



for PARENTS

What is MCDOWELL?

McDowell Environmental Center (MEC), a residential hands-on science center, is located on Highway 195, about 13 miles north of Jasper. The Environmental Center has been in operation over 12 years at this location. Camp McDowell, an Episcopal summer camp since 1947, has hosted more than 100,000 children over the years. The environmental program is completely nonsectarian and is offered to all students regardless of race, religion, ability or gender.

It is the philosophy of the MEC that experiencing nature first-hand can lead to a lifelong awareness and understanding of the natural world. At the McDowell Environmental Center, our professional instructors share a love of Nature with students in outdoor classrooms. The ratio of one Instructor for every twelve students promises safety as well as a personalized learning experience - with plenty of fun, adventure and confidence building. By working together in their field groups, cabin groups and in the Dining Hall, students also learn about living in a community. Our classes provide opportunities for self esteem building, as students have new experiences and successes.

OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of the Environmental Center are to:

- Increase student's awareness and understanding of the environment.
- Encourage a sense of responsibility for the environment.
- Foster cooperation and a community feeling.

CABINS:

Each cabin is a sturdy, clean, and well-maintained cement-block cabin with about 11 single beds (no bunk beds). The cabins hold about 9-10 students and 1-2 adults. All cabins are heated and have an attic fan in the bathroom for cooling. Each cabin has a bathroom with 2 sinks, 2 toilets, and 2 individual showers.

The adults from your child's school will establish guidelines for the students such as: shower times, lights out time, no raiding, respecting other students' belongings, keeping their area clean, etc.

In the evening, students are not allowed to leave the cabin.

FOOD and MEALS:

Meal times are also educational opportunities at McDowell. We stress the importance of no food waste and using good manners by eating family-style. Our Dining Hall serves nutritious, kid-friendly meals. **We ask that you do not send any additional food with your child** as it may "critters" to the cabins.

Students sit in small groups in the dining hall are encouraged to be responsible with setting of tables, assisting others in clean up of the table and sweeping (this helps encourage responsibility and community living while at camp).

SAFETY AND MEDICATIONS:

The safety of the students is paramount at McDowell. A registered nurse lives on-site and our Health Hut is equipped to handle first aid and other routine health care needs. Any medication you send for your child will be dispensed by the Resident Nurse or authorized school personnel.

Please send ALL medications in their original containers. All medications will be kept and dispensed by the nurse unless your school has made other arrangements. The exceptions are inhalers and bee sting allergy kits, which should be kept by the student.

If your child has a severe allergy and requires an Epi-Pen, is diabetic, or has a special dietary requirement it is essential that you contact our Nurse at 205-387-1806 at least one month prior to your child coming to Camp McDowell Environmental Center.

Please do not send over the counter medications. There is a place on the student health form where you can grant the Nurse permission to give your child an OTC that we keep here at Camp.

All of our instructors are certified in First Aid and CPR. In the event of an emergency, school and McDowell personnel will make the decision to transport a student to the regional hospital in Jasper, 15 miles away. We monitor the weather closely with weather radios, by computer or by television. During severe weather, we have an emergency plan that includes tornado shelters.

STUDENT PREPARATION:

It is important that your child is prepared with the items on the Bring along List. Your child has the choice to bring a sleeping bag OR sheets / blankets. Please be sure that they clearly label everything they bring (including their cameras). We will hold class rain or shine and so a rain poncho is necessary.

A small backpack to use during the day for classes is a wonderful addition for them to have as they may be taking notes in their journals for school.

CLASSES:

We offer 20 different classes here at the Environmental Center. The teacher from your child's school has chosen the classes all students will be taking, based on their goals for the visit. All classes are correlated with the Alabama Course of Study for Science and Social Studies. The classes at McDowell Environmental Center are hands-on and take place rain or shine. If there is "inclement" weather classes occur indoors (severe rainstorms, thunderstorms, etc.).

CANTEEN / RECREATION:

If you would like to send additional money for your child to use to purchase souvenir items, the following is a price list of some of the Camp items.

\$2—I love Camp McDowell bracelet	\$8--\$10—MEC Water bottle
\$4—I love Camp McDowell shoelaces	\$10—Hat
\$8—Disposable camera	\$12-\$20—T-shirt

Typical SCHEDULE for at 3 day stay:

<u>Day One</u>		<u>Day Two</u>		<u>Day Three</u>	
10:00	Arrive, settle into cabins	7:55	Breakfast	7:30	Cabin Clean-up
10:45	Welcome Meeting	8:45	Morning Class	7:55	Breakfast
11:45	Lunch	noon	Lunch	8:45	Morning Class
1:00	Afternoon Class	1:00	Afternoon Class	noon	Lunch
4:10	Canteen	4:10	Canteen	11:15	Sharing Circle
4:30	Recreation Time	4:30	Recreation Time	1:00	Depart
5:40	Dinner	5:40	Dinner		
7:15	Evening Program	7:00	Evening Program		
8:30	Snack	8:30	Snack		
10:00	Suggested Lights Out	10:00	Suggested Lights Out		

