



Staff at MBC

Table of Contents

Pg 3: Co-Founding Directors Stacy Raye's Top Ten Things to Know about MBC & Heather's "How I Camp"

Pg 4: About MBC

Pg 9: Prep for Camp, What to Bring, Self-Care Food Protocols & Printable Pack List-page 10

Pg 12: Helpful tips for camp

Pg 15: Teamwork & Timing goals

Pg 17: Schedule, Activities

Pg 27: Equipment, Sustainability, Music

Pg 31: First Aid & Safety

Pg 46: Boundary Setting, Awareness & Engagement

Pg 52: Challenging Behavior & Special Needs

Pg 59: Intermission

Pg 61: New Staff Welcome & Staff who were former Youth Leaders

Pg 64: Youth leadership at MBC

Pg 70: Tilden Park Specific Details-rangers, poison oak, water play, rainy day, etc

Pg 77: Team meetings, Staff Details & Roles

Pg 82: Photo Taking Tips

Pg 84: Contacting Parents

Pg 85: Paperwork

Pg 92: The Daily log

Pg 99: Parent Communications & LookSee

Pg 105: For Site Directors (Group Leaders check this too, since you may step in)

[EOD Survey](#) and [camper YL lists for names, ages](#)

Pg 112: Thank you!

Co-Founding Directors Share about MBC

Top 10 Things To Know About Monkey Biz

List created by Stacy Raye sometime 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

Heather's Blog Post [How I Camp](#)



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

Our Values

We started Monkey Business Camp in 1998 to nurture the creativity and individuality of each child in a loving and magical environment. We develop programs with balance of structured and spontaneous activities, hire incredible and kind staff, and then go about co-building a community centered around fun and respect.

Our values are:

- RESPECT AND FUN
- Being Outdoors Is Something We All Need More Of
- Self-Care, Community Care, and Care For Our Planet Earth
- Positive Guidance and Being Friendship Coaches
- We are Similar and 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 and leadership qualities
- willingness to try and adventurousness
- confidence and self-esteem
- environmental awareness
- understanding of one's own values



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



*Findings from an American Camping Association national study

About Us

- Monkey Business has been around since 1998, and whether you're new to camp or returning and need a refresher we have many great resources to help you out from our experience over the past 25+ years.
- Check out [our website](#) for a wealth of information, such as details about [group sizes and location](#), our [founding directors](#), and more!
- With how long camp has been running and all the recent changes we've had to enact due to COVID and other major events, camp may not look the same as you remember.
- Just like any of us, the policies and practices at MBC have grown and adapted to reflect our values and goals or due to the limitations of being human in these times. If you feel a longing for something you miss from years ago, be sure to notice that and communicate with your team – If there is something we don't do anymore, there's usually a reason.

"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!"

"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!"



Scholarships

- Up to \$50,000 given each year
- Supports vision of camp being accessible to more children who could not attend otherwise.
- Funded by:
 - Merchandise sales
 - Parents rounding up to higher payment tier, as we have 3 payment tiers for tuition.
 - Camp general fund
 - Donations-individuals can donate unused funds from their FSA work accounts or just in general, to support inclusivity.

All families on scholarship receive a coupon to use if we have merch table once/year, toward a purchase.



Groups, Ages, MBC slang for each



- SB = Strawberry Banana- ages 5-7, yellow
- MC = Mango Coconut- ages 7-10, green
- SME = Smoothie- ages 6-10, blue
- FS = Fruit Salad- ages 7-9, orange (Summer only)
- Each group uses its own area or gate for drop-off and pick-up.
- Depending on the camp, we will have 2-4 groups happening. 2 is usually the minimum.
- When there are more groups, there is smaller age range in each group than listed above.
- Bins and equipment are labeled in color tape for each group.



Prep for Camp & What to Bring Each Day 1

- **Clothing:** Wear **MBC T-shirt and/or sweatshirt daily**, except if Wacky Wednesday, when wearing costume. Wear standard blue color for 1st two days of session, so kids/parents easily identify you.
- **We encourage staff participation in Wacky Wednesday!** Wear different socks, a wacky headband, or colorful clothing (like tie-dye you can make at staff event in summer.)
- **Layer, layer, layer:** we spend lots of time outside. Staying positive about the weather really helps keep the vibe at camp upbeat.
- **Shoes:** Sturdy shoes/sneakers or close toed sandals only, no flip-flops.
- **Wear a watch** to keep track of timing. Our aim is to make camp more of a tech-free space.

Prep for Camp & What to Bring 2

- **Water bottle-** refill at water fountains, all staff bring to snacks & lunch for toasts. Regular hydration is so important for our well being.
- **Lunch and two snacks-** camp seems to make people hungrier, so pack accordingly. Some groups will be nut/nut butter free, but in most cases nuts are allowed. For your 1-hour break, it can be relaxing to have a packed lunch.
- There will be surgical masks in the first aid backpack in case of an emergent need. We recommend that you keep a better mask in case of bad air quality as a backup in your car or backpack. Extra masks may be brought up.
- Optional sun protection - hat, sunscreen, lip-block, sunglasses – in a lighter shade so people can always see your eyes.
- For a list to print and more about food and drink protocols, check out our [Staff pack list & food and drink info](#) document



Take care of yourself

- Start with small goals - those are easier to meet!
- Have visual or auditory reminder e.g., hang a note or set an alarm
- Bring awareness and compassion when you do not meet goals; maybe adjust or ask for support
- Celebrate when you accomplish. Could be treating yourself or sharing with buddy!

Why is self-care important?

1) For your own self – you'll be giving a lot at camp.

2) For camp - so you can be a strong team member.

Burning yourself out won't help anyone.



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

- **Getting to know campers and youth leaders (and other staff and parents!)** Welcoming, smiling, sharing stories, asking questions. Playing name games 1st two days of camp and more. Staff, YL and campers also make name tags 1st two days of camp.
- **Playing and bonding:** Engage with the kids to create connection and to channel their big energy into more positive directions. Lead games, create safe places to be together and practice respecting one another. Inviting kids to play together. During meals, socialize with kids or do some storytelling.





Tips from former Staff Director Ashkon Davaran

- **Don't sweat the small stuff** – Try to be patient. Some kids may talk out of turn. Rather than reprimand them, think of other ways to get their attention or change their behavior. Too much shushing can create distance between you and the campers.
- **Staff and YL placement/General awareness** - Know where the kids are and what they are doing. Even better, 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.
 - I really think we can nip most of our extreme trouble situations in the bud by heightening our awareness. Even just 30-45 seconds can be crucial in noticing a situation starting up.
- **Reinforce rules and support each other** - We may be strong when we're leading songs, games, activities... lets try and take it a step further and 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. I think it's easy to assume someone else will take care of it, but ultimately, it's everyone's responsibility to be there for each other, and reinforce the rules.

What Helps at Camp

- **Positive re-direction:** Sharing boundaries and guidelines with what we **are** wanting from them when possible. Instead of saying, *“No standing on the bench,”* say *“Come and sit down here.”*
- **Transitions:** Check in with your staff and YL team before making calls. E.g. *“Brad is this a good time to call it? Brad: “Can we wait until this game ends in about one minute?”* Communicate at team meetings about how it’s going and find a solution together.
- **Label Art:** Make sure names are on all projects going home. Kids can usually write their own names - great practice.



Start of Day

Start time of 8:10 means you are ready to go then. You've arrived and have put down items, used restroom, eaten, and are set to go. If 8:10 is your start time, you might think about arriving at 8:00.

Staff Breaks

Leave for your break on time and arrive back ready to go after an hour. If away on a hike, do your best to plan to arrive back in time for lunch. It is your responsibility to leave for break on time, otherwise it will be shorter.

Special Guest Detail

Special guests need to start on time, so plan activities around that. E.g., do not start a long game 5 minutes before they plan to start. SDs please check in about how many kids can start, the # of staff or YLs needed to assist, & if the guest wants to share something about the activity with the entire group first.

Oops, timing off...

We know that timing can get off by 5 minutes or so here and there, and that seems to work out okay.

End of Day

Staying over for any reason? You are paid a little extra every two week pay period which is partially to pay for this.

Timeliness- Important in this kind of work



Communicating & Problem Solving as a Team



- Communication among staff members is important for everyone's enjoyment at camp.
- Expect to experience both magical and conflictual feelings with your team.
- While some staff may prefer leading certain activities, like running the field game or managing the art table, it is important to switch up the roles sometimes. This helps us grow and learn outside our comfort zones and not feel like things are too repetitive.
- Address things the day they come up, rather than letting a troubling situation fester.
- Know that we're all trying our best to have camp be as great as possible, and talking out issues as they come up really helps that happen.