



VOYAGEUR
OUTWARD BOUND SCHOOL

28 Day Fall Boundary Waters Canoeing Expedition Family Seminar Information

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Overview, Travel, Accommodation, and Directions

The Outward Bound Intercept Family Seminar is as much for you as for your child. We strongly encourage all parents or guardians who live with the student to attend the Family Conference, but only one parent/guardian is required to attend. This document includes an overview of the Seminar, general reminders, travel information, directions, and accommodation suggestions. Please read this document thoroughly and contact your Course Advisor if you have any questions.

The Seminar will focus on how your family can best support one another as your child finishes their Outward Bound course and transitions home. The seminar is crucial to the success of the Intercept Program, and your choice to participate demonstrates a strong commitment to that success. Thank you for your involvement, and we look forward to meeting you at the end of the program.

FAMILY SEMINAR OVERVIEW - The Family Seminar accounts for the last three days of your child's Outward Bound course and will include a series of interactive workshops, activities, presentations and discussions. It will culminate with a family conference facilitated by Outward Bound staff and a graduation with the student group. The objectives of the Family Seminar are to:

- Provide you with a mini Outward Bound experience so you can better understand your child's experience.
- Connect with other parents, guardians, and families.
- Share specific information about your child's experience and stories from their expedition.
- Share tools, techniques and lessons that instructors employed during the expedition. We will also discuss how your family can employ the same or similar tools at home.
- Begin a plan for your child's transition home.

Note: You will not see your child until the second day of the Seminar as they will be engaged in volunteer service projects. Also, during the seminar your child will spend each night with their group. Students are not permitted to leave the Seminar to go to hotels, restaurants, etc. You will travel home with your child on the final day of the Seminar following graduation.

Day 1: During the first day of the Family Seminar you will meet your child's instructors and the parents of the other students. You will participate in lectures, interactive lessons and activities in the morning and afternoon. In the evening you will have one hour to engage in an in-depth conversation with one of your child's Outward Bound Instructors. This meeting is intended to update you on your child's experience and help prepare for the reunion and family conference the following day. The purpose of the first day is to equip parents with a better understanding of their child's Outward Bound experience, where they struggled and thrived, what progress they made, and what struggles they may face while transitioning home. By the end of the day you will have learned the same communication, decision making, and anger management lessons that the Instructors taught your child during the expedition, giving you a common vocabulary to use the following day when you reunite with your child.

Day 2: This is the day you will reunite with your child! This day your child and their group will give a short presentation about their experience. You will have the opportunity to participate in some activities together with your child and with the other families. Individual family conferences are scheduled throughout the afternoon. You will have one-and-a-half hours scheduled to have a conversation with your child that will be facilitated by one of their Instructors. This conversation will touch on some of the issues from the past, but is intended to retain a focus on the future. It aims to be the beginning of a conversation that you and your child will continue in the days and weeks to come. It will allow you to reconnect and to begin making a plan for your child's transition home.

Day 3: On the final day, we will begin with conversations and course closure with the large group of parents. Then there will be a graduation ceremony for your child and their group. The graduation ceremony is an important part of your child's course as it provides recognition of their accomplishments at Outward Bound and acknowledges the transition and challenges ahead. You will travel home together with your child on this day.

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
7:30am Breakfast. 8:00-11:30am Lectures, activities, discussions. 11:30-12:30pm Lunch 12:30-2:45pm Lectures, activities, discussions (cont). 3:00-8:15pm* 1-hour scheduled conference with an instructor *Dinner is on your own this evening.	7:30am Breakfast 8:00-11:30am Reunion, activities, and student presentation 11:30am "Trail" Lunch 11:30-6:15pm 1.5-hour scheduled conference with your child and an instructor. Other activities scheduled throughout the afternoon. 6:30pm Dinner with parents, students, and staff.	7:30am Breakfast 8:00am Course closure with parent group 9:30am Graduation 10:30am Final group circle 11:00am Outward Bound

WHAT TO BRING - It is important that you arrive prepared with:

1. **Workbook:** This must be completed and printed. You will receive a link to the workbook the first day your child is away. This workbook is your daily "homework" while your child is away. It provides you a parallel experience to your child's Outward Bound course and is intended to keep you connected with the experience as well as prepare you for the Family Seminar.
2. **Letter to your child:** You will find guidelines for crafting this letter in the "Week 3" section of the workbook.
3. **Narrative request Google Form:** The narrative is a written account of your child's Outward Bound course. The instructors will be writing it next week after the course ends. It can be provided to parents, schools, bosses, probation officers, etc. Please use this form to confirm your email and any other email addresses to which you would like us to send your child's narrative.

Note: Please do not bring gifts, treats, mail, or electronics for your child. After an extended period in the wilderness these items have a great influence on students and can greatly distract from the overall goals of the Seminar. Please hold these items until after Graduation.

WHAT TO WEAR - Please dress in whatever is comfortable for you. There are optional activities on the 2nd day of the Seminar that occur outside, but most of the activities at the seminar are non-strenuous and primarily indoors. We recommend casual, comfortable clothes and shoes. Please note that Northern Minnesota can have very unpredictable weather. Bring clothing for chilly and rainy and possibly snowy weather (sweatshirt, sweater, raincoat and warm jacket).



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Travel to/from the Family Seminar:

Please do not make any travel arrangements until your child has been medically approved for the course.

SEMINAR LOCATION –

Voyageur Outward Bound School Basecamp
1007 Spruce Road
Ely, MN 55731

[Directions to Ely, MN](#)

[Directions to Homeplace \(wilderness basecamp for the Voyageur Outward Bound School\)](#)

VMSC - 2561 // Saturday, October 18 - Monday, October 20, 2025

DIRECTIONS TO ELY, MN – You will fly into the Duluth International Airport (120 miles and 2.5 hours south of Ely, MN). Please fly into Duluth and arrive in Ely on **Friday** so you are ready to begin early on **Saturday**. Some families choose to fly in and out of Minneapolis and rent a car. This option also works, but be aware the drive from Minneapolis to Ely is 4.5 hours. The seminar itself will take place at Homeplace, the VOBS basecamp, 25 minutes south of Ely. To get to Ely, MN from the Duluth International Airport (for those not taking the shuttle):

- Follow Haines Road to MN-194/US 53 North from Duluth to Virginia (about 60 miles).
- Pass through Virginia. Continue for about 5 miles on US 53. Look Hwy 169 to Ely.
- Turn right onto Hwy 169 and take it all the way to the town Ely (about 45 miles).
- Or click [here](#) for directions using Google maps.

DIRECTIONS TO THE SEMINAR – for those not taking the shuttle (15.5 miles; 25 minutes).

- Follow Sheridan St./Hwy 169 to the east end of town. Then go right on MN-1 E.
- After 10.7 miles on MN-1 turn left on Spruce Road. Follow Spruce road for 2.9 miles.
- Look for the Voyageur Outward Bound School sign and the 1007 blue address marker. Take a left.
- Go left down our driveway (Forest Rd 181E) and follow for 1.3 miles to reach our basecamp.
- Or click [here](#) for directions using Google maps.

SHUTTLE – Outward Bound will provide a shuttle from the Duluth International Airport to Ely. The shuttle will leave the airport no later than 7pm on **Friday** and return by 2pm on **Monday**. The shuttle will provide transport between your hotel and the seminar each morning and back each evening. Some choose to use the shuttle to save the hassle of car rental and navigating.

CAR RENTAL - Others choose to rent a car to have more freedom and to explore Ely and the surrounding area. Ely is a small town, but it is spread out. As the seminar dates get closer your Course Director will reach out to you if you are interested in this service. There is no car rental service in Ely. You must make arrangements at the Duluth International Airport where several major rental companies are available.

TRAVELING HOME FROM THE FAMILY SEMINAR - The Family Seminar ends no later than 11:00 AM. We cannot guarantee you will make any flights before 3:00 PM out of Duluth. Please plan your itinerary accordingly.

Accommodation during the Family Seminar:

Please do not make any travel arrangements until your son or daughter has been approved for the course.

ELY ACCOMMODATION – Ely is a small town of about 3,700 people right on the edge of the 1.1 million-acre Boundary Waters Wilderness Area. Spread out over several miles, the quaint community has fun downtown stores and several local restaurants. The only national chain stores are Dairy Queen and Subway. Lodging rates vary widely depending on the season. Please contact the hotels directly for current rates.

Below is a list of possible accommodation in a variety of price ranges. If you find these full or are interested in other ideas, visit the Ely Chamber of Commerce website at www.ely.org.

Grand Ely Lodge Resort and Conference Center

400 North Pioneer Road. Ely, MN 55731. (800)365-5070. (218) 365-6565

www.grandelylodge.com

Right on Shagawa Lake with canoe and other boat rental available. Indoor pool, hot tub and sauna. On-site restaurant and bar.

The Adventure Inn

1145 East Sheridan Street. Ely, MN 55731. (218) 365-3140

<http://adventureinn-ely.com/>

A variety of different rooms including suites. Central location.

A Stay Inn Ely

112 West Sheridan Road. Ely, MN 55731. (218) 365-6010

<http://www.jaspercompany.com/locations/jasper-inn>

Five attractive wood-paneled rooms with private bath, that share a kitchen, dining and living room. Complimentary pastries at the Jasper Co. Bakeshop next door.

Northwoods Inn and Suites

1605 East Sheridan Street. Ely, MN 55731. (218) 365-2873

<https://northwoodsinnandsuites.com/>

Just like it sounds.