



BR Guide

WHAT EVERY BR FAMILY SHOULD KNOW!

This guide will introduce you to BR programs and traditions and help you get organized for the busy time ahead. It should also eliminate some of the anxiety both parents and campers sometimes feel in anticipation and get everyone excited about the wonderful experiences camp can provide.

Camp is going to be a special time for your camper. She will meet new people, learn new things, be more independent and have a blast! So Be sure to talk about all the positive aspects of camp and prepare for the time away together. Campers should read this guide with you, be involved in packing and choosing items for the BR experience.

The BR staff are here to help you. If you have questions while preparing for camp, do not hesitate to call us. Once your camper is at camp, remember that our most important job is to ensure that she is safe and having fun. To do that, we need to focus on leading and supervising the program. It is a very busy time for all of us. You may leave a message with the office. We will return your call ASAP because, we do care about your camper and her family at home!

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CAMP INFORMATION

MOTTO:

Be Safe & Have Fun!

MISSION:

The mission of the Black River Farm and Ranch is to provide a safe atmosphere where young girls ages 7-15 can have a great time riding horses and enjoying the other activities provided in a stress free environment.

HISTORY OF THE BR:

Since childhood, Lois Donovan "Mrs. D" had a dream that she would have a place where girls could come to learn to ride and to be around horses and farm animals. Her dream became a reality in 1962 when Mr. & Mrs. D purchased an old potato farm in Croswell, MI. They were living in Birmingham at the time and chose the location because it was within driving distance from the Detroit area and still secluded from the hustle and bustle of the city.

That summer Black River Farm and Ranch opened its doors. The D's had managed in very short time to build two cabins (now part of Virginia City) and a dining hall (what we now know as Silver City). The first two cabin names were Pioneers and Trailblazers. That first year the BR had 16 campers, 4 staff members, and 7 horses.

Mr. D and his son-in-law, Mr.C were very close. They opened and operated a manufacturing business together in the 1970's. Mr. D eventually sold off his portion of the business to Mr. C who continued to grow the operation. When Mr. D became ill in 2000, he asked his daughter and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. C, to help manage the camp. When Mr. D passed away that same year, Mrs. D and the C's ran the camp together. Eventually Mrs. D did less of the daily management of the BR, but continued to love her time at the ranch with her family and the BR girls. The camp that she worked so hard to create was truly her pride and joy. Mrs. D passed away in 2015.

Today the C's and their children proudly manage and operate the BR together. Mr. C oversees the grounds and maintenance, while his daughters manage the program and its staff. This third generation of women work hard to honor their grandmother's traditions and maintain her vision of the ideal horse camp for girls. For more than a half century the BR has expanded and improved its program and facilities while holding on to the traditions and values that make it so special.

For more than a half century the BR has continued to expand and improve its program and facilities. Our staff continues to pass on the joy of camping and horsemanship to girls and our camp and program continues to evolve.

Black River is licensed by the State of Michigan
Inspected by the Sanilac County Health Department
Accredited by Camp Horsemanship Association
Accredited by American Camping Association

Black River Farm and Ranch
5040 Sheridan Line Road, Croswell, MI 48422
810-679-2505



INCOMING DAY

Sunday – 2:30 pm to 4:00 pm

This day is a wonderful opportunity to see your camper's cabin and meet her counselors. However, we need everyone to follow the same procedures.

- Parking gates will be opened at 1:30 pm.(Please try not to arrive before 1:30 pm). Lexington is a town nearby on the lake that has some great spots for lunch. Or you can visit the World Famous Swinging Bridge in Croswell if you are worried about travel time and arrive early.
- At 2:00 pm staff will be in the parking lot to assist with baggage.
- Check-in begins at 2:30 pm
- Camper must be present for check-in. It is State Law that we do a camper health screening. Cabin assignments are given after the screening and you can go to the cabin as a family to claim your bunk.
- Bunks cannot be reserved in advance, nor can they be chosen until after you have checked in. We will try to accommodate a bottom bunk request if it is made in advance. Campers who are staying over from a previous session do get first pick.
- Parents, we ask that you say “goodbye” and leave camp no later than 4:15 pm so that we can begin our safety orientations.
- Activities will be open throughout the day. Only registered campers will be able to use the waterfront activities.
- Parents are responsible for any children (non-campers) they bring with them. Please supervise them carefully.
- Please know that BR has many dogs on property. These dogs live here and may be running around.
- Be aware that GPS and Mapping programs can give you incorrect directions to camp. Please use the directions from our website. The BR is on the East side of the Black River.

What you need at Check-in:

- **All Medications** – Prescription and OTC must be with you at check-in. Medication must be in its original container or packaging, labeled with camper's name, and dosage information. We cannot dispense medication that is not in compliance with these State regulations. Please refer to the Medication Section of this guide if you are bringing medication to camp.
- Campers may not check into camp without a health history, completed on-line and a current camp physical. Both should be submitted to the camp office by June 1st.

HORSE SHOW DAY
SATURDAY - 11:00 am to 1:00 pm
** except starter camp session's horseshow is @ 3:00 pm*

The Horse Show is a wonderful opportunity to see what your camper has learned at camp, meet her cabinmates, riding group friends, and talk with her counselors. However, we need everyone to follow the same procedures.

The Horse Show Parade will begin at 11:00 am sharp
All campers are in the opening Parade

Before the Show:

- Gates for parking will be opened at 10 am.
- The show will last about 1.5 hours.
- There is a short walk to the show ring. We are able to transport family members who need assistance to the show ring. Please find a BR staff person and ask for assistance.
- If you would like to sit during the show you may bring a chair to setup along the horseshow ring.
- Please do not try to gather luggage until after the show. When unloading be respectful of other campers' things. Remember bags will not come home as neatly as they arrived. You may have more items to claim like laundry bags and towels. Before you leave camp ask your camper to look and make sure she has everything.
- Campers will not be able to leave the barn area to say hello before or during the show. This is so that they are prepared for their part in the show. They will be released for check-out following the final performance.

During the show:

- Parents are responsible for all children (non- campers) they bring with them. Please supervise these guests carefully. The playground and the small animals' area require extra supervision. Waterfront, trampoline area and tree climbing is off-limits.
- Dogs are not welcome near the Horse Show ring. Barking may disturb the girls or horses during the show and could cause an accident. Please keep dogs away from the show area. Please know that BR has many dogs on property. These dogs live here and may be running around, but they do not threaten the horses.

After the show check-out procedure:

- Check-out will be immediately following the show – In the Central Park area.
- Parents or authorized persons must be at check-out to sign out
- **All Medications** – are picked up at check-out
- **Cash or Check** can be used to pay Treat Store bills. We do not accept Credit Cards for Treat Store accounts.

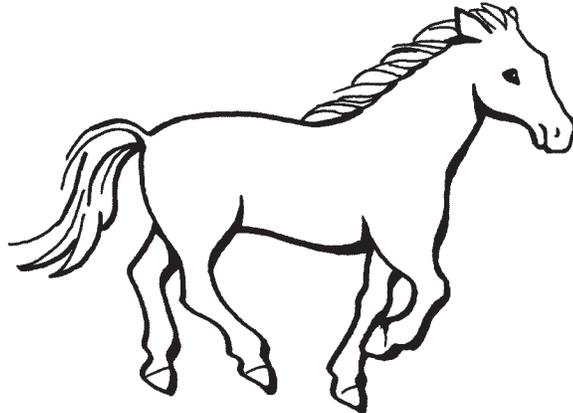
STARTER CAMP SESSION INFORMATION

INCOMING DAY **SUNDAY – 2:30 pm to 4:00 pm**

- Check-in will be the same as the procedures for all sessions.
- Things to Bring List – this list is a recommendation for a one-week session, please adjust for your shortened stay.
- Mail - Due to the short stay at camp it is important to mail letters before the girls arrive at camp or drop off some letters at arrival. You can bring cards, letters, or packages labeled with the date for delivery to check-in, we will deliver them on the assigned day.
- Our daily schedule and activities are the same as any other session.

Horse Show will be Wednesday at 3:00 pm

The time and format of the horse show for starter camp are unique in an effort to accommodate more riding time for the girls. The girls will ride in a demonstration with their instructor so that you can see more of what they have learned. You can expect to be checked out by 5:30 pm.



MAP TO CAMP



Directions from Port Huron, MI to Black River Farm and Ranch:

1. I-94 to Port Huron, exit 275 to the right.
2. Follow signs for Lexington.
3. Take a left (north) at the first light onto M25 or Lakeshore (same road)
4. Continue north through Port Huron heading towards Lexington
5. Take a left (west) at the first stop light in Lexington onto M90 or Peck Road (same road). Travel 3 miles.
6. Take a left (south) onto Wildcat Road. Travel 1 mile.
7. Take a right (west) onto Sheridan Line Road.
8. Travel approx. 1.5 miles straight ahead until you arrive at the BR.

More directions are available on the website.

Important Message for GPS users: Please be aware if you are using a GPS navigation system it will give you directions that take you to Sheridan Line, but on the wrong side of the river. The BR is on the East Side of the Black River. You cannot access our side of Sheridan Line Road from Black River Road. If this happens to you, go to the McDonald's in Croswell. Head east on M90. Turn right onto Wildcat Road and follow directions above.

Please use the directions above or try entering the **street address as 5100 Sheridan Line Road.** That will get you very close to camp and you will see our signs.

Staff are not available to answer the phone in the office on incoming and horse show days to help with directions. Please keep these directions handy when you are driving to camp.

ACCOMMODATIONS NEAR CAMP

Parents driving from around the Thumb Area can easily make the round trip to camp in one day. For visitors traveling from out of the area who wish to stay locally, there are a handful of great Inns and B&B's in Lexington. Reservations should be made in advance, since availability is very limited during the summer.

The Croswell-Lexington Chamber of Commerce is also a helpful resource.
www.cros-lex-chamber.com

Hotel near Camp:

Lakeview Hills Golf and Conference Center
6560 E. Peck Rd. Lexington, MI 48450
Phone: 810-359-7333
www.lakeviewhills.com

City Name

Cabin Name

Silver City

Trail riders
Trailblazers
Wranglers

Virginia City

Settlers
Drovers
Rangers
Cowpokes

Carson City

Rustlers
Prospectors
Broncbusters
Homesteaders

Dodge City

Buckaroos
Pioneers
Roughriders
Golddiggers

CABIN PLACEMENTS

The BR has 4 bunkhouses called cities. There are three or four cabins inside each bunkhouse of 8-12 girls. All the cabins in the bunkhouse share bathroom facilities.

Campers are assigned to cabins by age, cabin requests, and grade.

We do our best to accommodate all cabin requests (each camper is allowed 2 requests). However, we cannot guarantee the requests.

The ages in each cabin will depend on the session. We start with the youngest and work our way up. Campers will not necessarily move up a cabin every year. During their years at BR they may go up, stay the same, or go down, but whatever cabin they are in it will be with other girls their age or grade.

We do our best to honor as many requests as possible. Please remember, we have each individual camper's best interest in mind and are committed to providing every camper a "good fit" and positive cabin experience.

Cabin placements are not given out prior to camp.

PREPARING FOR CAMP

Black River Farm and Ranch is A LOT of FUN!!! However, for some first-time campers, spending time away from home is a major step.

“The cornerstone of homesickness prevention is parents’ attitudes. When parents express confidence, optimism, and a positive attitude about camp, children follow their lead.

It’s normal for children to ask, in the months prior to opening day, “What if I feel homesick at camp?” Sadly, many well-intentioned parents provide an answer that virtually guarantees intense homesickness. “If you feel homesick,” they say, “I’ll come and get you.” This is what camp professionals regrettably refer to as “The Pick-Up Deal.”

The tragedy of “The Pick-Up Deal” is how it undermines children’s confidence in themselves and gives them something about which to be preoccupied. When you think about it, the subtext of the promise “If you feel homesick, I’ll come and get you” is basically “I have so little confidence in your ability to cope with these feelings that I think the only solution is for me to come and rescue you.” In *The Secret Ingredients of Summer Camp Success*, you’ll learn the best way to respond to children’s questions and concerns about staying at camp. You’ll also learn the best ways to reply to a homesick letter, the best homesickness preparation tips, and the best ways to provide parenting from afar.”

Chris Thurber www.CampSpirit.com 2008

The key to success is preparation! Here are some suggestions to help your camper adjust to the camp experience:

- **Start early preparing your child for the idea of being away from home.** Find out what her expectations are and what seems a bit scary. Teach coping strategies for when she is away. Provide reassurance and encouragement. Ensure you are not projecting your anxiety on them.
- **Stress the positive aspects of the upcoming session.** Remember, children learn about coping skills related to separation from home through experiences such as camp.
- **Practice Away From Home Skills**, such as letter writing, talking with other adults, hugging a teddy bear at night, and using a flashlight. Nothing builds confidence and teaches a child how to cope with time away from home better than...(you guessed it)...time away from home. That weekend at your folks’ will do wonders for her ability to adjust. If possible, have her practice spending the night away from home with no phone contact in smaller increments of time.
- **Allow your child time to adjust to the new situation.** The first letter or two you receive (which may have been written the very first evening) may sound hesitant about the camp experience. We find that campers are quickly consumed by the activities and opportunities and forget their first and second day worries.

PREPARING FOR CAMP continued...

- **Send your child mail.** Mail is delivered daily and it is very exciting for campers to receive a letter or postcard from home. Be positive in your message. For example; try not to mention how lonesome you are without them, instead write about how exciting camp must be.
- **Don't make a "pick-up deal."**
- **Pack for camp together.** Allow your camper to help pack her own things. Campers need to have a perceived level of control when entering into a new situation. Simple things like picking out her clothes and going to the drug store to buy soap and goodies for camp can help her feel comfortable with the transition.
- **Double-check the opening and closing dates and times.** Start camp off on a smooth note by arriving on time and on the right day. Use a wall calendar in the months prior to opening day to make an exciting count-down to the big day.

These ideas are gathered from many different sources including the teachings of Bob Ditter and Chris Thurber both talented psychologists who specialize in children and camping. Chris Thurber has a great DVD titled The Secret Ingredients of Summer Camp Success you can purchase it at www.CampSpirit.com and the The Summer Camp Handbook available free online at www.SummerCampHandbook.com

TIPS FOR CAMPERS

- Talk to your parents and friends about camp. Share your ideas about what you expect from camp and ask them about their experiences at camp.
- Help pack your things for camp. Make sure you remember everything on the list.
- Label all your belongings; it's the best way to avoid losing things. Leave expensive things at home.
- Leave your electronics at home. Not only are they not allowed at camp... it's time to unplug and make new friends.
- Tell your parents you will be fine. Sometimes parents worry a lot. Remember to give them a big hug on the first day of camp and remind them that you will write.
- Pack some pre-stamped, pre-addressed envelopes, along with paper and pens. Parents and family love to get mail and the more you write, the more you'll get back. Put all your stationery stuff in a zippered bag so it stays together.
- Visit the camp website, it may have all the answers to your questions.

THINGS TO BRING AND CLOTHING LIST:

Required Items:

1. **Riding Helmet** - ASTM/ SEI certified (*available at BR for purchase or rental the day of arrival*)
2. **Riding Boots** - Western or English (*Arizona Saddlery offers a BR discount, call us for coupon*)
3. **Tennis shoes** for vaulting

THIS LIST IS BASED ON A 1 WEEK STAY

* These are suggestions. **You know your camper

CLOTHING

Riding Wear:

- 7 pr. tall socks for boots
- 7 T-shirts or tops for riding
- 4 pr. jeans or pants for riding

Non-Barn Wear:

- 7 pr. underwear
- 4-7 pajamas
- 5 pr. shorts
- 7 T-shirts or tops
- 1 disposable outfit for messy games
- 2 sweatshirts
- 1 long sleeve T-shirt
- 2 bathing suits
- 1 raincoat or poncho
- Hat for sun protection
- 1 pr. sneakers
- 1 pr. thongs or sandals
- Optional- rain boots
- Casual dress outfit for "dress up dinner"

MISCELLANEOUS

- 1 large laundry bag
- 1 pool towel
- 1 flashlight
- Camera (optional)
- Stationery, stamps, pens
- Pre-addressed stamped envelopes

TOILETRIES (Please label clearly)

- 1 toiletry bag or box
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Deodorant
- 1 plastic drinking cup
- Soap
- Shampoo
- Comb or brush
- Bug Spray
- Sunscreen
- Tissues

LINENS

- 1 pillow
- 2 pillowcases
- 1 light blanket
- 1 sleeping bag
- 2 flat sheets
- 2 fitted sheets
- 1 mattress pad, optional
- 4 bath towels
- 2 wash cloths

NOT PERMITTED

- **Cell phones or any device with gaming or cellular capabilities. i.e. No smart phones or tablets with or without SIM cards.**
- **Food, Candy, Pets**
- **Weapons, Tobacco, Drugs, Alcohol**

- **LABEL ALL BELONGINGS:** Things will be lost at camp. That is the nature of group living. We can eliminate much of this if ALL items are labeled. We will return any lost and found with a name in it so please label anything you would like returned to you.
- **DO NOT PACK MEDICATION:** It must be turned in at check-in
- **DO NOT SEND EXPENSIVE ITEMS:** Clothing and items such as MP3's can be damaged or lost. personal sports equipment is not necessary at camp with the exception of riding helmet, attire, and boots. All other sports equipment is not permitted at BR unless special arrangements have been made to store it for appropriate use.

Items that are not permitted will be taken to the office and returned at check-out. Campers will be asked to turn them in the first night and after that if items are discovered it will be considered a violation of the conduct code.

LABELING BELONGINGS

Please ensure that your camper's name (first and last) is on everything she brings to camp - clothing, shoes, towels, sports equipment, sleeping bags, cameras, flashlights, etc. Use either a permanent marker or name tapes.

Please contact these companies directly if you are interested in name labels.

Stuck on You – (888) 236-2800 - www.stuckonyou.biz/

Mabel's Labels – (905) 297-0522 – www.mabel.ca – *Link available on our website*

LUGGAGE

Trunks, suitcases, and duffel bags are acceptable for packing your camper's belongings. Please pack everything into bags and label with your camper's name. Please take into consideration that she must be able to repack her belongings on the last day into the same bags. Each camper will have a large drawer under her bed for storing clothes and a shelf for bathroom items.

Campers are limited to a maximum of 2 bags, which will easily accommodate the required amount of clothing.

EXPENSIVE GEAR

Expensive clothing, cameras and musical instruments are brought to camp at parent's and camper's own risk. We suggest that you arrange insurance coverage on a "Floater Policy" for any costly items. The camp, though taking all reasonable precautions, cannot be held responsible for loss, damage or theft of any camper's belongings in transit or while at camp. Personal sports equipment is not necessary at camp with the exception of riding helmet, attire, and boots. All other sports equipment is not permitted at BR unless special arrangements have been made to store it for appropriate use.

LAUNDRY SERVICE

Laundry service is only provided for campers staying for more than one session. Camp laundry is completed by an outside contracted service and will be billed to your Treat Store account. This service includes washing, drying, folding and returning all articles to camp the next day. Please do not send any clothing that requires delicate laundering as they may not stand up to camp laundering. Be sure that all items are pre-washed prior to camp to avoid shrinkage or dye leakage in our laundry.

LOST AND FOUND

Due to the group living experience, the fast-paced nature of camp and the frequent changing of clothes for different activities, clothing and personal belongings will be misplaced. Every activity area has a "lost and found bin" and clothing is regularly collected by our staff and distributed back to the appropriate persons. Every effort is made to ensure campers go home with everything they came with, but this is often not possible.

LOST AND FOUND continued...

Greater emphasis on routines, cabin cleanliness, and camper responsibilities has reduced this problem and we will continue to fight the battle of missing socks, towels and t-shirts, however, while reasonable care is taken by the camp to keep track of camper clothing, the nature of group living and the rugged active lifestyle at camp makes it certain that clothing WILL BE LOST OR DAMAGED. Parents, please expect this loss and send items that are disposable if possible. The camp CANNOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE for the loss, disappearance or damage of campers' clothing or belongings.

Clothing and personal belongings (that are labeled) and found at camp after campers leave will be collected, laundered and sent to your home within two weeks of the end of the camp season. The items will include a receipt for the shipping fees which we ask that you repay. Your understanding in this matter is appreciated. Items that go unclaimed will be donated to charity at the end of the summer. Labeling your items and contacting us ASAP will result in the best chance of us locating and returning your items.

SPENDING MONEY

Spending money is not needed at camp. The camp will not be responsible for the loss of money or valuables not brought to the office for safe keeping.

COMMUNICATING WITH CAMP

Mailing Address:

Black River Farm and Ranch
5040 Sheridan Line
Crosswell, MI 48422

Phone: (810) 679-2505

Business Email: info@blackriverfarmandranch.com

Website: www.blackriverfarmandranch.com

MAIL

Communication between parents and their children is an important part of camp. Who doesn't love getting mail? Campers are encouraged to write to parents, but not required.

Occasionally letters from camp may seem sad, which may concern you. Parents are encouraged to remember that most campers have a settling in period to camp or may have brief moments of missing home. This, while upsetting, can be a natural part of camp for some children. Many campers, even those that attend each summer, may experience homesickness. Most temporarily unhappy campers bounce back within an hour of mailing the letter and we encourage parents to recognize this. If there is something contained in your child's letter that is of concern to you and you wish to follow up, please call the camp office, we are more than happy to check in on your camper.

MAIL continued...

Mail is dropped off and picked up in Croswell every business day. Mail between Detroit and camp can take 2 to 4 days to reach its destination. Parents are encouraged to write to their children before their arrival at camp to ensure they receive a letter within the first day or two.

Our camp mailing address is:

Black River Farm and Ranch
Your Child's First and Last Name
Cabin Name
5040 Sheridan Line Rd.
Croswell, MI 48422

Cabin assignments will be given at check-in. Once you know this, please include it with your child's name on mail. Cabin assignments are not given out prior to the start of camp. We will label any packages sent before assignments are given.

You can drop off packages and letters for your camper at check-in, just label them with camper's name and date you would like them to be delivered.

We recommended that you send pre-addressed, pre-stamped envelopes with your child.

Although helpful for all ages, campers under 10 particularly benefit from this. We try and check outgoing mail, but often cannot tell who it is going to and who it is from if the address is incomplete. Provide envelopes for yourselves, grandparents, aunts and uncles, friends and anyone else you want your child to write to throughout the session. Campers do get busy with activities and forget to write – busy having fun is good! We encourage them to write home, but do not force them.

PACKAGES

Packages are distributed daily. If service is late in the day, delivery may not happen until the next day. We do not deliver any mail or email on Sundays.

Please limit care packages larger than an envelope to once or twice a session. **Please do not include food or candy.** If food is sent campers must consume it when it's received because it cannot be taken back to the cabin. We ask that they share with the cabin or camp, but what cannot be consumed must be thrown away.

All of the main couriers deliver to camp, including FedEx and UPS. Please do not pay extra to send FedEx or UPS packages for Saturday Delivery, as it is not delivered to us on weekends.

EMAIL

We have contracted with a camp email service. Emails will be downloaded once a day and delivered to your camper at meal time. Although email is quick and efficient there is no substitute for a handwritten letter or card!

There is a fee for email service. The fees charged help cover the cost of the service. We do not make money from the email. If you want to avoid the fees, send letters. Kids like them more anyway.

Please go to the BR webpage for a link to the camper email. Look for the “Camper Email” link on the home page. You will need the code supplied to you in a separate handout to access the email service. Once you register you can continue to use your account information each year. This email account is different than the online registration account.

TELEPHONE

It is a strict camp policy that campers may not call home or receive telephone calls at camp. In addition to being disruptive to the daily routine, our experience has shown that telephone conversations, however well intentioned, tend to bring sadness, tears, and homesickness. The only exception is in the event of a family emergency. Concerned parents of first time campers are welcome to call and find out how their child is doing, but continual updates take time away from our staff’s primary focus. We want our counselors to focus their time and energy relating directly with their campers. We will always notify you if we feel there are issues you should be aware of.

Contacting us after office hours:

In case of an emergency you can reach BR after hours on the Leadership Line. It is a phone that a program director carries after office hours. Please call the office and listen to the voice mailbox prompts to give you the emergency information. This line is for emergency use only and we will only return calls about urgent issues regarding campers currently at camp.

CAMPER CONDUCT

General behavior of campers and staff is expected to be in keeping with the ideals upon which BR was founded. Our mandate includes protecting campers from verbal, mental, sexual and physical abuse from anyone. Any behavior that compromises the well being of any child is not tolerated. Our policies are designed to reinforce these ideals and campers must adhere to the following “Code of Behavior”:

- Bullying and teasing other campers is NOT permitted.
- Swearing is an inappropriate way to communicate and not acceptable.
- All campers must remain in their cabins from camper bedtime until scheduled wake up.
- Campers will attend all scheduled activities.
- Campers are expected to contribute to the cabin community and do what they can to make everyone feel welcome, comfortable, and included.
- Respect for all camp equipment, facilities and property is required of all campers.
- Respect for each other’s property and belongings is common courtesy and also required.
- Staff should be used to help resolve any issues or problems.
- Respect and abide by the No Food policy at camp.
- Campers and staff may not possess, consume or be under the influence of any drugs or alcohol. Smoking is not permitted on camp grounds, by anyone.
- Firearms and weapons are not permitted at camp.

Campers who do not respect this code shall receive a warning, after which, if the behavior does not improve, parents will be notified. If the camper continues to be a disruption to camp and the enjoyment of camp by others, she may be asked to leave.

Campers who breach our policy regarding drugs, alcohol, smoking, or weapons will be asked to leave camp immediately.

Black River Farm and Ranch reserves the right to dismiss from camp any camper whose conduct proves to be detrimental to the welfare of others.

Dismissal from camp due to camper conduct will not receive a refund of any fees.

** Black River Farm & Ranch is an invitation only camp. Your poor conduct could result in not be allowed back at camp.*

CAMP POLICIES

FIRE SAFETY

As a safety precaution we must limit the amount of electrical devices and appliances campers bring to camp. Our rule is that each cabin may have only three electrical devices plugged in at a time. Fans are permitted but only those that are battery powered. Hair dryers, flat irons, and other hair styling devices can only be used in the bathrooms.

Each cabin is equipped with a smoke detector and a fire extinguisher. Both of these must be respected as safety devices and never considered toys to be played with. Therefore fire extinguishers cannot be touched and batteries cannot be removed from smoke detectors.

Finally, the buildings at camp are also equipped with a sophisticated fire safety system linked directly to 911 and the alarm company. These fire alarms are not to be played with. Pulling the fire alarm as a prank is cause for automatic dismissal.

EMERGENCY CONTACT POLICY

In the event of an incident or medical emergency at camp concerning your child we will try to contact you in the following order:

1. One or both parents at home, work or cell.
2. Person listed as emergency contact.

We will make every effort to contact you or your alternate contact person, but if we are unable to reach you, the Camp Director will act on your behalf. If we are contacting you and it is NOT an emergency (i.e. behavioral concerns, medical update) we will leave a message or call again. Please don't be alarmed if you see our phone number on your call display or hear our voices on your answering machine. Sometimes phone calls are made for non-emergency issues.

LEAVING CAMP

Campers may NOT leave camp for any reason without permission from the Camp Director. "Special Occasions" must be arranged prior to the start of camp and are subject to the Director's approval. Fees will not be adjusted for any time spent away from camp during the session.

Campers leaving camp must have a parent pick them up and sign them out when leaving camp. Sign out will take place in the office because parents are not allowed on camp property during a session for the safety of all campers.

VISITORS

Our camp entrance and grounds are monitored by security personnel and staff 24 hours a day. No unauthorized visits are permitted. Please, be sure all family and friends are aware of this policy. It is for our campers' and staff's safety. All visitors must sign-in at the office.

For first-time campers, appointments can be made to see the camp during the summer, prior to your session. Please call the office to arrange.

NO FOOD POLICY

Black River Farm and Ranch has a no food in the cabins policy for all campers. Prior to this policy food caused significant problems including: attraction of bugs and animals in the cabin, allergy concerns, and cabin cleanliness.

In addition to three meals a day (all you can eat!), campers receive a daily mid-afternoon snack, and afternoon and bedtime treats at the Treat Store. Do not send or bring food of any kind. Your camper does not need extra snacks. We request that parents support this important policy.

GENERAL STORE POLICIES

The BR has a General Store on property (also known as Treat Store). It has items for sale such as: snacks, drinks, t-shirts, sweatshirts, novelty items, travel size toiletries, and more.

We limit the campers to 1 food item and 1 drink item per visit. We ask you to go through the novelty section with them on incoming day so that they are aware of what they can and cannot buy.

Each camper has an account in the General Store and they can charge items as they go. Campers are responsible for making the choices as to what they can have when they are in the store. Accounts are paid in full with cash or check during check out. Therefore, campers must practice making choices and being responsible. If you have certain rules you would like her to follow, please go over those with her on incoming day.

CANCELATION POLICY

Mother Daughter Retreat & Black River Summer Camp Refund Policy:

- All deposits and tuition are fully refundable until April 30th.
- After May 1st deposits are no longer refundable.
- After June 1st deposits and tuition are non-refundable. Deposit and tuition payments may be transferred to a new session in the current season if available.
- Within two weeks of the session start date deposits and tuition monies are not refundable or transferable.
- Cancellation due to injury/illness (with a physician's note) can be rolled over to another session for the current season or for the next year.

The Black River Farm and Ranch recommends insuring your camp tuition. Although there are many options, we recommend insuretuition.com.

MEDICAL CARE

PERSONNEL

The BR Infirmary or Health Center is staffed around the clock by Certified Health Officers. Our camp doctor is located one mile from camp. We use Port Huron Hospitals when possible and, if necessary, Sandusky Hospital.

Please know that the staff at Black River Farm and Ranch is not trained to deal with severe medical or behavioral issues. For your camper's safety, you must call the camp office prior to camp to discuss any medical or behavioral issues that may require special attention to ensure that we will be able to properly care for her.

MEDICATION

All medication (prescriptions, inhalers, allergy serums, vitamins, and OTC medicine) must be brought with you to check-in and given to our camp Health Director. Special medications must be supplied in adequate quantities. All medication must be provided in its original bottle or package - our Infirmary staff cannot dispense it otherwise. Please put all medicines in a zippered baggie or container labeled with camper's first and last name.

Inhalers need dosing instructions – keep the pharmacy packaging.

Any medication brought to camp must be kept in the Infirmary. The only exception to this rule applies to campers who have medications that require immediate, possibly life saving dispensing, including asthma inhalers and Epi-pens. These campers must bring a “hip pack” or other means to enable them to carry their meds at all times on their person.

If your child is on medication that requires strict observance, any breach of which would have serious health consequences, you must discuss the details with the Health Directors prior to arrival.

MEDICATION DISPENSED IN THE INFIRMARY

Our Infirmary stocks OTC (over the counter) medications and remedies. The health care staff has standing orders from the Camp Physician which direct the use of these medications for common or routine health problems.

Please review page 4 of the health form for a list of medications we stock and dispense. These are the only medications the Infirmary can dispense other than medication brought from home. We are authorized to use the brand name or generic versions of these medications.

You may provide different medications that you would like us to administer.

HEALTH FORM

The camper Health Forms must be fully completed every year (this is in compliance with State of Michigan and ACA regulations). **These forms are due by June 1st.**

Your copy of the **Camp Physical Form**, must be completed by a doctor. If you need an extension due to the timing of the physical please let us know when we can expect to receive it. At a minimum, it must be received 1 month in advance. We ask you to keep a copy for your records, just in case.

Camper Health History is to be completed on line in the registration portal. Immunization history and health insurance information are required.

Campers cannot be checked into camp without a completed health history & physical.

CAMPER ILLNESS AND NOTIFYING PARENTS

Campers with routine complaints go to the Infirmary to be checked after breakfast, lunch, or dinner every day during Infirmary hours. Campers with mild fever, upset stomach or persistent colds will be admitted to the Infirmary to rest and recuperate. When the camper rests and returns to activity, we do not normally advise parents of the “illness”.

However, parents will be notified (via telephone) by the attending Health Officer regarding the health of a camper in the following circumstances:

- The camper is transported off camp property for special diagnostic tests/services (i.e. x-rays, dental appointments) or therapeutic management of injuries/illness requiring emergency treatment (i.e. Doctor’s Office, Hospital & dental emergencies).
- If the camper is admitted to the Infirmary overnight or a protracted illness is evident.

In any of the situations listed above, if the parent cannot be contacted initially, attempts will continue to be made to notify parents/emergency contacts of the clinical situation (refer to our Emergency Policy for further details).

Campers must be sent home for contagious issues such as:

- Lice
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye or pinkeye)
- Any other illnesses, rashes, viruses, etc. that are contagious

Campers can return to camp when well as long as their doctor and our camp doctor feel it is safe for them to return to the program. To return to camp they must have a doctor’s note allowing them to return to the program.

HEAD LICE POLICY

Head lice have reappeared over the past few years in schools, camps, and workplaces across the U.S. This is a national issue that is discussed and addressed at length at several American Camp Association conferences that we have attended over the past few years, and self-contained communities like camps are especially vulnerable and must be vigilant to control this problem.

Head lice do not spread disease, nor does their presence mean that your child is unclean. Head lice are not living in your home, on your furniture or in your bedding or on your pets. Without blood from your head, head lice can only live 24-48 hours. They need your head to live, colonize and lay eggs. Head lice are greyish-white in color, and are about 2mm-3mm in length (about the size of a sesame seed). They are wingless insects and DO NOT fly or jump. They are usually passed through direct head to head contact. They are usually seen around the ears, nape of the neck, and the crown of the head. They vary in color, often described as yellowish-brown or caramel. Nits are attached firmly to the hair shaft like glue, and do not move easily like dandruff. Eggs and nits are not easily removed and must be carefully combed out with a fine-toothed comb.

MEDICAL CARE, HEAD LICE POLICY continued...

Black River has a no nits no lice policy. Any evidence of head lice, live insects or eggs (nits), will cause the camper to be sent home for treatment. Parents will be contacted to pick-up and treat the camper. All campers and staff in the same cabin group will be screened to prevent the spread of head lice. Parents will be notified via email before campers are picked up.

To prevent the spread of head lice when present parents should discuss with their camper the importance of:

1. Discuss with children how lice are spread (head to head contact and sharing of personal items).
2. Teach kids not to share personal grooming items, hair decorations, clips, headbands, hats, helmets or clothing.
3. Encourage kids to use their own pillows, blankets, etc.

Before arriving at camp please check your camper for head lice two weeks prior to the session and then again the day before. To check for head lice:

1. Use a strong light or go outside in bright light.
2. Combing hair while it's wet is more effective.
3. Lice are hard to spot. Look for tiny white or black specks (eggs or nits) stuck on the hair shaft. Head lice are small, wingless bugs.
4. Please be aware! Checking for lice prior to arrival at camp is NOT always a guarantee, as there is a 3 to 7 day period of gestation during which the nits are invisible.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Black River Farm and Ranch requires that campers have health insurance. Please attach a copy of the insurance card to the health form.

Campers who do not have health insurance will need to contact the office prior to arriving at camp.

DENTIST AND ORTHODONTIST PRE-CAMP VISIT

A visit to the dentist or orthodontist prior to camp to take care of last minute fillings and avoid teeth troubles during the session is advised. Please make sure braces and retainers are in good shape. In most cases the orthodontist in Port Huron will only do temporary work to make your camper comfortable until she returns home to see her own orthodontist. Note, as well, that the dentists and orthodontists in Port Huron require payment that will be charged back to your account.

SUN SAFETY

We are always concerned about the harmful effects of the sun. We instruct our staff to encourage their campers (and themselves) to apply waterproof sunscreen before leaving the cabin each morning and reapply as required.

PERSONAL HYGIENE

Our staff monitors the personal hygiene of campers, however, we cannot supervise campers in the shower. We ask campers to shower and wash their hair a minimum of 2 times a week and brush their teeth twice a day. These are habits kids learn at home so, if you know we may have issues with hygiene, or if you have different expectations, please discuss them with your camper before camp and with camp staff upon arrival. We can help girls brush their hair, put in braids or ponytails if needed or asked.

FOOD SERVICE

OUR MENU AND SPECIAL DIETS

We are proud of our long-standing reputation for great camp food! BR plans its menus in accordance with the USDA Food Pyramid, the expertise of a dietician, and the appetites and tastes of the campers. No matter how hard we try, we cannot accommodate all individual tastes and food preferences at every meal, but we work hard to make sure there is an option for everyone.

CAMPERS WITH FOOD ALLERGIES

Our mission is to ensure the health, safety and well-being of all campers. Therefore, we want to be sure we have all the details and information regarding your child's food allergy prior to the start of camp. This information should be provided in writing from your doctor on the Camp Health Form and include what causes the response, what type of response has occurred in the past, symptoms, and any treatment/prevention strategies.

Parents should obtain and review a copy of the menu from our camp website for the period of time that your camper will be attending camp. After reviewing the menu, discuss any concerns of potential allergens with the Food Service Manager. If accommodations are required a plan must in place in advance of your arrival at camp. This plan will be shared with our kitchen and health care staff, as well as, your camper's counselors.

It is the family's responsibility to review with the child the information needed to manage her food allergy. In some cases, it may be necessary for the camper to provide her own food during the camp session.

SAMPLE MENU

MEATLESS MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Pancakes Hard Boiled Eggs Yogurt Hot & Cold Cereal Asst. Condiments Apple Juice Hot Chocolate Milk	Scrambled Eggs Turkey Sausage Breakfast Potatos Hot & Cold Cereal Asst. Condiments Orange Juice Hot Chocolate Milk	Coffee Cake Scrambled Eggs Yogurt Hot & Cold Cereal Asst. Condiments Cranberry Juice Hot Chocolate Milk	Cinnamon Bread French Toast Hard Boiled Eggs Yogurt Hot & Cold Cereal Asst. Condiments Apple Juice Hot Chocolate Milk	Blueberry Muffins Hard Boiled Eggs Bacon Hot & Cold Cereal Asst. Condiments Orange Juice Hot Chocolate Milk	Yogurt & Oatmeal Bar Banana Bread (or Loaf Bread) Hard Boiled Eggs Cold Cereal Asst. Condiments Cranberry Juice Hot Chocolate Milk
Tomato Soup Grilled Cheese Sand Egg Salad Chips Veggie Grapes Lemonade	Tacos - <i>Soft & Hard Shells</i> Black Beans & Ground Beef Lettuce, Tomato, Cheese, Salsa Carrot Sticks & Dip Fresh Fruit Aj's Snicker Salad Fruit Punch Pasta Salad (no meat) on SB	Fish Sandwich Garlic Chicken Sandwich Chips Broccoli & Dip Pears Veggie Pasta Salad w/ Beans - <i>SP V</i> Jell-O Milk	Philly Cheese Steak, Buffalo Chicken And Grilled Veggie Pizza Vegetable Soup Broccoli Florets & Dip Fresh Fruit Lemonade Chicken Salad on SB	Broccoli Cheese Soup Chicken Strips (Crispy) Baked Potato Bar Chili & Cheese Veggie Grapes Lemonade	SOFTBALL COOK-OUT All Beef Hot Dogs & Veggie Dogs <i>Plain, Sauerkraut, Peanut Butter</i> Baked Beans Veggies & Dip Potato Chips Oranges Brownies Lemonade
Noodle Bowl (Udon Noodles, Carrots, Cabbage Vegtabel Fried Rice Vegetable Eggrolls Salad w/ Ginger Dressing Mini Ice Cream Sandwiches Milk	BREAKFAST FOR DINNER Waffles Strawberries & Syrup Veggie Egg Bake Turkey Or Chicken Sauage Hash Brown Casserole Biscuits & Gravy Fruit Salad Pasteries Orange Juice & Milk	Ham Baked Crusted Fish Au Gratin Potatoes Broccoli Florets Greek Salad Pita & Hummus Cinnamon Bread Carrot Cake Milk	OUTBACK COOK-OUT Hamburgers Black Bean Burgers Warm Red Skin Potato Salad Celery & Carrot Sticks Fruit Salad Cupcakes Fruit Punch	Enchilladas Refried Beans Mexican Corn Sour Cream, Guacamole, Lettuce, Tomato, Cheese, Salsa Yellow Cake & Frosting	Chicken Caccatorie Baked Ziti Rice Cheesy Broccoli Sweet Brown Rolls Cheesecake Milk

HORSEBACK RIDING PROGRAM

The mission of our riding program is to provide a safe and fun atmosphere where girls can learn horsemanship and riding skills. Skills will be taught at whatever pace the camper is comfortable.

Goals of the Horse Program:

1. To teach girls to be knowledgeable horsewomen
2. To teach girls to be skilled riders
3. To foster the love and appreciation of animals

STAFFING

Our Equine Manager must have the following training, experience, and qualifications: CHA certification as a riding instructor, previous experience as a riding instructor for at least 30 weeks, and a minimum of 6 years experience riding and caring for horses.

Riding instructors must have the following training, experience, and qualifications: CHA certification (or the equivalent) as a riding instructor and previous experience as an assistant riding instructor or a minimum of 3 years experience riding and caring for horses.

Assistant Riding Instructor must have minimum of 1 year experience riding and caring for horses.

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The riding program begins at 8:00 each morning except Sunday and the last Saturday of each session. Riding groups will have a lesson from 9:15 am until 10:30 am or 10:30 am until 11:45 am. The groups will alternate time slots each day. Opposite the group's lesson, they have Vaulting and Horse Talk (a ground lesson about horses), as well as, either Small Animals, Barn Chores or a lunging lesson.

Groups will be taught a set curriculum based on their skill level. The group will move through the skills at a pace which is safe yet challenging for the riders. The pace will be set by the average rider in the group. We try to keep a balance in each group that allows the lessons to be beneficial to all riders. This allows riders continue to have fun and learn without instructor pressure to advance. It is intended to be a fun, stress free environment.

Every effort is made to give the riders who are struggling the opportunity to get extra coaching in their lessons and additional practice time at instructional riding in the afternoon. If a rider is not comfortable advancing they are always given the choice to move to a lower group. However, if we feel that there is a safety issue we may move them to a different group. More advanced riders will be challenged in different ways, including more challenging horses and drills. If they are demonstrating competency of the skills taught in their group on a variety of horses, they may be offered the choice of switching groups.

RIDING GROUP PLACEMENT

First-Year campers will be placed in a group based on the questionnaire filled out. Please remember when filling out the questionnaire that it is always easier for kids to be asked to move up instead of down. All campers will be passively evaluated on the first day of riding and they will be given levels. If necessary, they will then be reassigned to a new group based on the new level.

HORSEBACK RIDING PROGRAM, RIDING PLACEMENT continued...

Throughout the session riding levels continue to be re-assessed to insure campers are placed in the appropriate riding group for their skill level and personal goals. Camper's riding skills will be verified and documented by an instructor at the end of a session to determine their initial group placement for the following year.

Returning campers may choose any group up to the skill level that was verified the previous season. They will also be re-evaluated on the first day and may be moved based on the re-evaluation. If a camper returns the following year a much better rider than the previous year, they will have the opportunity to move up levels after the initial placement. If at any time a camper feels like she is not progressing as quickly as she would like to she can ask the instructor what skills need to be mastered so that she can move up. She can also attend additional instructional riding time in the afternoon.

The Equine Manager will decide what riding level is appropriate. We will not place a camper in a riding group that we believe to be beyond her capabilities. This is for the safety of the camper.

AFTERNOON PROGRAM

Afternoon activities are open during "free time" 2:00 – 4:30pm daily. All activities will be staffed and campers can move from one activity to another.

SWIMMING in the pool during free time is an option every day (weather permitting). The pool is staffed by certified lifeguards.

BOATING Kayaks, paddle boats and boards in Lake Lorely are great fun. The Lake is staffed by certified lifeguards.

CRAFTS are always a hit! The Craft barn has a different craft everyday, from beads and lanyards to bird feeders and picture frames. It is a great place to be creative and meet new people.

SMALL ANIMALS are provided for the campers to gain knowledge through direct experience with the small animals. The animals may be handled with supervision. It is important that staff and campers remain aware that the animals are not toys and must be treated with care and respect. The small animal's area is open during free time in the afternoons and during the mornings when scheduled. If the Small Animal Barn is open at any other time campers must be accompanied by a staff member.

ARCHERY is a great way for girls to learn precision and discipline. Girls learn the equipment, safety and techniques used in archery.

FIELD ACTIVITIES

Trampolines are a fun way to exercise and unwind. They are open at free time or whenever a staff person is present. Soccer, volleyball, tennis, basketball, softball, and any other games we can think up are played during free time. Nature walks and activities are also a fun way to get involved and enjoy the outdoors.

BARN ACTIVITIES

Trail rides are offered daily. Each camper will be offered at least one trail ride a week.

Halter class is a great way for girls to learn about caring for horses. Each day the class learns a new lesson about routine care and first aid for the horse. On the last day they show their horse to the judges who decide who has taken the best care of their horse. That person wins the Halter Class.

Vaulting is used to increase rider confidence, balance and rhythm. It is often compared to gymnastics or ballet on horseback. Vaulting Club is optional.

Free riding is supervised riding without instruction. Campers can come to play games, practice what they learned in class, or just relax in the saddle.

Instructional riding Kids come ride with instructors available to help kids work on the skills they are trying to master in class.

TYPICAL DAY AT CAMP

If you are wondering how your child will spend her day at camp, here is a schedule of a camper's typical day. The day begins at flagpole followed by breakfast and riding activities (riding lessons, ground lessons, barn chores, small animals, and vaulting), lunch -delicious food (mmmm), rest time (ahhh). Then, afternoon activities (barn, pool, boats, crafts, field activities, trampolines, ropes course, trail rides) dinner (yum), the day finishes with an evening program (skits, games, treasure hunts, talent show, etc.) and treat store before sleepy campers return to their cabins for bedtime.

8:00 am	Flag Raising
8:05 am	Breakfast
9:00 am	Riding Begins
10:30 am	Riding groups switch
12:15 pm	Lunch
1:00 pm	Rest Hour
2:00 pm	Free Time
5:25 pm	Flag Lowering
5:30 pm	Dinner
7:00 pm	Night Activity
8:30 pm	Treat Store
9:00-10:00 pm	Bedtime depending on age

STAFF & CIT PROGRAM

We at BR believe that we have the best camp staff around. The majority of our staff were BR campers who came through our training programs. They know the BR's mission, camp activities, are excellent horsewomen, enjoy working with children, and most of all, know what it is like to be a camper and how important the role of a counselor is in the campers' lives.

Counselors

- 18 years of age by June 1st of the season for which you are hired Must attend or have graduated from college or university Experience with children
- Experience with horses or a certified lifeguard
- You must complete an application and interview in order to be considered for the position. Or, your evaluations as an AC will be considered your interview

Assistant Counselors

- 17 years of age by June 1st of the season for which you are hired
- Must attend or have graduated from high school
- You must have completed our CIT program successfully
- Your evaluations as a CIT will be considered your interview

Counselors in Training or CIT

- 16 years of age by June 1st of the season for which you are hired
- Must attend or have graduated from high school
- You must have completed your time as a camper at Black River successfully
- Your evaluations as a last year camper will be considered your interview

** Being on Staff at Black River is a very special opportunity and can only be extended to those campers who prove to be ready for the position. It is a serious job that requires responsibility, quick thinking, positive personality, willingness to lead, horsemanship, and desire to learn.*

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS -- FAQ'S

- What time do the kids get up? Just in time to get to the flagpole on time! Usually between 7:30 and 7:45 am.
- Can I see pictures of my camper while she is at camp? Yes, we post pictures on social media occasionally. We also post pictures on our web based email and picture service that you can log into. See the flyer in your mailing for login information.
- Do you have visiting days? No, we do not have visiting days at the BR. Due to the length of our sessions we do not feel it necessary to have visiting days in the middle of a session. Also, many campers come from a great distance and it would not be possible for their parents to visit, but mostly parents visiting contributes to or creates campers' homesickness.
- May my daughter make or receive a telephone call? No, the girls may not call you and you may not talk with them during their stay. You may check with the office staff if you have concerns about your daughter. They will be happy to talk with you about your daughter.
- May my daughter bring her cell phone to camp? No, they are not permitted. Devices with Wi-Fi, cellular data, video, or gaming capabilities are not permitted at camp. We are focused on connecting with real people and experiences.
- Do you have laundry facilities? No, please send enough clothes to last your camper's entire stay.
- Does my daughter need riding boots? Yes. We suggest a slip-on western riding boot (cowboy boot), but there are many different types of riding boots available. We do require a flat-soled riding boot with at least a one-inch heel. These requirements have been made for your child's safety.
- Does my daughter need a riding helmet? Riding helmets are a must. They are to be worn while riding. You may bring your own, you can rent one upon check-in, or you may purchase one upon check-in. All helmets sold or rented are ASTM & SEI certified, as this is what we suggest you bring.
- Does my daughter need money while she is there? No, she will have an account to charge anything that she needs or wants. You pay her account when you check out. Black River does not accept credit cards. Cash or check only.
- What government authority supervises camps? The State of Michigan licenses the BR and we are inspected and approved by the Michigan Health Department. We are also an accredited camp by the American Camping Association and the Camp Horsemanship Association.
- Is there camp security? BR is assessable by only one road, at which a security guard is on post nightly, the guard also makes hourly rounds of the camp to ensure every person's safety. Each bunkhouse is equipped with a phone system that can dial 911 in an emergency.