



Parent and Camper  
Summer Camp Handbook

**Welcome to Tom Sawyer Camps!** This handbook is a reference guide for you and your camper(s) to familiarize yourself with many aspects of our camp programs. It aims to orient you and answer our families most frequently asked questions. Please spend the time reading over the information so that you feel as prepared as possible before camp begins. Once you have read this packet, please feel free to call our office; we can answer any further questions you may have!

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## OUR PROGRAMS

### ACCREDITATION & THE AMERICAN CAMP ASSOCIATION

Tom Sawyer Camps is a proud member of the **American Camp Association (ACA)**. The ACA ensures the highest professional practices and administration in order to provide for the unique experiences offered in organized camping. The ACA's extensive standards accreditation program requires us to be visited every five years in order to maintain our accreditation

ACA collaborates with experts from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Red Cross, and other youth-serving agencies which helps assure that current practices at TSC reflect the most up-to-date, research-based standards in camp operation. ACA goes beyond basic requirements for health and cleanliness but also sets standards for programming, camp staff, emergency management plans, and many other areas. ACA applies separate standards for activities such as waterfront, horseback riding, and adventure and travel.

ACA helps our directors provide the best possible experience for campers. Your child is enrolled in an ACA accredited camp and we are proud of our association with the ACA ([www.acacamps.org](http://www.acacamps.org)).

TSC is also a proud member of the Western Association of Independent Camps ([www.waic.org](http://www.waic.org)).



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### IMPORTANT TSC USERNAMES & PASSWORDS

[www.tomsawycamps.com](http://www.tomsawycamps.com)

Taxpayer ID Number: 95-2635023

Save this for tax time!

**Camp Photos** (daily photos found on our website):

Password = summercamps

**TSC Families** (website):

Username = marktwin

Password = summer

## **PROGRAMS AT A GLANCE**

### **Pre-Camp (PC)**

Ages 3-5. Coed groups split by ages.

9:00 am – 2:00 pm.

PC is split into a 6 week and 3-week session. The 6-week session can also be split into first 3 weeks and second 3 weeks.

Pre-Camp has its own bus routes.

### **TSC Too (Too)**

Currently in K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Groups split by grades and gender

9:05 am – 3:00 pm.

Too is split into two 4-week sessions. Both 4-week sessions can be split into 2-week sessions.

TSC Too has its own bus routes.

### **Summer Day Camp (SDC)**

Currently in K-5<sup>th</sup> grade. Groups split by grades and gender.

9:05 am – 3:45 pm.

SDC is split into a 6- week and a 3-week session. The 6-week session can also be split into first 3 weeks and second 3-weeks.

SDC and OP campers are on bus routes together.

### **Outpost (OP)**

Currently in 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Coed groups split by grade.

9:05 am – 3:45 pm

OP is split into 3 three-week sessions (9 weeks total).

SDC and OP campers are on bus routes together.

## **THE BASICS**

### **WHAT HAPPENS ON THE FIRST DAY?**

Whether your camper is new or returning to Tom Sawyer Camps, we strongly encourage you to take the time to read through this handbook and talk to your camper about their first day of camp. Some campers (and parents) may feel nervous about the first day, but rest assured our staff are trained to help campers with any fears and help them have a fun and memorable first day.

- Talk in detail to your camper about what will (most likely) happen their first day (at camp, we call this “front-loading”).
  - Tell your camper that on their first day they will meet their counselors and new friends in their group (your camper will be in the same group every day they attend camp).
  - Explain how they will get to go to many different activities with their group – horses, pool and more.
    - When groups go to horses, we have special horse staff (“wranglers”) who will teach them how to ride.
    - When groups go to pool (groups will travel in their groups’ van 1.8 miles to the pool), they will change into their swimsuit in a locker room, and then get to meet the Lifeguards/Swim instructors who will help them learn to swim. Let your camper know that their swimsuit stays at the pool for their entire session while at camp.
  - Your camper will also eat lunch with their group, possibly go hiking and look for a fort, come up with a unique name for their group and maybe go to our nature program, archery and/or play in the water and mud.

Remind your camper that at any point they need help with something (for example putting on their shoes after swimming or they need some extra TLC because they are nervous to ride a horse), their counselors are there to help them with anything and everything! It’s ok to ask for help, especially when you are feeling scared, hungry, thirsty and maybe even overwhelmed.

Sometimes campers worry that they won’t be able to find their van or driver when it is time to go home. Reassure your camper that, at the end of the day, each van driver will call out his or her van route and lead those campers to the van. Assure your camper that no one leaves camp until everyone is on the correct van. You can help by reminding them of their drivers’ names and van numbers.

Once at camp, the schedule for the first couple of days is slower and includes more transition time to help campers adjust. Our staff introduces campers to the programs and helps them get to know the other counselors and fellow campers.

Before your camper comes to camp:

- Make sure you clearly label everything – clothes, swimsuits and lunches – with your child’s first *and* last name.
- Make sure your child is well hydrated and covered with sunscreen.
- Keep it simple – send your child with a swimsuit and a sack lunch only. We want our campers to be “hands-free.”
- Wait with your child outside for the van – talk about the day ahead with excitement.

- Note that that your van arrival might be slightly off due to normal “first day of camp” surprises (i.e. a camper who is hesitant to get on the van or a parent who takes a lot of photos). Staying cool and calm will help your camper handle any concerns they may have.
- If you are bringing your camper to camp (or a pickup point), give yourself plenty of time to get to camp (and if possible, drive by camp or your pickup point prior to confirm you know where you are going ... getting lost on a first day can be stressful for you and your camper)

## CLOTHING

1. PLEASE CLEARLY LABEL ALL BELONGINGS from t-shirts to socks.
2. Camp is a great place to wear out old clothing! Send an old swimsuit (not a favorite). Wear your TSC camp shirt (not required but recommended). We recommend campers wear clothes that can get dirty and wet.
3. It is especially important that they wear **closed toe shoes**. *Crocs, Keens and other shoes with holes in them are NOT appropriate for camp*. Shoes with holes invite sticks and rocks that poke campers’ feet and *they* are especially not permitted to wear for riding horses.
4. On the first day, your camper should bring a swimsuit (towels are not needed) which will remain at camp with your child’s counselor for the entire session.
5. Outpost campers may bring towels when they go windsurfing or to the beach.
6. Please do not send expensive sweatshirts, jackets or other valuable clothing, as campers can easily lose track of them.

Two camp shirts will be given out the first days of camp according to the size on the camper’s enrollment form (in Pre-Camp and Too we will hand them out at the Open House). We pass out camp shirts at the end of the day, so look for the shirts when your child returns home. If you need to exchange them for another size, please return them in the plastic bag with the camper’s name and size desired (see insert in bag). We will send new one’s home with your camper the next day. Many campers wear their t-shirts to camp each day although it is not required.

## LUNCHES

Campers bring their lunches to camp each day and store them with the groups’ lunches in a shady spot. Refrigeration is unavailable, so please pack non-perishable items. We request a sack lunch rather than a lunch box so your camper won’t have to remember to take it home (in other words, get lost). You may choose to send disposable water bottle/juice boxes; if you do send a reusable (older) water bottle, please make sure it is clearly labeled (again, we want our campers to be hands free while at camp). We have plenty of water stations around camp for your camper to get hydrated. Please mark your camper’s first and last name clearly on the sack and water bottle. In Pre-Camp, please put your child’s group letter or name on the bag as well.

In Pre-Camp and Too, we also provide a small snack during the day. Snacks vary from day to day and can be anything from crackers to watermelon. We will do our best to accommodate any allergies in your child’s group; we are extremely careful not to give a child food that he or she is allergic to. If you have any concerns (camper dislikes) about our snack, you are welcome to send you own.

## TRANSPORTATION

Tom Sawyer Camps provides door-to-door transportation for campers who live within our designated pick-up area. The counselors who drive our 15 passenger vans must have a Class B Commercial License, a good driving record, pass a pre-employment drug screen and get training from our experienced senior staff. The TSC Admin are certified by the DMV as trainers. We own all our own vans, which are inspected annually by the California Highway Patrol. Our drivers inspect their van each morning before the routes begin. TSC also has our own mechanic on staff. All of our vans have booster seats (for campers 7 & under) and seat belts; each child must be seat belted in prior to the van moving.

***A FEW DAYS BEFORE EACH SESSION BEGINS*** our counselors practice their routes and your child's driver will let you know the approximate pick-up time (between 7:40 and 8:50 for Pre-Campers and between 7:40 and 8:55 for older children). Campers are on different routes for PC, Too and SDC/OP. Our driver will come by your home and leave a door-hanger telling you his/her name and what time to expect the van on the first day of camp. If you have not heard from a driver by 6:00 pm on the Saturday before your camper's first day, please call the office. Also, some campers who attend camp five days per week may have two drivers – one driver for Mon-Wed-Fri and one for Tue-Thur. In some areas, we do not pick up door to door but have pick-up spots. Please refer to your confirmation letter for the pick-up spot you chose for your camper during enrollment.

The camp fun begins on the van and most campers love the route. We work hard to make the trips to and from camp as short as possible by careful planning. Your camper may be on a route for as long as an hour. If your camper is coming 5 days a week, be aware that the route on MWF can be totally different from Tu/Th and therefore pick up and drop off times for your child may be different. Although the routes are carefully planned, they take more time on the first few days of each session. Some children are riding a van for the very first time and need a little more attention. Some parents are sending their children off for the very first time and they may need a little more attention too.

**If your camper is ill or will be absent, please call the office before 7:00 AM.** This way, the driver will not come by your home and disturb you. If you want to call earlier, our voicemail will take your call. **If your child has not been picked up by 8:45, call the office.**

Your child will be returned home approximately between 2:10 and 3:00 for PC, 3:15 and 4:00 for Too, and 3:55 and 5:00 for SDC/OP. A responsible person must **be at the entrance to your home to receive your camper when he/she returns from camp.** We do not assume any responsibility for the camper other than dropping him/her off at your house or pick up point. If the child is unable to enter the home, we will return him/her to camp and it is the responsibility of the parent to pick him/her up by 5:30 pm. **Please call the camp office with any transportation messages. Please do not make any special arrangements with the driver.**

There are a few more things we would like to clarify about our van transportation service which, hopefully, will help you understand our limitation in scheduling your child's transportation. We provide transportation to and from camp for approximately 450 campers and counselors each day. We try to accommodate each family's needs whenever possible and hope that you will understand when we cannot.

### **Here are some of our basic Transportation guidelines:**

1. Call the office if your child is going to be absent – please do not tell your driver (drivers can be absent or might forget).
2. If you must pick up your child early from camp, please call the office, preferably the day before. This makes it easier for the counselor to have your camper available at the necessary time. You must sign your camper out with a director.
3. If you need to bring your child to camp late, please call the camp office (the day before if possible) so we can coordinate getting your camper together with his/her group. Be sure to sign in your child with a director at camp (“Base Camp”).
4. There are some residences that we consider to be “inaccessible” (i.e. private driveways, winding/narrow roads), even though the address might be in our regular pick-up area. We will let you know if there is a problem. Safety of our campers and staff is our #1 priority.
5. Pick-up and drop-off times that the drivers give you prior to the first day of camp are approximate. Please have your child ready at least 10 minutes before the pick-up time and please be sure someone is at home at least 10 minutes before the drop-off time. The times will become regular as the drivers do the routes a few times (and campers are ready when the van arrives).
6. Campers are not allowed to switch vans to or from camp. If campers are going to someone else’s home to stay overnight, or to another destination, then outside transportation must be provided by the parent.
7. Special pick-up and drop-off times cannot be arranged. Please do not ask your driver to change the pick-up and drop-off times to accommodate your schedule.
8. TSC has a release form for parents to sign if parents choose to not have an adult at home for drop off (i.e. your child can let them self in the house). Please contact the office for this release form if you did not select it upon initial enrollment.
9. Occasionally the van drivers arrange a “bus party”. This is a special event for campers to have “breakfast” together. The counselors ask the campers to bring a small amount of food to share with everyone on the van. Appropriate food would be a carton of orange juice (with cups), fruit, muffins, or some other healthy option. Bringing food is optional. Your van driver will notify you a few days in advance and will typically pick up your camper 15 minutes earlier than usual so the they have time to have the “bus party” before the camp day starts.

### **VAN RULES**

Because transportation is an integral part of our day camp program, it is important parents discuss our safety rules on the van. Please review the following important dos and don’ts with your camper:

1. Stay on the curb or sidewalk until the van arrives. Wait until the van comes to a complete stop before you approach it.
2. Although we try not to cross streets to get on and off the van, sometimes it is unavoidable. It is very helpful (and more efficient) if you can help your camper cross the street. If you are not able to, a staff member from the van will cross with your camper.
3. Buckle your seat belt. Changing seats is not allowed.
4. Stay in your seat until the van has come to a complete stop. You may exit the van only when a counselor decides it is safe.
5. Talk quietly with your neighbors. Yelling is not allowed.
6. Keep your arms and head inside the van at all times.
7. Never throw anything out of the window.
8. Sit with your back against the seat. Do not sit on your knees or turn around at any time.

9. Chewing gum, eating, or drinking on the van is not permitted. This includes breakfast! Make sure your camper is ready to go when the van arrives.
10. Follow all directions from the driver and the other counselors on the van.

## **MORE IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

### **ESSENTIAL CAMPER FUNCTIONS**

Our goal is for every child who attends TSC to have a safe, positive camp experience. We understand that campers are at different levels of development. Part of being at camp is about taking that next step and growing many new and different skills. However, prior to starting camp, the ability to do the following is required of all campers:

- Potty trained and 3 years old by June 1<sup>st</sup>
- Ability to understand/follow staff directions and stay with one's group.
- Ability to self-monitor one's behavior so as not to be harmful to oneself or other staff or campers.
- Ability to navigate a large outdoor environment with varied terrain and participate in physical activities throughout the course of the day.

### **PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

TSC considers the positive example parents set for their campers and the cooperation of parents essential for it to carry out its mission. Parents are expected to support all policies, rules, and regulations, and cooperate with and act with civility toward members of the TSC community, including our staff and contracted vendors providing service to TSC both on site and off site. Unacceptable parent behavior, including actively undermining any camp policy, may result in non-renewal or termination from camper's enrollment.

### **MEDICAL INFORMATION**

The safety and well-being of your child is of utmost importance to us. Since your child will be in our care, it is extremely important that we are prepared to assist him/her at any time should a medical problem or emergency arise. You have supplied this information on your camper's health history form. If there is any additional condition or concern that you feel the office or your child's counselor needs to know, or if anything has changed since you filled out your form, please call the office with that information as soon as possible.

All of our Senior Counselors are First Aid and CPR Certified and many of our Assistant and Junior Counselors are certified as well. Emergency services are close by, as well as two hospitals (Huntington Memorial and USC Verdugo Hills) within five minutes of camp. In the event a child is hurt at camp and needs medical treatment, the staff will always call the camper's parents first and then call the emergency contact if we do not reach the parents. It is important that in the event of an emergency (or a stomachache) you, or someone local designated by you, will be available to come to camp to pick up your child. If you think your phone numbers have changed since enrollment, call/email us your updated numbers.

Tom Sawyer Camps' accident insurance covers, up to our policy limits, any injuries received at camp to the extent that they are not covered by any other health and/or accident insurance covering the child.

If your camper needs to take medication while at camp, you will need to bring enough medicine (in the original packaging) for the camper's whole camp session, to the camp office prior to the start of camp and fill out a form. We will then package the medication into individually labeled envelopes that will be given to your child's counselor daily. All medications are kept in a locked area. At the end of summer, you may pick up any leftover medication. We will dispose of anything not claimed within 60 days after camp has ended.

Our policy (and an American Camp Association standard) is not to have over the counter or prescription drugs "roaming around camp." It is just as important for us to ensure the safety of all the campers as it is to be sure your child receives his/her medication properly. All medication must be brought through our office. Our drivers will not accept any type of medication on the van (nor can they bring it home to you on a van).

### **COMMUNICATION**

At the end of each week, TSC sends an email ("Tom Sawyer Tell'em") to our camp families that will have information about upcoming camp events and other fun and important announcements. Make sure you read this weekly email that will fill you in on lots of camp information (as well as highlights from the past week).

### **EXTENDED CARE PROGRAM**

We have an Extended Day Program before and after the camp day. Any camper can come as early as 7:30 am and stay until 6:00 pm (you can sign up for am or pm, or both). This is not a drop-in program; campers must be enrolled for the entire session. Call us for more information.

### **VISITING CAMP**

Parents are always welcome to visit camp to see their camper in action. Call the camp office to set up a time for your visit. All days have special time schedules, and some are better for visiting. Plan on making your visit a short one, as you are aware that often a parent can change the dynamic of what the group and your child are doing.

### **CAMP PHOTOS**

We have 2 camp photographers who are at camp daily to catch our campers in action! Daily photos are uploaded at the end of each day and can be viewed on the home page of our website ([www.tomsawycamps.com](http://www.tomsawycamps.com)). Click on our "Photo Gallery" link and enter the password "summercamps". Our photographers do their best to photograph every group during various activities but if after a few days (or more), you have not seen a photo of your camper, send us an email. We will track your camper's group down and get some photos of them.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

PC, Too and SDC campers need not bring anything to camp other than a sack lunch. We want our campers to be at camp "hands-free." However, our OP campers may bring a backpack since they often are out of camp. We strongly discourage campers bringing a backpack to camp since all they need is their lunch. Everything brought to camp should be marked with a first and last name. Although our staff try to prevent articles from getting lost, your child is responsible for his or her own belongings. Every attempt is made to return labeled clothing to you, but we are not responsible for personal belongings

brought from home. If your camper loses something while at camp (and has not found it on his/her own), call our office. We will do our best to help your camper track it down.

## **EVENTS**

### **OPEN HOUSE**

We hold an Open House for parents and children attending our Pre-Camp and TSC Too Camps on the weekend before each session begins. This is an opportunity for you and your camper to meet your counselor and driver, see the camp site, and receive camp t-shirts (if you do not attend, your camper will receive their t-shirts their first day of camp).

Note: There is not an Open House for campers attending Summer Day Camp or Outpost

### **BBQ/SING-A-LONG**

During each session of Day Camp and Outpost, we have a BBQ for you to visit camp and meet all your child's counselors. For Pre-Camp and TSC Too parents, we have a sing-a-long so you can visit camp and meet your counselors. Both are a highlight of the summer for both campers and our counselors.

## **AT CAMP**

### **A NOTE ABOUT OUR SWIM PROGRAM**

Safety is at the core of our aquatic program, and safety of campers and staff is paramount. Aquatic activities at camp require certified, trained staff in appropriate ratios, skill testing, safety systems, rescue equipment, rehearsed emergency procedures, and other guidelines to reinforce risk management and safety.

The key to water safety is proper supervision. TSC employs approximately 21 pool staff supervised by 2 on deck directors. All pool staff are certified by the American Red Cross as Lifeguards, including First Aid, CPR and AED certifications. Lifeguards rotate stations every 20 minutes. Our Lifeguard staff regularly practice response drills to ensure vigilance.

Group Counselors swim with their campers along with lifeguard staff. Additional lifeguards are on deck supervising at all times. Depending on the age of the camper, we maintain a 2:1 (older camper 3:1) supervision ratio (camper to staff).

Campers are in the pool for a 35-40-minute swim block; at least 20 minutes of the block is a lesson followed by free swim. Before free swim, all staff and campers are required to swim to the side of the pool to ensure pool is clear. The pool's lap lane and deep end are roped off and only used by our highest-level swimmers with supervision.

We conduct swim assessments on a camper's first day of camp and use a wrist band system to identify swim level. Campers may only leave the shallow end of the pool once they've demonstrated proficiency to do so. Swim levels are evaluated on an ongoing basis. A large part of our job is knowing the abilities of the children in the water. Campers who demonstrate a specific level of skill will receive a color-coded wristband to be worn all summer. Help your campers keep their wristband on throughout the summer!

Campers who are non-swimmers will not receive a wristband. Throughout the summer, campers are evaluated to assess their progress, and will be issued a wristband when they demonstrate the level of water safety applicable to our wristband system. This system allows our staff to identify a camper swimming in the appropriate area of our pool, based on their skill level. If you have questions about your child's skill level, call the office. Regular participation is important. Minor ailments should not be used as excuses for not swimming and campers will not be excused unless there is a note (or phone call) accompanying the child from the parent or guardian. Please make sure you write a note if your camper has a cold or an earache, etc.

**Towels not needed!** Campers dry-off on the deck in the warm sun and towels almost always become part of the lost and found (we do have towels in the rare instance we have a colder day at camp).

**Goggles not needed!** There are very few instances where a camper needs to wear goggles to swim. If your camper needs goggles while swimming, please make sure they are labeled with the camper's first and last name. Tom Sawyer is not responsible for lost goggles, and they are one of the most frequently lost items at camp. (So frequently lost, assume goggles will not make it home!)

## PRE-CAMP SWIM PROGRAM & BADGES



The goal of the Pre-Camp Swim Program is to provide a safe and fun introduction to swimming. To help facilitate the development of skills, we have a badge system, so campers can learn at their own pace. Although the badges are an important aspect of our program and a motivator for the campers, our #1 priority at the Pre-Camp pool is to create a safe learning environment in which campers of all ability levels can learn and become comfortable in the water. Campers who demonstrate a specific level of skill will receive a color-coded wristband to be worn all summer. Help your campers keep their wristband on throughout the summer! Campers who are non-swimmers will not receive a wristband. The color of the band is determined by our detailed swim skills evaluation on your child's first day at the pool.

**BADGE #1 – TADPOLE BADGE** covers basic and essential water adjustment skills. While working on this badge, the child gets used to the new pool and the pool staff. A camper who has earned this badge can pull him/herself in/out of the pool, blow bubbles, and open his/her eyes underwater. This is a giant step for the child who says, "I don't like to get my face wet."

**BADGE #2 – SALAMANDER BADGE** introduces four basic swimming skills: floating, gliding, kicking and using a basic freestyle stroke. It is exciting to earn this badge because the camper is actually swimming. Technique is not as important as actually understanding and integrating the new skills.

**BADGE #3 – TUNA FISH BADGE** can be the most difficult for campers to earn. This level introduces a new way to swim – on the back! One of the biggest fears a child has in the pool is floating, gliding, and swimming on his/her back since they feel they have no control of their body in this position. Once the child overcomes the fear of swimming on their back, it is easier for them to turn over on their stomach and learn a clean crawl stroke with side breathing.

**BADGE #4 – MARLIN BADGE** we teach the crawl stroke with side breathing. Clean performance is emphasized. Endurance and strength are important, but side breathing is the primary goal.

For children who have earned their MARLIN BADGE and who come both sessions, we have an “advanced” Pre-Camp certificate specializing in new strokes, cleaning up old strokes, and identifying safety and pool rules.

**SPECIAL BADGE – TURTLE BADGE** for campers who are not ready to earn any of the above badges. This is awarded for a great attitude and a willingness to get in the water. We feel it is important to recognize those campers who are hesitant in the water and give them this badge for special encouragement.

We also have days at the pool where we teach children basic safety skills and pool safety. We focus on preventing accidents. The techniques are very basic, but we feel it is important to create awareness around pool safety for all children.

## **PRE-CAMP EQUESTRIAN PROGRAM & BADGES**



Many of you will hear your children talk about our horses at camp and a little about what the campers do with the riding time. We are very proud of our equestrian program at Pre-Camp. The children, though young and small, are capable of acquiring many valuable equestrian skills such as balance and self-confidence. Similar to the pool program, the horse program has a badge system based on distinct skills demonstrated by your camper. Campers who come Mon-Wed-Fri or Tue-Thu will ride twice a week and camper who come every day will ride four times a week.

### **BADGE #1 – PONY**

1. Know and demonstrate the proper way to mount the horse.
2. Know and demonstrate the proper way to dismount the horse.
3. Know the name of what you sit on (pad)
4. Know the name of what you hold to control the horse (reins).
5. Demonstrate how to make the horse go and stop.
6. Demonstrate neck-reining.
7. Demonstrate the proper way to go up and down hills (with the counselor mounted also).

### **BADGE #2 – WRANGLER**

1. Ride alone, starting and stopping at designated points.
2. Do balance exercises on the horse - at a walk; arms out, arms overhead, twist, and touch your toes.
3. Brush and comb the horse

### **BADGE #3 – HORSESHOE**

1. Name the major parts of the horse (ears, nose, nostrils, eyes, neck, mane, tail, forelock, back, belly, barrel, hoof).
2. Lead the horse with counselor assistance
3. Pick up front hoof with counselor assistance

### **BADGE #4 – LONE RANGER**

1. Identify the major colors of horses (bay, chestnut, grey, black, palomino, pinto, roan).
2. Identify a walk, trot, and canter by watching these demonstrated.
3. Go on an obstacle course.
4. Go on a trail ride.
5. Know the names of most the horses.

By the time our campers become LONE RANGERS, they are quite knowledgeable and skilled. Please encourage your children. They gain so much through the challenges that are put before them and through the sense of accomplishment in meeting these challenges. We are SUPER proud of all our campers for participating in our horseback riding program.

## **SUMMER DAY CAMP & TSC TOO SWIM PROGRAM & BADGES**

Our campers swim every day and have lessons every day except Fridays. Campers have instruction first (approximately 20 -25 minutes and then free swim (approximately 10 – 15 minutes). Each session we have a water carnival where the campers participate in games and races. It is one of the highlights of the summer.

There are two ingredients in our Swim Program that we believe are essential. First is safety and second is well organized and individualized instruction. Teaching swimming skills effectively depends on motivation and positive encouragement. Our Swim Staff will give the utmost in motivation and encouragement, but we need your help at home, too. Our swim program is based on American Red Cross achievement skills. When your camper comes home exuberant over mastering the elementary backstroke, know that he/she has accomplished a lot and is working hard. Campers can choose to earn badges at the pool for swimming laps during Free Swim. Each consecutive badge corresponds to a higher number of laps. The laps are cumulative over the course of the session.

## **SUMMER DAY CAMP & TSC TOO EQUESTRIAN PROGRAM & BADGES**

Horseback riding is often a favorite activity of our campers! Campers ride horses 1-4 times a week based on the number of days they attend. Campers often have a favorite horse, yet our program is designed for campers to ride different horses daily, resulting in having a handful of favorite horses.

Campers learn and practice horsemanship skills when they ride. Starting with the **Pony Express Badge** for demonstrating 3 skills, badges are proof campers have learned and can demonstrate these skills to

our wranglers. After the Pony Express is the **Preakness Badge** for 6 skills learned, the **Belmont Badge** for 10 skills learned, the **Kentucky Derby Badge** for 15 skills learned, and the **Grand National Badge** for demonstrating all the skills we assess. Learning and growing horseback riding skills with our caring wranglers by their side, helps campers to gain confidence and grit and feel proud once they have mastered the skills and earned a badge.

Tom Sawyer's riding program is designed to provide campers with basic riding skills and develop a comfort and a confidence with large animals. Our horses are carefully selected for their good character and patience. Our experience and caring Wranglers (horse counselors) teach campers about the size and power of horses and how to interact with them respectfully. TSC's program teaches riding skills that focus on safety, entry level proficiency, and fun. As competence develops, campers may participate in exciting and innovative games on horseback or go on trail rides with their group across the "desert". Just like our aquatics program, as campers earn badges by learning new skills and demonstrating skills such as steering, stopping, starting and much more.

TSC Wranglers supervise and mentor each rider, walking alongside the horses as they ride. Many of our wranglers have their own horses, are experienced riders and are comfortable teaching children equine skills. Most of our staff have come through the Tom Sawyer program and are familiar with our herd, lifelong skills like confidence, patience and responsibility.

Riding, like many other sports, has certain inherent risks. Tom Sawyer gives campers the greatest possible protection by teaching them proper behavior around a horse in addition to riding techniques. We also ride with bareback pads, which give campers more of a "feel" for the movement of the horse.

**Campers are required to wear helmets. These are supplied by camp when riding. All campers must wear closed toe shoes. Campers will not be allowed to ride if they are not wearing closed toe shoes.**

## **OUTPOST**

Outpost is our adventure program for 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade campers that promotes cooperation through active relationships with peers, staff, and the outdoors. It is designed to give each camper an experience that he or she might not receive at school or at home and to encourage the exploration of new possibilities through personal and group efforts and successes. The program builds on the older camper's desire for more varied, challenging activity while maintaining the sense of group belonging that is a cornerstone of the TSC experience. Outpost's special activities include rock-climbing, windsurfing, stand up paddle boarding, kayaking, ropes course, team-building exercises, and going to the beach.

Each of the Outpost activities is an immersive experience for the campers. Our counselors create a sense of belonging and confidence for the campers in their groups, allowing them to successfully participate in these new challenges.

Outpost campers typically bring backpacks to camp with their lunch and towel and wear their swimsuits under their clothes. Campers will be told what activity they are doing the following day, so they will know what they need to bring for the day (i.e. for rock climbing, campers need to wear longer shorts for the harnesses). TSC is not responsible for any valuables, so please discourage your camper from bringing any expensive items. TSC is also "unplugged", so we strongly discourage campers from bringing any cell phones or other devices.

On the last day of each session we have a potluck BBQ at the beach and may ask campers to contribute a package of hot dogs, chips, or sodas. Sometimes Outpost groups plan special activities (such as pizza lunches at the park) involving a small amount of money that will not exceed \$5. Participation in this is optional; please call the office if you have any concerns.

## **AFTER CAMP HORSE CAMP**

Another horse program for your camper is our After Camp Horse Camp at the OK Corral (Pasadena Equestrian Center – where we keep our horses). This program offers basic horsemanship for campers (8 and older) who love horses and want to devote more time to leaning about and riding our trusty camp steeds.

Campers sign up for a week at a time. The program is from 4-6 pm. Monday through Friday. If your child does not attend camp 5 days per week, he or she will have to be brought to the corral. Space is limited. Parents need to pick up their campers by 6:00pm.

Included in the program are riding lessons, games on horseback, trail rides, and a snack. Campers will also learn how to groom, tack-up, un-tack and put away their favorite horses under the careful supervision of our riding staff. Call for more information.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

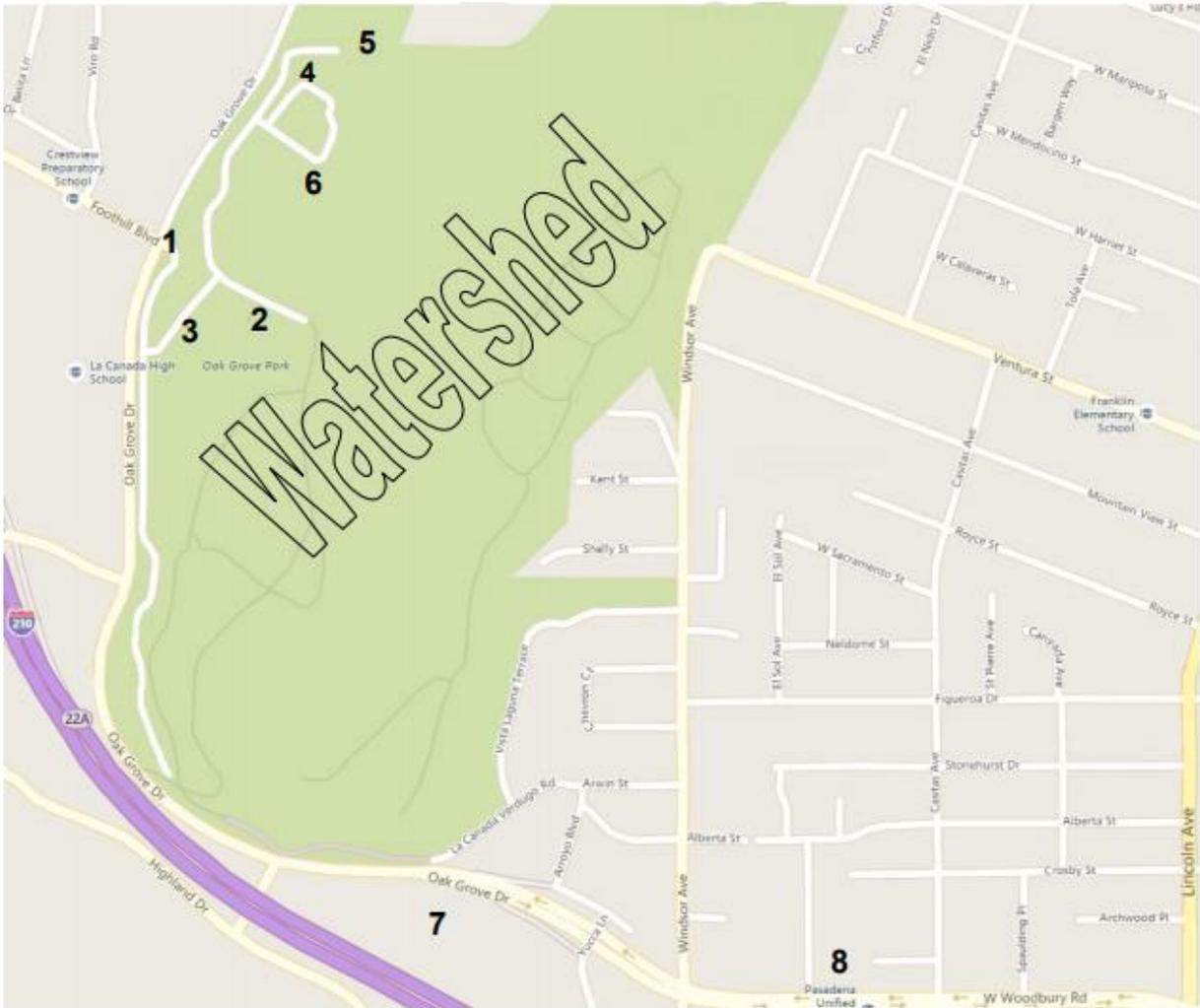
1. Do not send equipment, toys, or anything valuable. Phones and similar devices are not needed in the camp environment. Pets are not allowed during the camp day. Weapons, knives, and other unsafe items (including, but not limited to, alcohol or drugs) are forbidden; possession will result in suspension and/or expulsion from camp.
2. For the most part, money is not needed at camp. Occasionally, your camper may want to bring “popsicle money” to treat his/her group to popsicles. Typically, \$5 (more than plenty) will buy popsicles for the group. This is completely optional. As an alternative to sending money, we encourage parents in the true Tom Sawyer spirit, to send a watermelon for the group.
3. **Pictures** are taken once each session. If your camper is absent, he/she will not be in the picture. The camper will, however, receive a picture of his group with his friends and counselors.
4. **Unfortunately, no make-up days can be given for any reason.**
5. Campers may not bring guests to camp with them; unfortunately, we do not have extra seatbelts and/or space.
6. We sometimes leave camp during the day to visit other local hiking spots like JPL Pools, Eaton Canyon, or other nearby areas, where we can hike and explore our local mountains. We are unable to notify parents in advance that their child might be out-of-camp, therefore, please let call our office a day in advance if you want to pick up your child early from camp.
7. Our staff apply sunscreen on the campers at least once a day, either in the morning or immediately after swimming. We strongly recommend that you apply it at home in the morning, especially on the areas (such as the back) which will be covered by the camper’s shirt but exposed by the swimsuit, since our counselors do not apply sunscreen to these areas (however, we will help campers to do so for themselves).
8. Counselors give campers frequent opportunities to drink water during the day. Each group carries 3 squirt bottles of water with them throughout the day. You may send an additional

disposable bottle which your camper will need to carry. We strongly recommend that your camper drinks plenty of water prior to coming to camp both the night before and the day of.

9. Swimming, horseback riding, archery, and vigorous outdoor and recreational activities are integral parts of the day camp program. Any physical activity, of course, has hazards, but with proper supervision, support and confidence of the parent in any aspect of the program, full benefit cannot be derived by the child as he often times carries the parents' fears. If you do not wish your child to participate in any given activity in the program, we need an email stating you do not want your child to participate in that activity. We hope that one of the reasons you are sending your child to camp is to try new activities like horseback riding; our caring positive staff work with campers at their pace to help them try new things and overcome any fears. We are successful 99% of the time! However, if you still choose to have your child not participate, we are not able to offer an alternate activity during that time you have decided to have your camper opt out (your camper will watch the group during the activity).
10. We understand that parents may need to pick up their child early or drop them off late during camp. We strongly discourage you from doing this; your child may miss out on a favorite activity, a bonding moment with his/her group, or a special activity. If you do need to schedule a doctor's appointment etc., we encourage you to schedule it first thing in the morning (before 9:00) or at the end of the camp day.
11. Tom Sawyer is proud of its traditions, which are built upon a series of vivid and imaginative stories of legends, adventure, mythical creatures and secrets. Many campers regard this folklore as the most wonderful part of camp. However, these stories can occasionally confuse some campers. We train our staff to let campers know in advance that everything we do a camp is safe, supervised, and often make-believe situations. Please call our office to let us know if your camper is having a fearful reaction to anything that may be going on at camp so that we can address the concerns. And of course, if you hear a story that doesn't sit right with you, please call our office.
12. End of Summer Evaluation: TSC will send you an end of summer evaluation link to fill out on your camper(s) experience while at camp. We hope you will take the time to fill this out – your feedback is important to us. And of course, at any time you need to talk to our camp team about and concerns or compliments, you do not need to wait for this eval form. Call our office!
13. In **case of emergency or natural disaster**, TSC will send out text blasts to keep parents updated in a fluid situation. You provided us a cell number upon enrollment. If your cell phone has changed since you originally enrolled, please email our office the new number.
14. We also have an out of area summer camp as an emergency back up (if we are unable to reach via our text blasts). Tom Sawyer Camps has arranged with Outpost Summer Camps in San Diego as our out of area contact to take messages for us. If you whatever reason you cannot reach our camp office, call (858) 842-4900.

# TOM SAWYER CAMP?

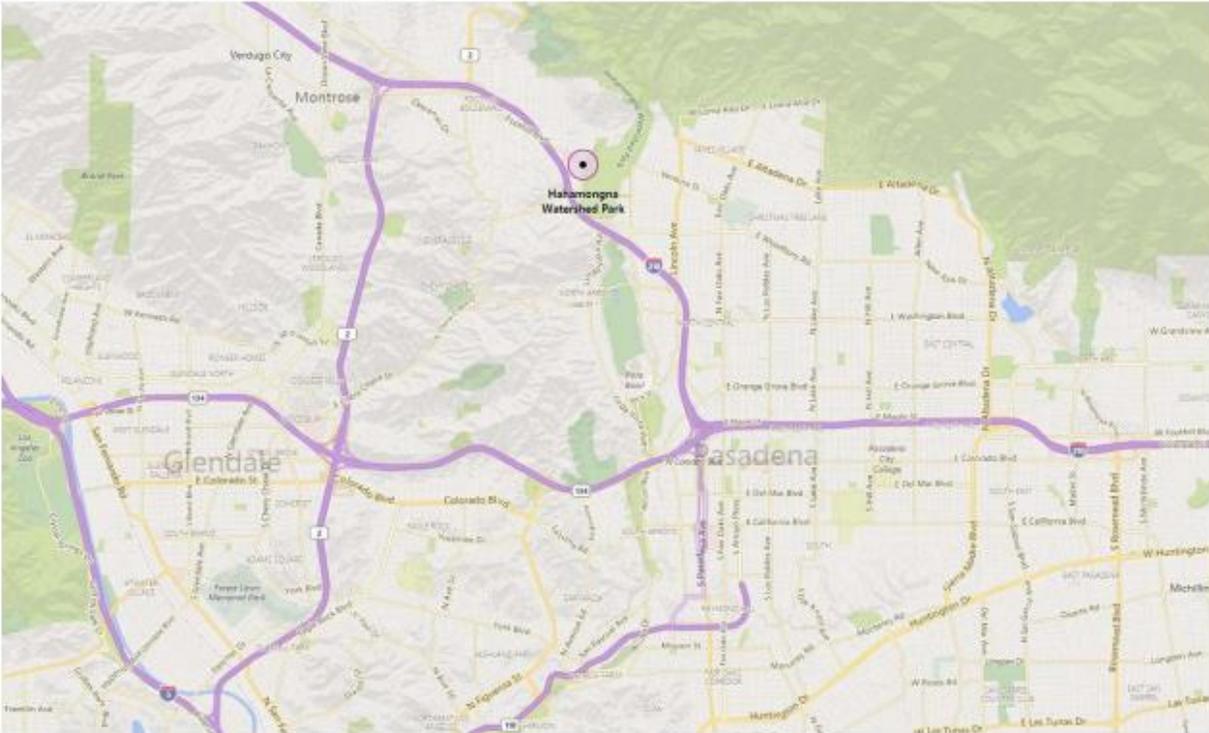
**Summer Camp Park Map**  
**Hahamongna Watershed Park, 101 Foothill Blvd, La Canada 91011**



<b>1</b>	Hahamongna Park Entrance	<b>5</b>	Arena
<b>2</b>	Main Parking Lot, Backstop, AM Extended	<b>6</b>	Archery, Challenge Course, Corral, After Camp Horse Camp
<b>3</b>	TSC <sup>TOO!</sup> , SDC, OP Logs/Flagpole	<b>7</b>	High Ropes Course
<b>4</b>	PreCamp, PM Extended	<b>8</b>	TSC Office

# TOM SAWYER CAMP?

**Summer Camp Park Directions**  
Hahamongna Watershed Park, 101 Foothill Blvd, La Canada 91011



## **From the 210 Freeway:**

- Exit Berkshire Ave/Oak Grove Dr
- Turn East
- Left on Oak Grove Dr (1<sup>st</sup> Stop Light)
- Right at Foothill Blvd into Park Entrance (2<sup>nd</sup> Stop Light)

## **Link for Online View/Directions (Opens Google Maps)**

- <https://goo.gl/x9MtVw>