



RIVERS TO RIDGES RESPECTFUL FIRE PROTOCOL

Fire-making is one of the outdoor-skills often taught during Rivers to Ridges programming. While there is inherent risk in fire-based activities, they teach respect, responsibility, and encourage patience and calm, requiring self-regulation. During Rivers to Ridges programs, there may be an opportunity to use a real or propane fire for cooking, or explore friction fires with the use of hand or bow drills.

All participants will be explicitly taught proper fire-side practices and fire use, including:

1. Keeping your body a safe distance from the open flame (e.g. an arm's length)
2. Never adding material or placing sticks in (or removing them from) the fire.
 - a. *Unless explicitly building a fire as part of program. In this case, participants can add fuel under adult supervision - sticks/wood is to be placed from the side of the fire. Hands do not go over the flame.*
3. Keeping the area clear of debris or materials that could catch fire.
4. Moving in a calm and focused manner around the fire, walking around the outside of the circle rather than inside the circle.
5. Sitting when near a fire.
6. Becoming familiar with basic fire safety practices: Stop, drop and roll.
7. Telling an adult if you find matches or a lighter - they will remove them.
8. Remembering there is a zero tolerance policy for unsafe use of fire or fire starters

E.g. If a child intentionally uses a stick around a fire in an unsafe manner, or implies that they will do so, they may no longer be allowed to be near the fire for a duration specified by leaders.

Leaders may decide to reassess the participant's understanding, revisiting their attendance of fire activities after the participant has adequately demonstrated understanding of their responsibilities.
9. **Friction Fires:** Practicing caution when using hand or bowdrills.
 - a. Burns are possible as the tools become very hot, especially at the ends where the friction is the greatest.
 - b. If a fire is made, letting it burn out slowly, not adding larger fuel.

Participants must meet the following requirements prior to participating in fire-focused activities:

1. Demonstrate calm and focused movements around fire.
2. Demonstrate ability to keep a safe distance from the fire (an arm's length).
3. Demonstrate an ability to take direction and redirection.
4. Demonstrate respect for and understanding of the fire protocol.