Tilden Park: How We Use the Space

Care for the Park

- Daily Leave No Trace with kids & S2 staff check site end of day
- Stay on the trails
- Do not pick plants or disturb wildlife
- Protect trees - No digging at the base of trees, no “tree forts”
- Conserve water – Water fountain to refill or drink, not play
- Drive Slowly and Safely in the park

Nature Awareness - Watch for poison oak

- If campers touch, wash with Tecnu (first check the OTC list for permission); If balls or hoops touch, same. Use gloves.
- Wash hands before eating
- Let staff know about any ticks, rashes or bites

Staff

- Use bathroom when campers are engaged (circles, snack)
- Take breaks away from group

East Bay Regional Park District

Healthy Parks Healthy People



MBC has been hosting camps in Tilden Park since 1998!

Tilden Park Daily Operations

Mowing

- Rangers may arrive at unpredictable times
- Shift activities as needed when they are working

Garbage & Recycling

- Toward the end of the day, watch for trucks and keep kids clear
- Recycling available: paper, cans, glass, plastic bottles
- Big Leaf also has compost
- If compost isn't available, suggest campers take it home

Park Rangers

- Most communication goes through the office/operations team
- If something is urgent, rangers may speak directly with staff
- Be friendly—say Hi and thank them
- Check with the office/operations if you're unsure about anything



MBC team will interface with park rangers most days

Froggy Flats (FF) & the Creek





- Redwood Fairy/troll houses
- Tables for card games you bring
- Creek exploration

Creek Boundaries

- Explore by the creek and play by (not in) the water. Shoes on.
- Rangers' views may change. If asked to stay away from creek, say we've had permission in the past, and will stay out now. Text office.
- 3 safety rules that have worked well with campers–
  1. Walking only in creek area (no running or chasing)
  2. You can throw rocks that fit through your OK sign finger circle
  3. You can carry sticks as long as your arm



Staff Spread out to see everyone

- Do regular head counts, for sure when arriving & leaving area
- One staff +YLs at Creek & One staff + YLs in the central Redwood woodsy area can also watch the tables.
- Send groups of 3+ up to Meadows bathrooms with an older YL/JC

Summer Water Play

When it's hot, we may use spray bottles, sprayers, buckets, and sponges

Set Up & Boundaries

- **Clearly define areas**
  "I want to get wet" & "I do not want to get wet"
- **Some equipment is for staff/YLs only**
  Please reinforce that limit to protect the equipment & other campers



Safety & Group Awareness

- **Water play can get campers & YLs very, very excited**
  Stay especially aware and keep checking in
- Make sure kids can hear and respond to a **"stop"**



Water Use

- Do not leave water running
- Avoid dumping large amounts on the ground

Summer Rainy Day Procedures



If rain is in the forecast

- Admin will contact you with the plan
- This may include a location change or alternate plan

If rain starts during the day

- Use nearby forested areas or canopies for shelter
- Keep the group together and engaged
- Shift to: storytelling, games, drawing, quieter activities
- Check in with Admin/Operations as needed

If rain is heavy

- Move to a covered area (e.g., Nature Center or shelter)
- Check in with Admin team asap to confirm/make plan. They can send messages to parents.

★ *Stay flexible—plans may shift based on weather*





Tree Climbing

We allow tree climbing at camp when it is done safely

Safety Guidelines

- Campers are able to get up & down on their own
- Check that branches are strong and stable
  - Hang (branches thicker than arm)
  - Sit (branches thicker than thigh)
  - Three (3) body parts touching the tree
- One climber per section of tree, avoid crowding

Staff Role

- Stay close and actively supervise (spot/support)
- Help campers make safe choices

★ ***When in doubt, prioritize safety over continuing***

Blue = OK to climb/sit
Red = Not for camp use

The Mystery Tree







Blue Area

- Campers can climb/sit here
- Staff stays close (within arm's reach)

Red Area

- Not allowed at camp
- Too high and hard to safely spot

Staff Role

- Stay close and actively supervise
- Help campers make safe choices

Language to Use

- "Does that branch feel strong and stable?"
- "Take your time"

→ Support thinking about safety (not just saying "be careful")