

Department of Education Abstract

Ramapo for Children, Vendor #RAM021

Challenge and Adventure Youth Development Retreats

Program Description

At Ramapo, attitude is valued over aptitude, effort over ability, and cooperation over competition. Ramapo's **Challenge and Adventure Youth Development Retreats** are one to three day experiential learning programs for school groups which are crafted to promote teamwork, community building, effective communication, timely problem solving, self-reflection, positive leadership, conflict resolution and healthy decision making. Ramapo provides expert instruction, modern lodging, dining and meeting facilities, and a beautiful outdoor setting. Through experiences such as cooperative games, initiatives, high and low ropes course activities, boating and canoeing, orienteering, hiking, and campfires, participants learn that talent doesn't make one the most valued member of a team.

With over 80 years of experience working with diverse populations of typically and non-typically developing children, Ramapo's programs help create a culture of respect, responsibility, and willingness amongst staff and students.

The Primary Goals of Ramapo's Challenge and Adventure Youth Development Retreats:

- Increase student capacity to become effective, responsible, and productive leaders in their communities
- Provide opportunities for students to practice and take responsibility for resolving conflicts peacefully
- Increase decision making and problem-solving skills
- Increase interpersonal communication and relationship building skills

Selected experiences include:

- Large group games which require participants to work with a wide range of people
- Initiatives that require small groups to work together to solve problems, practicing negotiation skills, listening to different points of view, and consensus building
- Low ropes activities which require more tangible problem-solving skills, such as negotiating materials, planning and executing physical movement of a group, and making on-the-spot decisions about how to deal with stressful communication
- High ropes activities in which participants are put in physically challenging situations with a peer which cannot be successfully achieved without communicating, compromising, and negotiating
- Ropes course instruction focusing on using skills to assist people who become frustrated and want to quit
- Skills-based workshops on asking questions of peers and giving effective feedback

Each Ramapo Challenge and Adventure Youth Development Retreat includes:

- A three stage program planning process
- Facilitated challenge and adventure programming tailored to the specific needs and goals of the group
- One highly skilled program specialist for each 8 to 12 students, depending on need
- Use of Ramapo for Children's 250 acre challenge and adventure campus in Rhinebeck, NY including high and low ropes courses, climbing wall, orienteering course, hiking trails, recreation facilities, and a pristine lake for canoeing and boating
- Nutritious, buffet style meals
- Telephone contact with the school four to six weeks after the program to assess the quality of the program provided and the short term impact

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