

NORTHERN FRONTIER
TREE CLIMBER

A Coordinator's Guide to Leading Fathers & Sons

NORTHERN FRONTIER CAMP
Adirondacks, NY
Revised Spring 2026

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(518) 251-2322 | www.northernfrontier.org | office@northernfrontier.org | 7791A NYS Route 28, Indian Lake, NY

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Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to be part of Northern Frontier's ministry. The next three days can become memories that last a lifetime. So many of our Tree Climber campers return home with stories they share 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 done together, such as the low ropes course, shooting at the rifle range, hiking to the waterfall, and 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 spend as much time as possible with their boys.

Dads have a unique experience when they come to camp. We often receive testimonies from impatient fathers who drive 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 organic, unforced conversation. These times are often characterized by laughter and storytelling between the dads.

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

Chain of Command

As Tree Climber Coordinator, you report to the Assistant Camp Director. Your Tree Climber Assistant supports you in your role but ultimately reports to the ACD as well. He doesn't make calls up the chain on his own. If something comes up while he's with the sons, he contacts you first.

In almost every situation, your first call is the ACD. The Camp Director becomes directly involved when something affects safety, requires parent contact, or may result in removing someone from camp. For medical situations, contact the Health Director first, then notify the Camp Director.

Fathers are guests, not campers, but they're still under Northern Frontier's authority while on the property. If a father's behavior creates a safety concern, contact the Camp Director.

For full emergency procedures, such as the *Emergency Air Horn System*, *Missing Person*, and *Evacuation*, refer to the *Staff Manual*. Read them before your session starts.

Emergency Procedures

These procedures align with the camp-wide protocols in the Staff Manual. If there's ever a conflict between what's written here and a direct instruction from the Camp Director during an active emergency, follow the Camp Director.

Keep your radio with you at all times. Channel 22 is the emergency channel.

Air Horn

Three long blasts activate the *Emergency Air Horn System*. When you hear it, switch to channel 22 and move immediately.

Tree Climbers assemble at the Stockade Field. Get every father-son pair there, take attendance, and report to the Camp Director over the radio: either all pairs present and accounted for, or who is missing. Then send your TCA (if he's 18 or older) to the Garage as a runner to repeat that report in person.

Fathers are not campers, but they are your responsibility during an emergency. Keep them calm, keep them together, and don't let pairs drift off to find each other on their own. A father who wanders off in search of his son becomes a second missing-person case.

Stay at the assembly point with your group. You don't leave to help with the response unless the Camp Director specifically directs it and your pairs are covered.

Missing Person

Tree Climbers move with more independence than campers, so tracking them takes more intentionality. Know where every pair is throughout the day.

If a son is unaccounted for, check the cabin, bathroom, and last known location. That check should take no more than two to three minutes. Keep other pairs together and supervised while you look. If he doesn't turn up, contact the ACD immediately and activate the air horn. Don't extend the search independently once that window closes.

If a father goes missing and his son is with you, keep the boy calm, keep him with the group, and contact the CD right away. A child separated from his father at camp is a situation leadership needs to know about immediately.

Don't search independently, don't split your group, and don't make promises to a worried boy about when his dad will be found. Steady and calm is what he needs from you.

Injury or Medical Emergency

Contact the Health Director first. Then notify the CD.

Don't wait for injuries that look minor. Head injuries, chest pain, allergic reactions, difficulty breathing, and any loss of consciousness should be immediately reported to the Health Director.

On hike days, grab the First Aid Kit from the Nurse before the group leaves camp. When communicating an emergency over the radio, be ready to give your name, the number of people involved, their approximate ages, the nature of the situation, your location, and the steps you've already taken. Never give names over the radio.

The Camp Director or his designee handles all communication with parents and any outside agencies. If the situation draws any outside attention, your only response is: "No comment. Please speak with the Camp Director."

Schedule

Daily Schedule

Below is 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.

7:45	Wake up!	Be very quiet until reveille. Line up with the Stockade for flag raising at 8:00. Clean the cabin and make your beds.
8:30	Breakfast	Send waiters to the Dining Hall 15 minutes before meal time. Stay in the Dining Hall until dismissed.
9:15	Woody's Checkup	Explore God's word as Father & Son. Material includes activities, memory verses, and discussion questions.
10:30	Tree Climber Activity	Activities are determined ahead of time. A backup plan should be in place when inclement weather is expected.
1:00	Lunch	Send waiters to the Dining Hall 15 minutes before meal time. Stay in the Dining Hall until dismissed.
1:45	Rest Time	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.
2:15	Fathers' Forum	The Tree Climber Assistant leads the sons in games while the fathers join on the Stockade Porch.
3:00	Father & Son Time	The store will be open every day during this time. Afterward, head down to the Waterfront for fishing, swimming, and boating.
6:00	Dinner	Send waiters to the Dining Hall 15 minutes before meal time. Stay in the Dining Hall until dismissed.
7:00	Tree Climber Activity	Activities are determined ahead of time. A backup plan should be in place when inclement weather is expected.
8:30	Campfire	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.
9:30	Bedtime	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.
10:00	Snack	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 changeover schedule, this is 30 minutes later than usual. 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 reopen 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.

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 – Fathers' Forum

On the first day, you'll have a Father's Forum in the evening. This allows the dads to spend time together 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 visit the Slingshot Range.

3:00 – Father & Son Time

Please note that the Camp Store is closed to campers on Sundays. When opening the camp store for Tree Climbers, be discreet so our campers are not aware of this privilege.

7:00 – Tree Climber Activity

If pressed for time or in 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

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 reopen 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

Please notify the Waterfront Director of your arrival to avoid interfering with other activities.

7:00 – Fathers' Forum

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, in the car, or at home before bed.

On the first day, you'll have a Father's 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

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.

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 in advance (during the Father & Son block). 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 for time or in the event of inclement weather, the Air Rifle Range is sheltered and conveniently located 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

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.

7:00 – Tree Climber Activity

This is a great opportunity to visit the Slingshot Range.

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.

Woody's Checkup

Each father-son pair receives a Woody's Checkup booklet at check-in. It's their daily Bible study material, designed specifically for Tree Climbers, and it structures the 9:15 block each morning. The booklet includes a Scripture passage, a memory verse (Woody's Verse), activities, and discussion questions for the pair to work through together.

Your role during Woody's Checkup isn't to teach — the fathers lead their sons through the material. Your job is to make sure every pair has their booklet, that the block starts on time, and that the environment is right for it: pairs settled, distractions minimized,

enough space for conversations to happen naturally without groups crowding each other.

At bedtime, the schedule calls for pairs to read or recite Woody's Verse before lights out. Remind fathers of this during the day if it feels like it's slipping off their radar. It's a small habit, but it's one of the cleaner ways a dad can lead his son spiritually in a low-pressure setting.

If a pair didn't get a booklet at check-in or has lost theirs, contact the office.

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 schedule changes.

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.

On the last day, 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 how they're connected 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 highly weather-dependent and may require a trained instructor, as does the Rock Wall. Other activities, like Air Riflery, Archery, and Slingshot, are sheltered and can be moved around easily, 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 at any time, 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. Fellowship 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 Father's 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.

- 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, encourage the quiet men in 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 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 available in 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, red light/green light
- Fort building in the woods.
- The first few holes of Disc Golf

For additional information, see the Tree Climber Assistant Guide.

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 a day and build your curriculum from 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, then writing next to it 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 are truly 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 a 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 but who the person is.

- What is the most important characteristic, way of life, or philosophy you took from that influential person?

The obvious application for 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 there is 1-on-1 time, 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 the quantity of 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 as wish to participate pray in this closing prayer.

Hobo Stove Night Menu

Each week, the Tree Climbers will have the same Junior Leader. For the Hobo Stove meal, the TCA will be familiar with the menu and procedure. The Kitchen Staff will patiently assist the TCA, educating him on the Hobo Stove meal menu, showing him where the food is, what to pack it in (bread trays), and when to pack and pick up the food.

On Thursdays, the TCA will be aware of the procedure and is expected to follow through on packing the food at a time that is convenient for both the kitchen and the TC schedule.

Once packed, the food will be stored in the cooler until it is taken to the Hobo Stove cooking site.

The Kitchen Staff and Service Team will save all #10 cans for the Tree Climbers.

TC Hobo Stove Menu Check List:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hamburgers (1.5/person) | <input type="checkbox"/> Potato chips | <input type="checkbox"/> Cups |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hamburger rolls (1.5/person) | <input type="checkbox"/> Hershey bars (.5/person) | <input type="checkbox"/> Paper plates |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hotdogs (1.5/person) | <input type="checkbox"/> Graham crackers | <input type="checkbox"/> Napkins |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hotdog rolls (1.5/person) | <input type="checkbox"/> Marshmallows | <input type="checkbox"/> Garbage bags (2) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lettuce | <input type="checkbox"/> Mustard | <input type="checkbox"/> Bucket for fire dousing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tomatoes | <input type="checkbox"/> Ketchup | <input type="checkbox"/> #10 Cans (1/pair) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Onions | <input type="checkbox"/> Mayonaise | <input type="checkbox"/> Tin snips |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pickle Slices | <input type="checkbox"/> Juice | <input type="checkbox"/> Pliers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Celery | | <input type="checkbox"/> Can Puncher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carrots | | <input type="checkbox"/> Matches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cheese | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fresh fruit | | |

Tree Climber Assistant Guide

You're here to help make this weekend unforgettable for the dads and their sons. You're not a camper, and you're not just a helper—you're a leader. That means you show up ready, set the tone, and make sure every boy feels included, safe, and seen.

When the dads step away (Fathers' Forum and evening snack), you're the one in charge of the sons. Be present, keep them together, and make sure they're having a good time. The goal isn't just to pass the time, but to build a mini brotherhood of fun and respect.

You also help out during mealtimes, campfires, and activities. Whatever the group needs, you pitch in. Your attitude sets the temperature.

- Lead the boys when dads are away
- Help set up and clean up activities
- Keep things fun, fair, and safe
- Be kind, confident, and dependable

Daily Schedule

Here's what your day generally looks like:

- Report to the Central Service Leaders' Huddle at the Stockade Porch at 7:00 AM.
- All Day – Be available during every block of scheduled time unless you're told otherwise. If the Tree Climber Coordinator says, "We've got it covered," he's giving you a break. Feel free to still offer help, but don't feel bad about using that time to prepare for the next activity. That's especially helpful on Hobo Stove night.
- Fathers' Forum (2:15 PM) – You're in charge of the sons. Gather the boys, lead a couple of games, and keep everyone involved. Stick to the Stockade

Field or woods in clear view. Keep it safe, keep it moving.

- Father & Son Time (3:00 PM daily) – This is your break. Rest, reset, hydrate, and check in with the kitchen or program staff.
- Evening Snack (10:00 PM) – Quietly monitor the cabin area. All boys should be in or near bed. Bring a flashlight. Be the calm presence in the room.
- Hike Days – Grab the First Aid Kit from the Nurse before the group leaves.
- Cookout – Help carry food trays, distribute supplies, and check that everyone gets what they need. Help clean up leftovers and trash.
- Radios – Keep your radio with you at all times. If you run into any issue—injury, behavior, weather—call for help. You're not expected to solve everything solo.

These are the key times you're leading the boys while their dads are away. You're the adult they're looking to, so stay alert, stay calm, and stay kind.

Go-To Games

When you're leading the sons during Fathers' Forum, you'll want to have something fun, easy, and inclusive ready to go. No supplies? No problem. Here's your starter kit.

Field Games

- Gaga Ball – Easy go-to. Keep the line moving fast if there are lots of kids.
- Wiffleball – Build teams by birthday month, favorite animals, or shoe color.
- Red Light–Green Light – Simple but still fun for this age group.
- Sharks & Minnows – Great with a big group on the Stockade Field.
- Kickball – Use cones or shoes for bases. Keep it moving.

Chill Games

- Nature “I Spy” – Find something shaped like a letter, heart, or cross.
- Would You Rather? – Camp edition. Gross food or cold swim? Mountain or lake?
- Story Chain – One boy starts a story with a sentence. Go in a circle, adding to it.
- Drawing Challenge – “Draw the campfire,” “Draw your dad as a superhero.”

Nature Games

- Fort Building – Head over to Wild Mike’s Play Area. Use fallen branches only. Assign clear boundaries. No rough play.
- Bug Hunt – Find the coolest (non-poisonous) critter. No touching bees or spiders.
- Leaf or Rock Collection – Find three things that remind you of camp. Share after.

Pro Tip

- Keep your head on a swivel. It’s fun, but you’re still supervising.
- Watch for kids who are hanging back. Invite them in.
- Always end the game with, “Everyone grab your water and take a breather.”

Do’s and Don’ts

DO:

- Show up early and ask, “How can I help?”
- Use names—learn the boys’ names and use them often.
- Stay engaged—you set the energy and tone.
- Keep your cool—if something goes sideways, stay calm and ask for help.
- Encourage the quiet kid—pull them into the game gently.
- Model respect—toward staff, dads, and campers.
- Leave it better—pick up trash, organize supplies, notice what needs doing.

DON’T:

- Don’t disappear without telling someone.
- Don’t tease, mock, or let others exclude kids.
- Don’t let games turn into chaos or unsafe competition.
- Don’t try to handle serious issues alone. Get help right away.

Backup Plans & Emergencies

Things won’t always go according to plan. Rain happens. A kid gets upset. You forget the rules mid-game. Don’t panic. Here’s how to handle curveballs like a pro.

If Plans Change

- Rainy Day? Head to the Pavilion or Stockade Porch. Play chill games like “Would You Rather,” story chains, or silent ball.
- Too Wild? Hit pause. Gather the boys in a circle and reset expectations. “Let’s try that again, but better.”
- No one in the game? Ask for ideas. Let a boy lead something. Then step back in and help it succeed.

If Something Goes Wrong

- A boy is hurt: Stop the activity. Stay calm. Send another camper or adult to get help from a staff member immediately.
- A boy is missing: Don’t wait. Alert the nearest staff member or admin immediately.
- Fighting or bullying: Step in with a calm voice. Separate them and get a staff member. No drama, just action.
- Disrespect or unsafe behavior: Use a firm but kind tone. “That’s not how we act here.” Then redirect. Follow up with a staff check-in.