

## **Camp Pathfinder Student Reflection Responses**

*Did you experience anything on the trip that helps you to see your home life/culture differently?*

- "I realized how much better it is to be outside then to be plugged to a device."
- "That we are lucky to have each other as friends and as peers. We are all truly going through the same thing in school, friend groups, and in ourselves. We should lean on each other for support when things get tough."
- "Not having a phone with me all the time made me realize how much I don't really need it."

*What insights into effective teamwork did you gain from this trip? How might these affect your future work in teams or groups?*

- "I gained the ability to work with others and get along with others even in difficult situations. This could help me be a better teammate."
- "I learned to hear everyone out and consider everyone's feelings and I'll use that in the future."
- "I gained effective teamwork when canoeing as someone had to steer and two had to paddle and it required a lot of teamwork to accomplish."
- "I found that you can really work with anyone when you are working towards a common goal."
- "When carrying the wood, I learned that when doing a big project like that everyone has to pitch in for everything to run smoothly. This will help in the future to know that everyone must help to complete a group task."
- "I learned that kindness is key. My group was amazing because we all had an open mind about each other and ended up having a great time. I wasn't close with many others in my group, but this trip brought us together."
- "I learned that even if you aren't close friends with someone you can still work together with them and be a good team."
- "An insight into effective teamwork I gained from this trip is that it is always easier with help from others. While trying to climb the wooden wall by myself I realized that even if I thought I could do it, I could not. With one person helping me as being a table for me to step and grab the rope with, it was still impossible for me until a second and a third and eventually a fourth helped me get up the wall."

*What is something you were worried about before the trip that turned out to not be so big of a deal?*

- "The water. For a very long time I've been scared of water and what lurks underneath it, but at Pathfinder we went in groups, and it was easy to have fun without worrying about underwater animals."
- "Something I was worried about was being homesick, this did not affect me as much as I thought it would because I was with my friends that all cared for me and each other, which helped erase the feeling of homesickness."
- "I was worried about bugs, but they weren't that bad for me."
- "I was worried about my outfits, but it wasn't a big deal because I realized everyone was just trying to be comfortable."
- "I thought the food was going to be bad, but it ended up being amazing."
- "I was worried that the tents would be uncomfortable, but they just felt like a mini house and there were even mattresses."

*What is the one thing that you feel you learned or noticed about yourself while you were at Camp Pathfinder?*

- "I noticed that I wasn't concerned about my phone and that I forgot about it because we were so busy with all of the activities."
- "I don't need a device to have fun."
- "One thing I noticed about myself during the trip was that I hide my emotions really well when I'm able to just go on TikTok or play a video game, even to the point I don't even realize I'm happy, sad, angry, etc. I noticed this because on the third day when I found something out that was incredibly hard to take in, I actually noticed that I felt extremely sad."
- "Something I noticed about myself is that I am stronger than I thought I was, mentally and physically. I thought I wouldn't be able to do things like the ropes course or canoeing and archery, but I pushed through and did an excellent job."
- "I realized how little I really needed my phone. I was totally fine without it."
- "I noticed that I am not good at tetherball despite my height."
- "I learned that sometimes I move too fast, and I just need to slow down, think, and take a deep breath before I react."
- "I learned that I'm a better swimmer than I thought."
- "I noticed that I take luxuries like bathrooms and showers for granted."

*What advice can you share with next year's 8th graders before they embark on the same journey?*

- "For next year's group, go to Pathfinder even if you don't think it will be fun. There are so many benefits and upsides that I couldn't even imagine when I was going in and

thinking about it. You get so much closer to your friends and make new ones that you've never even talked to before. Don't dwell on small setbacks (though they're bound to happen), because a little bit of dirt and some drama shouldn't mess up your whole trip. I didn't want to go at first but I'm glad I did, and I'd encourage everyone else to go as well. This trip will really impact how you see yourself and your friends and it's definitely an experience for the ages. Be safe and have fun!"

- "If you are planning on going to Pathfinder you have to understand that you will need to bring multiple layers of clothes. While you're on the island, try and spend time building connections with new people because being on an island for three days is a great way to build new connections. I believe that everybody who's given the opportunity to go to Pathfinder should take it as I believe that there are lessons that can be learnt that can shape who you are as a person. The trip's impact was a lot heavier than I thought it would be because it made me realize that I truly don't need technology to be happy, while the lack of a phone for four days might seem like a challenge, it was honestly an eye-opening experience. The bonds that I built while at Pathfinder are stronger than most bonds that I've ever been able to build in the past."
- "Some advice I took in from just four days of this trip is that you should DEFINITELY reach outside of your comfort zone. Whether that is talking to new people, trying new food, or just maybe trying to show a little more emotion, it doesn't matter. This trip impacted me because before the trip I always put on a facade that I was happy at all times, but after the trip, I started publicly showing my emotion. Although this might seem like something bad to some of you, it is better to express your emotions rather than bottling them up."
- "Some advice I have for next year's group is to not worry about the trip because you feel so much more free when you're at Pathfinder. It changed me because I realized how much I enjoy camping and I realized who my true friends are. My favorite part was the meals and the nights where you got to wind down and talk to people in your tent. You should consider going because it is a once in a lifetime experience and it is hands down amazing. The nature, the people, the atmosphere, everything about Camp Pathfinder is wonderful. This trip impacted students like me because it is my first year at this school and I wasn't fully familiar with everyone. Pathfinder changed that and I became closer with some of my other peers that I didn't think I would get close to. Overall, Pathfinder was a great experience, and you should go."
- "I realized that being without your phone allowed for way more conversations between your friends, no matter how deep they were. This trip really showed me that being ready for anything, stepping outside your comfort zone, and teamwork are all really important. My favorite part of this trip was waking up from a really deep

sleep, doing the polar plunge to energize yourself, and then meeting up to eat, talk, walk around, explore, play tetherball even if you were horrible, and do any activities scheduled for the rest of the day. Another thing that I discovered is how much you can accomplish in so little time. We played so many games, swam, built fires, went canoeing, and so much more before even eating lunch. If you can go, there is no reason not to. Amazing experience."

- "Once I found out who was in my tent I told myself I wasn't going, I didn't know anyone and I was super nervous. After the trip I ended up getting super close with everyone, everyone's bond seems so much better, and it was all around a great trip. Next year's group should definitely bring Crocs. They are lifesavers"
- "Believe it or not Class of 2029, the food is actually really good, I was expecting it to be bagged lunches or something like that, but it wasn't. As for the bathrooms they're bad for the first day but you'll get used to it pretty fast. The trip made me realize that there's more to life than social media and it's much more fun to socialize with people in person. My favorite part of the trip was probably the bus ride, it was really long but it can be really fun if you're with your friends. I feel like if you can go you should, but unlike us bring air freshener, and DON'T forget bug spray. This trip was really fun, and it was a good way to get to know people on a deeper level."
- "I definitely recommend going to Camp Pathfinder. It is a beautiful island and there is so much to do and enjoy. I enjoyed hanging out with my friends and bonding with people I wouldn't have at school. The food is amazing, and you will make lasting memories in tent groups, activity groups and free time. I wanted to stay longer. Go to Camp Pathfinder!"
- "Don't worry about your phones, you really don't even think about them because there's so much to do. The food is amazing, and they have lots of options for picky eaters. Bring warm clothes especially for nighttime because it gets very cold. Wear socks at night because you don't want bugs to bite your feet. Only bring essentials because I brought way more than I needed, and it was just a lot to carry."

*Having had the time to personally reflect on and digest your experience, what part of this experience do you feel made the biggest impression on you or was the most memorable?*

- "I think the meals were the most memorable because all my friends gathered around the table, and it felt like a real family dinner."
- "I think the Camp Counselors were very memorable. They were all so sweet and helpful."
- "I think the most memorable moment for me was one morning I was walking around and I found this big rock by the water that I sat on and watched the sun, the waves,

and listened to the things around me. I love moments like that at my own family camp, they remind me to slow down and think. I sat there for 20 minutes just being with nature. It was quiet and peaceful, and I am glad I got to have that experience."

- "I think the most memorable was the canoeing because it helped me get a bit over my fear of boats and it was super fun!"
- "The most memorable part of my pathfinder experience was seeing everyone bond. For example, there were group members I never thought I would talk to in my entire life and yet I was building a campfire with them and laughing with them despite everyone's past and differences."