

Parents' Guide

Renaissance Adventures

A need to know guide to Renaissance Adventures.

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OUR MISSION

Our mission is to teach children the fundamental principles of cooperation and responsible empowerment through an inspiring journey of creative expression and experiential learning.

WHAT IS RENAISSANCE ADVENTURES?

Since 1995, Renaissance Adventures has offered summer camps, after-school classes, holiday camps, and birthday parties in Adventure Quest, an active, outdoor, Renaissance-theme theatre game designed to develop self-esteem, team-building, and creative problem solving skills. Over the years, Renaissance Adventures has added different after-school classes and special programs to offer a variety of creative avenues for children to learn and grow. From outdoor survival and martial arts to blacksmithing and fantasy writing, our mission is still the same: to teach children the fundamental principles of cooperation and responsible empowerment through an inspiring journey of creative expression and experiential learning.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

The staff at Renaissance Adventures believes that a non-authoritarian and non-coercive teaching environment encourages a receptivity in children which enables them to develop their self-awareness. Children are supported in becoming empowered, while learning skillful responses and non-abusive ways to resolve emotional and social distress.

In Adventure Quest, the puzzles and mysteries, moral dilemmas, and other challenges of the quest are regarded with creative imagination, as playful opportunities for experiential learning, cooperation, and problem-solving. Our goal is to create a nurturing and safe environment with an adventure that is full of fun and freedom, to assist the children in the realization of their own unique gifts and talents, the achievement of their personal goals and the experience of self-fulfillment and empowerment within a group setting.

ADMISSION GUIDELINES

All programs are filled on a first come, first serve basis. Once all available spots are filled, R.A. will begin to take a waiting list. Campers will be admitted from the waiting list if a spot becomes open. We strive to fill open spots with the most age appropriate camper for the questing group that has an opening, not necessarily the camper who was first on the waiting list. In the case of low enrollment, R.A. may cancel a program or work to move participants into a different program.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Pre-registration is required for all events. To register, please fill out and send together the registration form, health form, immunization records, image and likeness form, release waiver and your payment. We prefer payment in full at the time of registration but if paying the full amount is not possible at this time, you may send a 50% deposit to reserve space in the sessions, and pay the remaining balance two weeks before each session begins. If you are paying by check, please make your check out to "Renaissance Adventures". Write the full name of the participant and the names of the events you are registering for on the check.

SPECIAL GROUPING REQUESTS

Your child will be grouped with four or five other children of similar age. We plan far ahead to create the greatest harmony and success in the camper and staff composition of our questing groups. Most likely, your child will have some old friends and some new faces in each questing group. Adventure Quest camps are a great opportunity for your child to make new friends; however, if you wish to ensure your child is questing with certain friends, indicate on your registration form the name of those children and we will do our best to put them in a group together. Asking us to rearrange groups at the last minute (on the first day of camp) is difficult and may not be successful.

CAMPERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

R.A. can offer services to a child with special needs providing the child has the mental and physical abilities of a six-year-old. This includes children with emotional or physical handicaps such as a wheel chair. R.A. will work within reason along with the parents and child to accommodate the child as long as the child can support a safe environment with other children in regards to our sword games, and emotional safety in regards to fair play. If the experience of the others in the group would be negatively effected by the amount of attention that the employee would need to give the child, R.A. and the parents would work together to find an aide to accompany the child in the group, or RA could work one-on-one with the child.

A NOTE ABOUT FINANCES

R.A. charges more than some camps, and an equal amount as other high-quality camps in Boulder County. All the income is put back into the expenses of operating a high quality service-oriented organisation. We are working with our budget and cash flow and a financial advisor to manage our finances responsibly. If you have questions as to where the money goes, or if you wish to offer advice, please contact Mark Hoge, the director. In finance, as in all areas of R.A., we operate with honesty and integrity, and strive to support open communication.

FINANCIAL SCHOLARSHIPS

R.A. donates money and operates fund-raising events to raise money for the non-profit Solstice Adventure Quest Scholarship Fund, designed to provide aid for low-income families to send their children to Adventure Quest camps. If you need aid to attend camp, please ask us for a scholarship application. If you would like to make a tax deductible donation to this 501(c) 3 non-profit fund, send your check, made out to "The Solstice Institute", to 302 Pearl Street, Boulder, CO 80302. Make sure to specify in the memo line of the check that your donation is for the Renaissance Adventures Scholarship Fund.

If you don't think that you will qualify for scholarship but still need financial assistance, ask us about Opportunity Quest. In Opportunity Quest, campers will join one of our Grand Master CITs (a 16-17 yr old who has completed our CIT program as well as staff training). The campers will quest as usual, and will be in sight and sound of an adult staff member, but are given a 30% discount. We also offer last minute 30% discounts to campers who can wait until the last minute (Monday morning) to fill openings in groups. Space is limited, call for details!

AGES ACCEPTED

<u>Program</u>	<u>Ages Accepted</u>
Adventure Quest - Grifflet	6-8
Adventure Quest - Griffon	8-16
Adventure Quest - Dragon	8-16
CentaurRopes Course Quest	10-16
Counselor in Training Program	13-17
Overnight Programs	9-16
Pegasus Quest (girls only!)	8-16
Star Quest	8-16

FIRST DAY OF CAMP

All campers must be checked in and out every day of camp by either a parent or by the adult who drops them off unless that child has written permission from their parent to check in and out on their own. On the first day of camp, parents or the adult who brought the child will sign their camper in with their Quest leader. This is the person who will be leading the child's group for the session and is the person to contact for checking in and out every day. If there is money owed or missing forms, parents will be directed to check in with the office staff. The first day of camp is not the time for special group requests (please see paragraph: "Special Grouping Requests").

WHAT TO BRING TO CAMP

Pack a backpack for your child with the following items: *a hat for sun protection, sun block, a bag lunch with snack, a filled water bottle (for hot summer days, please pack two water bottles), a light plastic poncho, and a sweatshirt.* Please send your child to camp with *sunscreen already applied* as our staff are not authorized to apply sunscreen to a child. *Hiking boots* are recommended and give more traction outdoors, but *sneakers* are adequate. Sandals are not acceptable footwear for this program due to the nature of the hiking trails. Please do not allow your child to bring candy or gum, pocket knives, electronic games, money, or anything of value to camp. Children are responsible for their own belongings, however, younger campers will be assisted by their quest leader in keeping track of their belongings. R.A. is not responsible for lost items. Upon registering for overnight camps or specialty program a detailed equipment list will be mailed to you.

LUNCH AND SNACK

RA does not provide snacks or meals for the children, rather, parents must pack a lunch with extra food for snack. RA does have emergency snacks available to children in case of a non-adequate amount of food in their lunches. If a child forgets a lunch the supervisor is notified right away and can purchase food for the child at a nearby store. The camper's account will be billed for all food expenses.

MEDICATION

Only our company's health clinician may administer medication but not without written permission of the child's physician and the child's parents. R.A. counselors are not authorized to give children medication of any kind or sunscreen. We discourage medications being brought to day or overnight camps, but if necessary, please fill out the "Permission to Administer Medication" form found in the summer camp flyer packet on the back of the immunization form. The parent should send RA the completed form filled out by the child's physician. Medications should be brought by the parent to the camp office or directly to the camp health clinician. Medication should NOT be sent to camp with the child and kept in the child's bag. If a medication needs refrigeration, R.A. can use the refrigerator at the Solstice Institute.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In case of rain, groups can use the shelter in Eben-G-Fine Park, or groups can return to the studio rooms at the Solstice Institute. In case of lightning, or the threat of lightning, Quest Leaders will remove their groups from high places, and will stay away from trees and open fields. If a full-on lightning storm is coming, all groups will return to the Solstice Institute. If the heat is extreme, campers will spend less time in Settlers Park and more time in Eben-G-Fine Park and the Solstice Institute.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Campers who will be arriving or leaving camp on their own must have permission from their parents. Often campers will walk, ride their bike, or take a bus to camp. Please indicate on your health form how your child will be travelling to and from camp if they are not being picked up and dropped off by a parent. If your child will be carpooling to camp or will be dropped off or picked up by someone other than a parent, please list on your health form the names of persons your child has permission to travel to and from camp with. Last minute changes in transportation are fine, but please inform us of these changes by sending a note to camp with your child, in addition to calling our office.

EARLY DROP OFF

RA staff are usually in staff meetings up until five minutes before a program is scheduled to begin. Therefore, we are unable to supervise campers who are dropped off early for a program. Parents of older campers are welcome to give their child permission to sign themselves in and out and to wait on their own before and after camp. Parents are asked to use their own discretion in deciding whether their child is mature enough to wait on their own without supervision.

LATE DROP OFF

Sign in and out of questers begins at 8:30am for summer camps. By 8:45 am the counsellors will probably have taken the children to the parks to begin the daily program. Parents who arrive after their child's quest group has left the building should check in at the office. A supervisor stays behind every day in case parents show up late. When a late child arrives, the supervisor contacts the child's counsellor and sends the parent with the child to that location.

LATE PICK-UP

During the afternoon pick up, the supervisor will stay late and wait with the children whose parents have not arrived. If a parent is more than 20 minutes late, all efforts will be made to contact the parent including calling the emergency numbers provided on the health form.

There is a ten minute grace period for picking up participants at the end of a class. The grace period begins at the time that the program is officially over. The late pick-up fee is \$4 for every 5 minutes or part of five minutes after the grace period. Late pick-up, if arranged with 24 hours notice, drops to \$2/5 min. or \$24/hr.

CHILD ILLNESS AND INJURY

If a child is injured on site or becomes ill, the staff member will notify the health clinician immediately. The supervisor will determine whether or not to notify the parents immediately, or wait until pick up time. If it is determined that the parents should be notified right away, the supervisor will call the parent. If the illness is a communicable disease, other parents will be informed of the situation at pick up time.

All of our staff are trained in 1st Aid and CPR. We also have a Emergency Response Team consisting of an EMT and a 1st Responder.

UNAUTHORIZED PICKUP OF A CHILD

Only parents and people who are granted permission by the parent who are listed on the health form will be allowed to leave RA programs with a child. If the parents wish to have someone pick up their child who is not already listed on the health form then they may send a note of permission to the office or they may call the office with the person's name. The RA office staff may ask questions of the caller to verify that they are indeed the parent of the child. When a person not authorized to pick up a child attempts to sign out a child, employees will contact a supervisor (supervisors are the only people authorized to OK the sign out). Identification of the party will be established, the parents will be contacted, and the supervisor will receive a verbal authorization from the parents before RA allows the sign out to take place. If the person does not cooperate with the process, the child will be kept at the facility and authorities will be called. If the child is forcefully removed from camp by the unauthorized person, both the parents and the proper authorities will be called immediately.

SWASHER™ TOYS

Renaissance Adventures utilizes many teaching tools, one of which are our Swashers™ toys. Swashers™ are made of fiberglass rods and soft foam. When used correctly under adult supervision these toys are very safe. However, misuse of a Swasher™ could cause injury. The safety rules for playing with Swashers™ are easy to learn. Our Quest Leaders supervise the use of the Swashers™ in our programs, cultivating an environment that teaches good sportsmanship, fair play, and respect for others. If you have any questions about our Swashers™, please don't hesitate to call us. We are planning to offer our Swasher™ toys for sale this summer, and each winter we offer classes in which you can make a Swasher™.

GROUPS OF 4-6

Small groups allow for personal attention and harmonious group dynamics. We quest in small groups of 4-6 children with one skilled adult quest leader. In addition, some groups have a teen Counselor-in-Training. Mark Hoge our Camp Director, or Aaron Huey, our Assistant Director and EMT, is always on-site and available.

LOCATING CHILDREN / GROUPS

Grouping charts are kept in the office. These charts detail which children are in each group and who the quest leader is for that group. All quest leaders carry walkie-talkie radios with them at all times. In order to locate a child, the office would determine which group the child was in and would radio to that quest leader with whatever information was needed to be given to the quest leader or child.

LOST CAMPER PROCEDURE

In the event that a camper is lost from the group, the Quest Leader will immediately contact the supervisor. The supervisor will organize a search with all available staff. If the child has not been located after 15 minutes, the office will contact the parents and police department while staff continue to search. In the event that a child is suspected of being injured or abducted, the parents and authorities will be notified immediately.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Renaissance Adventures uses a three level, non-authoritarian and non-coercive discipline strategy called inspiring invitations. The three levels of the strategy are the "Heart-to-Heart Talk", the "Safety Talk", and the "Asking for Help Talk". These strategies address boundaries and clearly communicate consequences to the children involved. The first two levels of the discipline strategy are handled by the quest leader. If the situation continues to the point of the "Asking for Help Talk," the quest leader will usually ask a supervisor or the camp director to become involved. Our goals are to act immediately for conflict resolution, to reestablish a safe situation for all involved, and for the children to be comfortable and harmonious with the other questers in the group. (continued on next page)

The essence of the Heart-to-Heart Talk is to connect lovingly and firmly with a child so that they feel heard and respected, and so that they hear and understand what behavior is safe or unsafe. The quest leader and the child make an agreement to act safely.

The essence of the Safety Talk is to clarify potential consequences for future unsafe actions, to monitor a child's actions, and if need be, follow through with the consequences they have agreed on or have been warned about.

The essence of the Asking for Help Talk is asking the child and others for help resolving the present challenge. If appropriate, the quest leader may ask the questing group, the site supervisor, the camp director, and the child's parents for help.

The 3 Talks Discipline Strategy will be used immediately in any instance when anyone's physical or emotional safety is at risk. In the case that a child is out of control and beyond the camp's ability to properly handle, the quest leader in charge of the child will seek the help of their supervisor and/or the camp director. The child will be brought to a safe spot away from the group and would stay there with a staff person until the parents could pick him/her up. See "Withdrawal of Service Policy".

A full description of the Inspiring Invitations Conflict Resolution Strategy is available upon request.

WITHDRAWAL OF SERVICE POLICY

If a child acts within a manner that is not congruent with a safe environment and all disciplinary resources have been exhausted, the parents will be asked to provide an adult who can accompany the child in the camp and work with the child on a one-to-one basis, guiding and coaching them on safe participation. If this does not lead to a safe environment for all concerned then the parents will be asked to remove the child from the program. The decision on whether or not they will be asked to return will be made on an individual basis and not set forth into policy. Refunds will be granted according to the cancellation policy.

R.A . PROTOCOLS FOR REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

If it is suspected that a child is involved in a neglectful or abusive situation, the following steps are taken. First, the staff member reports the information to R.A. Administration. Second, within 24 hours of suspicion, R.A. administration fills out an NAT Incident report. Finally, administration will make a report to Social Services or the police department. R.A. staff will continue to support and monitor the child. R.A. complies with the request of Social Services to not inform the parents when a report is filed with Social Services.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

In the case of an emergency (flood, fire, storm, large scale disaster) RA staff will strive to return all groups to the Solstice Institute in a safe and timely manner. In the event that it was unsafe to travel to the Solstice Institute, or the building was considered unsafe, the quest leaders would radio to the supervisor and office staff as to their location and plan of action. If an event occurs that keeps children from returning to the Solstice Institute, then RA will call every parent to inform them of their child's location and how to pick up their child. RA will also leave that information on the outgoing message of the RA voicemail system. RA staff will remain at either the Solstice Institute or the alternate safe location until all children are picked up by their parents.

COMPLAINTS

The director and the staff of R.A. appreciate your feedback, complaints, and suggestions. With your help, we are succeeding at improving our program and making it more and more a service that meets your needs. Please help us to help you, by communicating directly with us whenever there is a problem. We will do our best to resolve the issue, and if need be, instigate new policies to support positive changes in our program. As always, we have a money back guarantee and will refund your money if we have not given you the quality of service you expect.

Please contact the Camp Director, Mark Hoge or the Assistant Director, Aaron Huey if you have any concerns.

QUALITY STAFF

We have received much praise from parents and children regarding the quality of our staff. A rigorous application process allows us to successfully hire exceptional people. A sixty -hour training seminar gives our staff the additional skills they need. All of our staff are skilled teachers, as well as being actors and storytellers. We choose teachers who can support an environment of physical and emotional safety, while cultivating a relaxed and joyful learning experience. Potential staff are screened through the Central Registry of Child Protection as well as the Colorado Bureau of Investigation.

CANCELLATION POLICY

If you cancel with two or more weeks notice before the registered event, all monies paid will be fully refunded. If you cancel a session with less than two weeks notice, we will strive to fill your child's spot with someone from our wait list, in which case we only charge you a \$25 cancellation fee. If we cannot fill your child's spot, then you will be charged according to the below listed schedule.

Fee Schedule

Late Pick Up Fees

Unarranged - \$4 for every 5 minutes, or part of 5 minutes

Pre-Arranged- \$2 for every 5 minutes or \$24 an hour

Cancellation Fees

If R.A. can fill your child's space with another child then there is only a \$25 cancellation fee instead of the fees listed below.

More than 2 weeks notice - no fee

Less than 2 weeks notice, but R.A fills your spot- \$25 fee

More than 96 hrs but less than 2 wks notice - A fee of 25% of event cost with a \$25 minimum, unless RA fills your spot.

Less than 96 hours- 50% of event fees with a \$25 minimum, unless RA fills your spot.

The day of the event or part way through event -**no refund**, unless RA fills your spot.

MEET THE CAMP DIRECTOR - MARK HOGE

As a child and teen, Mark spent many summers at a summer creative arts camp with his mother and grandmother. Mark began leadership training as a Boy Scout and an Eagle Scout. His love of summer camps has led him to work in camping every summer except two since 1980. He has held many roles at different camps, including camp counselor, teacher, Program Director, Assistant Director, and finally - beginning in 1990 - Camp Director. In 1994 Mark returned to Boulder and in January of 1995 he founded Renaissance Adventures and has been directing summer camps and year-round programs in Boulder ever since. The unique and effective teaching tool of Adventure Quest was born through Mark's passion to discover an inspiring and fun way to teach responsible empowerment and teamwork through engaging children in creative expressive play. Mark draws on a wealth of resources, including his BA and graduate studies in Movement Therapy, and extensive training and experience in psychology, expressive arts therapies, improvisational theatre, storytelling, martial arts, and a deep commitment to create a safe harmonious learning environment for children.

MEET THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR- AARON HUEY

A martial artist, an EMT, and most importantly, a father, Aaron Huey was a strong addition to R.A.'s staff in 1998. Aaron began his work with R.A. as a summer Quest Leader and has since developed R.A.'s successful martial arts and outdoor survival programs. Since the summer of 2000 Aaron has worked with the children and staff of R.A. as Assistant Director, site supervisor, and health clinician. Over the years, Aaron has demonstrated his commitment to the mission of R.A. and devotion to the success of each and every camper.

MEET THE OFFICE MANAGER- PAMELA FEDERER

Pam began her camping experience in New England where she attended several day and overnight camps. She spent two summers working with Meadowbrook Day Camp in Massachusetts as a group leader, and then went north to Camp Catherine Capers in Vermont for 6 years to work as the Horseback Riding Director and Program Director. Pam has been with R.A. since 2000 and works hard to promote R.A.'s mission.

Our Core Staff

Mark Hoge	Camp Director
Aaron Huey	Assistant Director
Pamela Federer	Office Manager

Important Phone Numbers

R.A. Office: 303-786-9216

Fax Machine: 303-544-5979

Assistant Director/
Site-Supervisor's Cell: 720-231-9389

Director's Cell (Emergency only): 720-280-3579

Email Address: Adventurecamps@Earthlink.net

Website: www.renaissanceadventures.com

OFFICE HOURS

September through May: Monday to Friday, 12:30pm-4:30pm

June through August: Monday to Friday, 8:30am-4:30pm

Our on-site supervisor can be contacted in person from 8:00am-4:30pm Monday through Friday when a program is running. (Cell number 720-231-9389)

Our office is closed on weekends but it may be possible to contact the Assistant Director, Aaron Huey, on the cell phone number listed above, if the matter cannot wait until Monday.

The office is closed on Christmas day, July 4th, and possibly on other holidays if no programs are scheduled.