

## **The Princeton-Blairstown Center**

### ***Acknowledgement of Responsibilities with the Release & Assumption of Risk***

The following describes activities that I may be participating in while at the Princeton-Blairstown Center:

**Outdoor Living:** camping, cooking and living outdoors. Groups live at campsites located throughout the property of the Princeton-Blairstown Center. Each campsite has separate tents for each gender. There is a fire circle. Toilet facilities are located at the camp and porta-potties have been provided closer to the campsites. Small gas camp stoves are used for cooking. **Responsibilities:** following the safety protocols for outdoor living. Participants are expected to be careful around camp stoves and campfires, to not throw sticks or stones, and to remain calm and cooperative. **Risks include: burns, cuts, falling trees, and contact with wild life. Local wild life includes: squirrels, raccoons, skunks, snakes, black bears, deer, and coyotes and insects such as mosquitoes, ticks, black flies and others.**

**Ropes Courses:** PBC has an adventure course with low ropes course elements that require group cooperation, safe-spotting skills, and following the safety rules for each element. **Risks include: falling, cuts, bruises, sprains, fractures, or other injuries.** PBC also has a high ropes course, climbing wall and rappel stations from the dam on Bass Lake. The High Ropes course has elements that have been built and designed by a ropes course builder in accordance with ACCT standards. The ropes course is inspected annually by an outside company. All staff is trained to facilitate the ropes course activity. Individuals on the high ropes course are on a safety system with a belayer. **Risks include: falls and falling objects.** **Responsibilities** of all participants: follow all safety instructions; stay focused and attentive to the activity.

**Rock Climbing:** The Princeton-Blairstown Center only leads top rope rock climbing. Rock climbing is a physically and emotionally challenging activity. It is important that the group demonstrates their care for each other before going to the rock-climbing site. **Responsibilities** of all participants: wear a helmet at the rock site, unless they are in a designated safe area; wear a harness and be on belay whenever climbing, remain calm at the rock site, walking (not running), and following the directions of the instructors. **Risks include: injuries due to falling rocks or objects; falls during the climbing activity.**

**Swimming:** PBC offers swimming in a designated area within the 12-acre lake. Individuals are not allowed to swim unless there is a lifeguard on duty. **Responsibilities** of all participants: follow the instructions of the lifeguard on duty. **Risks include: hypothermia (extreme loss of body heat), drowning, near drowning, or other injuries.**

**Canoeing:** PBC has a 12-acre lake, which provides opportunities for canoeing. Participants are responsible for following all instructions, staying in designated canoeing areas, and wearing their life jacket at all times while in the water. **Responsibilities** of participants: wear a life jacket at all times while in the water, follow direction of instructors, and stay with their designated group. **Risks include: tipping over, falling into the water, hypothermia (extreme loss of body heat), drowning or other injuries.**

**Off-site Trips:** The Princeton-Blairstown Center leads several different multi-day trips. During off-site trips, participants are further away from emergency assistance and cell phones are unreliable on the trail and river. Each off-site trip has an emergency evacuation plan and emergency action plan. But, whenever individuals are in wilderness areas, the access to emergency assistance is delayed for possible hours or even as long as one or more days.

▶ **Canoeing:** Canoeing on a river is inherently different from canoeing on the lake at camp. Rivers add additional risks and variables such as current, white water or rapids, rocks, and moving water. **Risks include: delayed evacuation, becoming lost, being pinned between the boat and rocks, environmental risks as outlined below.**

▶ **Backpacking:** During backpacking trips, participants are carrying their camp gear in backpacks and traveling distances of 5-15 miles per day. **Risks include: the terrain, condition of the trail, exposure to the elements including weather such as wind, rain and sun, crossing rivers; outdoor living such as cooking on a camp stove, campfires, and hiking with a pack.**

▶ **Bicycling:** Bicycle riding presents additional dangers of interacting with cars and traffic. Participants need to ride on the right side of the road at all times, use hand signals to let drivers know what they are doing and be cautious at intersections, leave space between them and the other riders, ride single file, stop at each turn to prevent being separated from the group and wear a helmet whenever riding the bicycle. During bicycle tours, riders are carrying their own gear on the bicycle and that presents additional risks: bikes become heavier, tip more easily and require more skill to balance. **Risks include: road conditions, other bikers, automobile traffic, weather, dogs and other animals.**

▶ **Environment risks:** living and traveling in the natural environment or urban and suburban environments can be unpredictable. ***The risks and hazards that may be encountered during backpacking, canoeing or other wilderness trips may include: insects, snakes, large animals, falling rocks, lightning, rapidly moving water, and unpredictable weather conditions. These risks can result in injury to participants.***

**\*\*Lyme Disease:** any outdoor activity exposes individuals to potential infection with Lyme Disease. The potential of coming in contact with the Lyme Disease carrying tick is present in urban and suburban environments and increases in rural settings such as the Princeton-Blairstown Center. ***We urge everyone who takes part in our programs to check themselves regularly for ticks and to be educated on the signs and symptoms of Lyme Disease. We also encourage participants to be aware that these signs and symptoms may appear days or months after an encounter with a tick (the presence of a tick or its bite cannot always be confirmed.) The Princeton-Blairstown Center has available, upon request, appropriate repellent protection against ticks and several other insect bites. It is the participant's choice to use the chemical repellent we provide or their own. Individuals may instead choose to use clothing coverage to minimize the amount of skin potentially exposed to ticks.***

**The Princeton-Blairstown Center**  
**Release & Assumption of Risk**

**Group Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Participant Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Home Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

In consideration of the services of **The Princeton-Blairstown Center**, their agents, officers, volunteers, participants, employees, and all other persons acting in any capacity on their behalf (hereinafter collectively referred to as **PBC**), I agree to the following:

While at PBC, I may participate in activities such as group initiatives and games, low ropes course, high ropes course, rappelling, rock climbing, canoeing, backpacking, camping, swimming, bicycling, and bicycle touring or hiking. **Although PBC has taken reasonable steps to provide me with appropriate equipment and/or skilled staff for the program I am attending, I acknowledge and accept that these activities have inherent risks. While PBC has established procedures to minimize the risks, I understand that not all risks can be eliminated without changing the nature of the activities.** The risks involved in the activities offered by PBC include but are not limited to accidental injury, illness, extreme trauma, disability and death. I understand that PBC wants me to be fully informed of the activities and their risks. **If under 18, my parent/guardian will be notified if any injury or illness requires emergency medical attention by other than the PBC trained instructors.**

The Princeton-Blairstown Center operates with a philosophy of "Challenge by choice". This means that staff will support my participation in each activity and support the level at which I choose to participate. I understand that my participation at PBC is voluntary. I understand that it is my responsibility to participate in a safe manner, doing my best to follow the safety instructions provided to me by the PBC staff. I understand that the activities at the Princeton-Blairstown Center include risks of injury or death. I understand that the risks noted above are not complete and that there are other risks that exist. I agree to assume responsibility for the inherent risks identified herein and those risks that are not specifically identified.

I understand that as a participant, I have responsibilities to follow the instructions of the PBC staff and work with everyone to adhere to safety standards. Each participant is responsible to follow the instructor's directions, exhibit safe behavior including calm, cooperative, non-violent behavior. I agree to not do anything that jeopardizes me or other members of my group. I agree to respect the rights and feelings of other participants and staff and to act in a supportive and caring manner during my participation at PBC.

I represent that I am fully capable of participating in the activities without causing harm to others or myself. I, and my parent(s) or guardian, if I am a minor, assume and accept full responsibility for me and for injury, death and loss of personal property and expenses suffered by me and them as a result of those inherent risks and dangers identified herein and those not specifically identified, and as a result of my negligence or the negligence of others in participating in the activity.

I, and my parent(s) or guardian, if I am a minor, have read, understand and accept the terms and conditions stated herein. I/We assume the risks involved in participation in PBC activities and release PBC from all liability associated with or arising from my participation in PBC activities, including any liability that might arise from injury, death, disability or damage caused by or resulting from negligence by PBC, its employees, agents, staff or representatives. I/We agree that this agreement shall be effective and binding upon myself, my heirs, assigns, personal representative and estate and all members of my family. I give the Princeton-Blairstown Center permission to use any photographs, videos, and audio reproductions of myself and/or child taken during my/their participation in any and all Princeton-Blairstown Center activities except as noted.

My signature below indicates that I understand the nature and demands of the program at the Princeton-Blairstown Center as I have received and read the *Acknowledgment of Responsibilities*, that I have reviewed the terms and conditions of this document and that I freely wish to participate. I understand that I may be living in a tent at a campsite and that I will be part of a group that helps to do the chores of everyday living. I also understand and accept my personal responsibilities in participating in this program. By signing this document, I/we agree to fully comply with those responsibilities, as well as the rules, regulations and procedures of the Center while under the supervision of the PBC staff.

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Participant)

If the participant is under 18, I am signing as the parent or guardian to reflect my understanding and acceptance of the risks involved in attending programs offered by the Princeton-Blairstown Center on the terms set forth above.

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent/Guardian)

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent)

**Is Participant allowed to leave with someone other than Parent/Guardian?**  **YES**  **NO**  
**If YES - Indicate Name and Relationship to Child-- NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD** \_\_\_\_\_