worship Service**

Join us in the Dining Hall for our Sunday Morning Worship service. We collect offerings during this time, which directly support our alumni serving as missionaries worldwide.

#### **11:30 – Tree Climber Activity**

This is a great opportunity to head over to the Slingshot Range.

#### **3:00 – Father & Son Time**

Keep in mind that the Camp Store is not open on Sundays.

#### **5:30 – Father & Son Cookout**

You'll be hosting a Cookout tonight using Hobo Stoves. Coordinate with the Tree Climber Assistant to ensure all materials are prepared. Plan to meet at 5:30 to ensure ample time to prepare, cook, and enjoy the meal. In the case of inclement weather, plans should be made with the Assistant Camp Director to construct a tarp kitchen shelter.

#### **7:00 – Tree Climber Activity**

If pressed on time or in the cast of inclement weather, the Air Rifle Range is sheltered and nearby. Otherwise, this would be an excellent time to use the Low Ropes Course. The Assistant Camp Director can provide a certified instructor upon request.

### **Monday Schedule**

#### **10:30 – Tree Climber Activity**

It's a great day for a hike! Hit the trail and enjoy the scenic OK Slip Waterfalls. Don't forget to bring plenty of water and a First Aid Kit from the Camp Nurse. Take your time hiking and enjoy God's creation. Encourage the dads to break off with the sons at the falls for quality time. This is a good chance to recite Woody's Verse and talk about the experiences they've had so far.

### **7:00 – Tree Climber Activity**

Depending on what's been done, this would be a good time to try out the Rock Wall. The Assistant Camp Director will provide a certified instructor upon request. Other Dads may wish to leave alone for a quiet paddle around the lake with their son.

## **Tuesday Schedule**

### **9:15 – Tree Climber Rally**

Use this time to gather, share contact information, and say goodbye to the other father-son pairs.

### **9:30 – Woody's Checkup**

This can be done at camp, car, or home before bed.

## **Session B**

## **Wednesday Schedule**

### **2:15 – Tree Climber Rally**

At 2:15, instead of the usual Father's Forum, you'll have a Tree Climber Rally and meet at Woody's Tree. There, you'll review the general guidelines, policies, and procedures to follow while staying at Northern Frontier.

### **3:00 – Camp Tour & Store**

For Father & Son Time, everyone will change into swimsuits, grab a towel, and be guided through a camp tour. Stop by the store along the way since it won't be open again until Monday.

### **3:30 – Tree Climber Activity**

This is a great opportunity to head to the craft shop since you're already in the area. The projects are designed to take about 60 to 90 minutes to complete, so plan your time appropriately.

### **4:30 – Swim Test**

Make sure to alert the Waterfront Director about your arrival to not interfere with other activities.

### **7:00 – Fathers' Forum**

On the first day, you'll have a Fathers' Forum in the evening. This works well because it allows the fathers to meet each other during a busy day.

## **Thursday Schedule**

### **10:30 – Tree Climber Activity**

This is a great opportunity to head over to the Slingshot Range. Battalion is out on their ov

### **3:00 – Father & Son Time**

Keep in mind that the Camp Store is not open on Sundays.

### **5:30 – Father & Son Cookout**

You'll be hosting a Cookout tonight using Hobo Stoves. Coordinate with the Tree Climber Assistant to ensure all materials are prepared. Plan to meet at 5:30 to ensure ample time to prepare, cook, and enjoy the meal. In the case of inclement weather, plans should be made with the Assistant Camp Director to construct a tarp kitchen shelter.

**7:00 – Tree Climber Activity**

If pressed on time or in the cast of inclement weather, the Air Rifle Range is sheltered and nearby. Otherwise, this would be an excellent time to use the Low Ropes Course. The Assistant Camp Director can provide a certified instructor upon request.

**Friday Schedule**

**10:30 – Tree Climber Activity**

It's a great day for a hike! Hit the trail and enjoy the scenic OK Slip Waterfalls. Don't forget to bring plenty of water and a First Aid Kit from the Camp Nurse. Take your time hiking and enjoy God's creation. Encourage the dads to break off with the sons at the falls for quality time. This is a good chance to recite Woody's Verse and talk about the experiences they've had so far.

**7:00 – Tree Climber Activity**

Depending on what's been done, this would be a good time to try out the Rock Wall. The Assistant Camp Director will provide a certified instructor upon request. Other Dads may wish to leave alone for a quiet paddle around the lake with their son.

**Saturday Schedule**

**9:15 – Tree Climber Rally**

Use this time to gather, share contact information, and say goodbye to the other father-son pairs.

**9:30 – Woody's Checkup**

This can be done at camp, in the car, or at home before bed.

# Tree Climber Rally

*The Tree Climber Rally is a time to gather around Woody's Tree (Stump/chair). It is a meetup with a designated location so everyone can be accounted for. This is also a good time to announce upcoming activities or changes to the schedule.*

*On the first day, the Tree Climber Rally will be your time to discuss the Schedule and the Camp Guidelines and Procedures with the fathers and sons. It's also a great opportunity to conduct introductions, allowing the pairs to get to know each other. The Assistant Program Director is available to attend this meeting upon request.*

*For the last day, you can use this time to facilitate goodbyes. Encourage the men to share contact information before they hit the road and head home.*

## First Day

### Introductions

Take time for the fathers and sons to introduce themselves. Let the dads start by sharing where they're from and their connection to Northern Frontier.

Next, ask the dads to introduce their sons and share something interesting or special about the boy.

Then, the son will share something interesting about their dad.

### Schedule

Go over the session schedule. We encourage groups to follow the outline detailed in this Leadership Guide. Take time to discuss each available activity.

Getting into the Craft Shop first is best because other programs are not using it during this time. Certain activities, like the Hike to the Falls or the Low Ropes Course, are very weather-dependent and may require a trained instructor, like the Rock Wall. Other activities, like Air Riflery, Archery, and Slingshot, are sheltered and can easily move around whatever the weather.

### Policies and Procedures for Fathers & Sons

Review the following policies and procedures with the fathers:

- Helpful Tips for Dads
- Guidelines for Fathers & Sons
- Dining Hall Policies and Procedures

Take time to answer questions. If you don't know the answer, say, "I'll find out for you." Each father-son pair receives these lists in their packet.

## Helpful Tips for Dads

- Don't be afraid to take time off from the rest of the group. You're here to spend time with your son and build your relationship.
- A quiet canoe paddle around the lake is a great way to get quality alone time. This can be done anytime, but we recommend it on the last night after dinner.
- You may also consider trying out our Disc Golf course
- Spend as much time as you can with your son. Fellowshiping with other fathers is great, but not at the expense of being with your boy. Leave the "man time" for Fathers' Forum and the evening Snack.

## Guidelines for Fathers & Sons

- Each boy must always be with his dad except at the Fathers' Forum or the evening Snack. The Tree Climber Assistant is assigned to run an activity for the boys during these times.
- Shoes must be worn at all times except in the shower, in your bed, and at the waterfront.
- Do not attempt to catch any wild animals except frogs. Be gentle and careful with the frogs (catch, admire, release).
- Do not throw rocks or sticks at any time.
- Do not use the emergency exit door except in an emergency.
- Respect the property of others.
- Be quiet in the morning before the schedule says it's time to get up. Fishermen, please be especially mindful of this. Sound carries easily all over the lake.
- Blasts from an air horn are Northern Frontier's emergency assembly signal. Should you hear that during your stay, immediately assemble on the Stockade Field to be accounted for.

## Dining Hall Policies and Procedures

- Send a waiter to your table 15 minutes before each meal. Set tables like you see the staff tables set.
- Waiters must be dads.
- When retrieving food and refills from the serving line, enter the Kitchen through the IN door and exit through the OUT door.
- Do not stack bowls, plates, or platters of food on top of each other.
- Try to make firsts go all the way around. There are plenty of seconds and thirds available.
- Please get an exact count for seconds (and thirds and fourths!), taking only what you can eat. We cannot re-serve leftovers.
- Only one person or pair, can be up from the table at any time. This is usually the waiter.
- Remain in the Dining Hall until announcements have been made after the meal and you have been dismissed.



- We are required to track milk consumption for rebate purposes. So, we ask adults to mark a tally for every 8-oz cup of milk they drink. A milk chart is posted near the kitchen's IN door. Writing down a rough estimate before you leave is acceptable.
- Dads can help themselves to the coffee station. Help your son if he wants hot chocolate. Let the Kitchen staff know if something is running low.
- In the morning, you may notice groups of staff huddled together in the Dining Hall for Leaders' Huddle. Please be respectful while using the coffee station during this time.

# Fathers' Forum

This is a time during the day for fathers to fellowship with each other on the Stockade Porch. During this time, the Tree Climber Assistant will organize group games and activities for the sons.

## Tips for Leading Fathers' Forum

- It is important to start on time and open with a brief prayer.
- As you facilitate the conversation, try to encourage the quiet men of the group without making them feel uncomfortable. If a man talks a lot, privately ask him to help you draw out the other men.
- Don't talk for more than a 25-percent of the time. If there's a period of silence—that's okay! Don't try to fill the empty space.
- Ask open-ended questions, not ones that can be answered with a "yes" or "no."
- Stress the importance of confidentiality within the group. Remember to lead by example.
- Each father should have a pen and paper to retrieve from the office if needed.

## Tree Climber Assistant

This is a time for you to foster relationships between the boys. Keep them engaged by asking them questions about themselves, like "What's your favorite sport? Do you have a team you like to watch with your dad? Where are you from? What do you like to do for fun?" Encourage the boys to share with each other and ensure that all the boys are involved with whatever you're doing.

### **Activities for the sons include:**

- Stockade Field Games including wiffleball, kickball, tetherball, gaga, soccer, redlight–greenlight
- Fort building in the woods.
- The first few holes of Disc Golf

## Facilitating Group Discussion

Below are a few suggested questions you can ask. These questions will help stimulate meaningful conversation. These are not intended to be asked of each man every day. This is a long list of possible questions to pick and choose from. You could even just take one question daily and build your curriculum out of these.

- What are three things you love most about your son?
- What kinds of affirmations have you spoken to your son this week?
- Are there character qualities in your son that deserve affirmation? What are they? And how could you affirm them?
- Are there some things your son is doing that you don't approve of? If so, have you tried writing that thing (or those things) down and then writing next to that upsetting thing something like, "Even still, I love and accept you always, no matter what"?

- Have you communicated to your son this week that you will love him forever no matter what? You accept him even when you disapprove of something he's done, said, or chosen. If not, what will you do to change that?
- Have you hugged your son enough this week? If not, what's your plan to make that happen?
- Have you communicated your love to your son verbally this week? If you know he needs to hear more from you, how can you do that creatively next week?
- Have you identified some ways your relationship with your father has impacted you and your fathering of your own children? What are some of those ways?
- Have you learned anything you feel you need to forgive your father? If so, where do you feel you are in that process today? And what is your next step forward?
- How aware have you been of your need to re-father yourself? Can you identify any ways you may need to do that? If so, what creative and loving fathering words or actions can you offer the little boy in you?
- Can you name three things you truly are grateful for about your dad, even if your relationship with him was not positive? Name them.
- On a 1 to 10 scale, how are you doing at being the dad you want to be? What would it take this week to make that a 10?

## **Day One: "Tree Climber Fun"**

### **Leader's notes:**

*Share with the men, "This program's design and my personal intention are to make you look good and have as much time with your boys as possible. We want you to have experiences you may never have had, cannot have back home, and will never forget." Continue with, "I want to encourage you to connect with your sons: encourage him at craft areas, do together what he wants in free time, go over the key verse and pray with him before bed, talk to him (not just other men) at meals, let him see you enjoy the activities and your wholehearted participation in them even when they are not your favorites."*

### **Questions for the dads**

- Why did you come to camp?
- Have you ever been to this camp or a place like this?
- What expectations do you have for the next few days?
- What are 1 or 2 things that you would love to do with your son over the next few days? (Leader takes note of how the schedule may be modified to help meet those desires.)

### **Biblical Application**

Read Proverbs 22:6 "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old, he will not depart from it." (ESV)

- What does it mean to train up a child?
- How can we better implement this in our daily lives?

## **Day Two: Role Modeling**

### **Leader's notes:**

*Pray for the men that they will allow God to work on them now. A common quote is “do as I say, not as I do.” The goal of this session is for the men to reflect and see the truth that what we do typically has the greater influence.*

### **Questions for the dads**

- What do you do to build strong relationships with your children?
- What do you do to provide the time necessary for role modeling to occur? (Who are the role models you provide for your children?)
- Who influenced your life the most up to the age of 21?
- What exactly did they say that most influenced you? Can you think of a second thing they said?
- What did they do, or how did that person live that most influenced you?  
*Influence isn't what a person says, it's who the person is.*
- What is the most important thing you took from that influential person – not words, but a characteristic or way of life or philosophy?  
*The obvious application to dads is that our sons will learn not so much from what we tell them as from who they see us as.*

### **Biblical Application**

*(Leaders, please read all three verses before discussing.)*

Matthew 5:16 “In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” (NIV)

1 Corinthians 11:1 “And you should imitate me, just as I imitate Christ.”

Ephesians 6:4 “Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.”

- How do these three verses relate to our earlier discussion?
- As we examine our own lives, what are some changes we can make to be a Christ-centered example to our children?
- 25 years from now, when your son is here for three days with your grandson, and a new Tree Climber leader runs to the files, chooses this outline, and asks your son these same questions, what will he answer?

Do not be dismayed. You most likely have ten years to bring great influence to bear upon what that answer will be a quarter century from now. Use these ten years in front of you so that you will not have reason to be dismayed when they are behind you.

*Open session for comments, questions, and other discussion.*

*Close with prayer - have as many men pray in this closing prayer as wish to participate.*

## **Day Three: Quality Time**

### **Leader's notes:**

*(Please make sure to have paper, pens, and envelopes available. These can be obtained from the office.) Often, people say, "I don't have a lot of time, but I will spend quality time..." The goal of this session is for the men to see that quality time is not independent of quantity.*

### **Questions for the dads**

- What is the difference between quality time and quantity time?
- Is one dependent upon the other?
- What do you do to spend time with your son (children)?
- Do you ensure that there is 1-on-1 time and not just 1-on-all time?

*Have all men share something.*

*So many parents mistake well-planned time for quality time. They think, "I'll do something special so we can spend quality time together." But the dad who hasn't built a relationship with his son finds quality time hard to come by. Quality time goes beyond special things. Quality time (a time of closeness and influence) results from a relationship that has already been built and is now used to provide joy or influence. Therefore, quality time is highly dependent upon quantity time. **Quality time is intentional time seized even from short or mundane activities.***

### **Additional Questions for Dads**

- How would you like to spend time with your sons (children)?
- What have you heard about how other men spend time with their children?
- Brainstorm how men can spend time with their children.

### **Biblical Application**

Read Deuteronomy 6:6-7

"These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down, and when you get up."

- What are some practical ways we can do this with our own family?

*Take time to pray through a plan they can implement when they go home. Then have the dads write a sealed letter to themselves to be mailed by camp in a few weeks.*

*Close with prayer – have as many men pray in this closing prayer as wish to participate.*