

Staff Handbook

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Co-Founding Directors Share about MBC



Founding Directors Heather Mitchell & Stacy Raye Meadows site Tilden Park in 2004

Heather's Blog Post How I Camp

Top 10 Things To Know About Monkey Biz

List created by Stacy Raye around 2007

- It's all about the love and appreciation for all that we have
- Respect – each other for all that we are, the environment, the equipment
- Fun
- Really be with and pay attention to the kids, each other, and the group dynamics
- Conflict resolution through non-violent communication, redirection, "I" statements, and reparative justice
- Learning through play
- "From there to here, from here to there, funny things are everywhere" – Dr. Seuss
- Multiple intelligences are fostered through our curriculum
- MBC thrives only through the skills, talents, and dedication of our amazing staff
- We can do our part to make the world a little bit better

Our Values

We started Monkey Business Camp in 1998 to nurture the creativity & individuality of each child in a loving & magical environment.

We develop programs with a balance of activities, hire incredible and kind staff, and then co-build a community each camp session.

Our values:

- FUN and RESPECT
- Being Outdoors Is Something We All Need More Of
- Self-Care, Community Care, & Care For Our Planet
- Positive Guidance & Being Friendship Coaches
- We are Similar & Different – Diversity, Equity, Inclusion
- Play Makes Everything Better
- Intergenerational Connection

To learn more, check out Our Philosophy





Camp uniquely benefits children by increasing*-

- social comfort, with increased social skills & ability to make friends
- independence & leadership qualities
- willingness to try & adventurousness
- Confidence & self-esteem
- environmental awareness
- understanding of one's own values









*Findings from an American Camping Association national study

These findings seem to be true for youth leaders and staff too! We are in this together and influence one another.

About Us

- Monkey Business Camp has been around since 1998, and whether you're new to camp or returning, we have many resources to support you—built from over 29 years of experience.
- We encourage you to explore our website—monkeybusinesscamp.com—for helpful information, including Camp Basics to deepen your understanding of how we operate.
- Camp continues to grow and evolve over time. Each season reflects what we've learned along the way.

We're glad you're here & part of our ongoing story.

"I think this camp is one of the best in the nation. Gosh I really wish there was a Monkey Business Camp in the San Jose area. Keep up the great work!" - parent

"MBC is amazing on so many levels–fun, professional growth, and building lasting relationships. I will never forget what I experienced this summer; everyone is a huge family–campers and workers are invested in this camp!" - staff





Scholarships

- $20,000+ given each year
- Supports camp being accessible to more families.
- Funded by:
  - Merchandise sales
  - Parents rounding up to higher payment tier. We have 3 payment tiers.
  - Camp general fund
  - Donations - Individuals can donate unused funds from their FSA work accounts or donate in general, to support inclusivity.
- Families getting a scholarship receive a coupon toward any in person purchases.

Groups: Ages, Abbreviations, Tape Color



SB = Strawberry Banana- ages 5-6, yellow

SME = Smoothie- ages 6-7, blue

- Share Meadows site at Tilden, Combined to "Meadows" group at some break camps

FS = Fruit Salad- ages 7-9, orange

MC = Mango Coconut- ages 8-10, green

- Share Big Leaf site at Tilden, Combined to "Big Leaf" group at some break camps

Each group uses its own area or gate for drop-off and pick-up.

- In Summer most sessions have 4 groups. Break camps have 2 or 3 groups.
- Clipboards, bins and equipment are labeled in color tape for each group.

What to Bring to Camp

Read Prep Guide for more info

- **Water bottle-** Bring every day & refill at water fountains.
  Bring to snacks and lunch for group “toasts.”
- **Lunch and two snacks-** Bring every day!
  Plan ahead - camp tends to make people hungrier.
  Some groups may be nut-free, but mostly nuts are allowed.
  Packing a lunch can make your 1 hr. break more relaxing.
- **Hot drinks** – keep out of reach and safe near campers.
- **If you get food delivered**, get before camp or on your break & outside of camp area.
- **Masks-** Surgical masks are available in the 1st Aid pack.
  We recommend a higher-quality mask (N94/N95) in your bag or car for air quality or illness.
- **Sun protection (optional)-** Hat, sunscreen, lip balm,
  Sunglasses with lighter lenses so people can see your eyes





Take care of yourself

- **For you:** You're giving a lot at camp! Taking care helps you stay steady, healthy, and present.
- **For your team:** It allows you to show up reliably and support each other

Burning yourself out doesn't help anyone.

Ways Staff Help Make Camp a Kind, Fun Space for Learning and Connection

Get to know campers, YLs, and each other

- Welcome, smile, share stories, and ask questions.
- Play name games and use name tags during the first two days to help everyone know each other.

Play and build connection

- Engage with kids to help channel their energy in positive ways.
- Lead games, create spaces to gather, and support connection & respectful interactions.

Use everyday moments

- During meals and transitions, connect through conversation, storytelling, and time together.



Tips from former Staff Director Ashkon Davaran



Don't sweat the small stuff.
Be patient. Kids may talk out of turn. Rather than reprimand them, think of other ways to get their attention or change their behavior.

Staff and YL placement/General awareness:
Know where the kids are and what they are doing.

BE where the kids are. Engage with the kids. Especially during free time. At MBC, it's about playing with the kids, not supervising from the sidelines.

Reinforce rules and support each other.
We may be strong when we're leading songs, games, activities... Let's have that same sense of commitment to the kids and each other even when we are not the one leading the activity, and especially during free time.

It's everyone's responsibility to be there for each other and reinforce the rules.

Helpful Practices at Camp

Transitions:

- Check in with your staff/YL team before making calls to change activities.
- Give 10 and 2 minute reminders each time so kids can know a change is coming.
- Use daily check-ins & team meetings to reflect and adjust together.

Positive re-direction:

- Share clear boundaries by focusing on what *to do*.
- Try “Come sit down here,” or “Let’s keep the benches cleaner,” instead of “No standing on the bench.”

