



Safety and Risk Management Practices

The well-being of all participants and staff is our first priority and a guiding principle of our programs. NatureBridge takes a conservative approach to outdoor education programming; we do not do ropes courses, climbing activities or wilderness survival. NatureBridge focuses on education and group-building in a natural environment but does so without putting students and teachers in more extreme situations.

We create a culture of risk management awareness at all levels of our organization through education and training. We include your school as part of this when you arrive on site for the program. The following is a list of some of our key risk management practices:

- NatureBridge educators in California, Washington and Virginia are required to hold a Wilderness First Responder (WFR) or Wilderness First Aid (WFA) certification through nationally recognized curriculums such as NOLS Wilderness Medicine. The 80-hour WFR curriculum includes standards for urban and extended care situations in the outdoors. CPR certification is also a requirement for this course and employment with NatureBridge as an educator.
- NatureBridge staff undergo background checks that are cleared through state and federal databases prior to working with children.
- NatureBridge has a strict policy that prevents any staff from being alone with a student, except in the case of an emergency.
- NatureBridge educators are trained in epinephrine auto-injector use in compliance with state regulations for California, Washington and Virginia. Each educator is required to carry epinephrine in the field for use during an anaphylactic emergency.
- NatureBridge educators have current and clear tuberculosis test on file.
- NatureBridge educators are college graduates and/or have years of prior experience in outdoor and environmental education.
- NatureBridge staff participate in annual risk management training with scenario based drills and large scale emergency response practice.
- NatureBridge has been a park partner with the National Park Service since 1971 and has 24-hour access to park law enforcement and emergency medical services, utilizing park service radio frequencies.
- NatureBridge employs a full-time Director of Risk Management to oversee a standard risk management program across all campuses, including standardized emergency response protocols.

Student Supervision Guidelines

We take student supervision very seriously as a component of risk management. Each learning group will have at least one NatureBridge staff member and one to two school chaperones accompanying the group at all times. Learning group sizes are limited to 12-15 students in an effort to optimize group management and safety. Each sleeping cabin has adult chaperone or teacher supervision throughout the night and there is a NatureBridge administrative staff member available 24 hours a day. Emergency Medical Services, fire department and law enforcement are available at all times.

If you have further questions regarding the risk management and safety practices of NatureBridge programs, please do not hesitate to contact Jeff Crow, NatureBridge Director of Risk Management at jcrow@naturebridge.org.