



Getting your group ready for Elevations

Step 1: Send Group Lottery Application and Fee

Each group coordinator must complete a *Group Lottery Application* and send it in by December 1st. There will be a lottery drawing for each available week. As soon as we do the drawing, we will contact you to confirm your status. If your group is chosen, we will then pencil you in and hold your reservation for up to two weeks while we wait on your \$300 Group Reservation Fee. Send the **\$300 Group Reservation Fee** to:

Dry Bones Denver
1600 N Downing St
Ste 400
Denver CO 80218

All checks or money orders should be made payable to Dry Bones Denver with the memo line clearly marked "**Elevations Reservation Fee**".

Step 2: Responsibilities Prior to March 15th

Prayerful Consideration

Due to the spiritual, physical, and mental intensity of this program, it is vital that the group coordinator prayerfully consider which students would most benefit from this experience. **Elevations** is designed for spiritually mature students who are ready for a challenge. Upon arrival, the first half of the week is very spiritually demanding and some activities might be physically challenging.

Immediately upon arriving in the city, the group will be faced with a culture much different from their own. They will be interacting with outsiders who often say and do shocking things. When choosing which students to bring on this trip, we encourage you to select participants who will influence others and not become influenced negatively by the street culture. For these reasons, this program isn't for everyone. The week will be much more powerful if each participant is aware of and prepared for the program's intensity.

Participation in Elevations is limited to those over the age of 14 (or those entering the ninth grade in the fall).

Selecting Adult Sponsors

Adult sponsors play a very important role in the program. The **Elevations** experience will be much deeper and richer if the adult sponsors are committed to praying for the group before the week, participating in all group activities during the week, and holding the students accountable to their commitments when they return home.

We suggest one Adult sponsor for every five youth participants to accompany the teens. However, there should not be more than three adult sponsors (ages 20 and older) for every 10 teenagers. Restrictions are different for college and adult groups.

Communication with Participants and Their Parents

Early January is the ideal time to begin the pre-registration process. Each deadline is set to encourage early commitments and to ensure full distribution of information to all participants. The group coordinator is responsible for communicating to each participant all details of payment obligations and deadlines, medical screening, and the implications of missing deadlines or not properly filling out forms.

From the very beginning of your promotional efforts, distribute and discuss the **Medical Information Form** (inserted in the **Registration Form**). As mentioned above, due to the nature of its activities, **Elevations** is not for everyone. The medical information questionnaire is intended to protect individuals from placing themselves at risk. It is very important that each prospective participant be aware of all medical information before he or she pre-registers.

The **Participant Guidebook** should be given to each participant when he or she signs up. This guidebook is extremely helpful in preparing for the trip.

Participant Fee, Deposit, and Deadline Information

Elevations offers a discounted **Participant Fee of \$395** per participant if the balance is paid in full and postmarked by **May 1st**. If the **Final Balance Deadline** is missed, the fee reverts to the **Non-discounted Participant Fee of \$425**.

A **Participant Deposit of \$100** per participant is due on **March 15th**. The deposit reserves the participant's spot for your week of Elevations and will be applied to their **Participant Fee**. Please communicate to all participants that this **Participant Deposit** is non-refundable. The deposit can be transferred to a replacement camper to cover their **Participant Deposit** for the confirmed week of your trip. However, the deposit is not transferable to an existing camper. This deposit helps the Dry Bones staff prepare for the exact number of participants.

The individual spots reserved with the **Group Reservation Fee** are forfeited upon missing the **Deposit Deadline**, postmarked by **March 15th**. Elevations will begin filling these spots from their waiting list after the **March 15th deadline**. If there is a problem, special situation, or if you need to add a participant to your group after the deadline, please call or email Mark Wilson at (720)240-8585, mark@drybonesdenver.org. We will do everything possible to make your week of **Elevations** be possible and run smoothly.

Please collect and mail one check for all **Participant Deposits**. You will do the same for the **Participant Final Balance** payment. The church check, cashiers check, or money order for these payments should include a note indicating your church name, date of trip, and number of participants you are paying for. Checks should be made payable to: Dry Bones Denver with the memo line clearly marked: **Elevations Deposit** or **Elevations Final Balance**. Please mail the payment and information to:

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1600 N Downing St
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A Request From Us

As the ministry of Dry Bones continues to grow and be active in the lives of homeless and runaway youth and young adults of downtown Denver, we would like to ask that you partner with us. Dry Bones asks that you commit to doing a fundraiser for the ministry along with participating in the Elevations program. This will help us to continue serving and building relationships long after your group leaves. We also believe that this will inspire your students as they invest themselves in the ministry of Dry Bones. Your efforts are greatly needed and much appreciated.

Here are a few examples of fundraisers that groups have done in the past:

- ◆ **Chili cook-off:** Create a competition to determine the best tasting chili. Invite people to come eat and charge by the bowl.
- ◆ **Spaghetti dinner:** This can be a fun get together at the church building or at someone's house. Charge each person to eat. Spend time socializing and inspiring your guests about the ministry that you are going to be a part of.
- ◆ **Service auction:** Auction off each member of the youth group for a specific number of service hours. Babysitting and yard work is worth a lot!
- ◆ **Church Garage sale:** Get rid of your excess stuff. Everyone has a closet or two that needs to be cleaned out. Collect donations from church members, sell the items, and then donate the money to Dry Bones.
- ◆ **Church-wide fast:** Organize a church-wide fast to raise awareness of poverty and the hunger that goes with it. Have everyone donate what money they would have spent on food that day. Assuming people spend an average of \$15 a day on food, a church of 300 people could potentially raise \$4500 in one day!
- ◆ **Spange Drive:** Spange is the term street kids use when they are asking for "spare change". It can be a verb ("I need to spange up money for bus fare") or a noun ("I need some spange"). You could have each Sunday school class, small group, or home church have a competition

to collect the most spare change. Spange is how street kids often survive. It is extremely valuable to Dry Bones too!

If you would like brochures, newsletters, and other promotional items from Dry Bones to help in your fundraising efforts, just let us know.

Group Size

In order to provide a more intimate and focused atmosphere, **Elevations** limits group size to 15 total participants (including adults). We encourage group coordinators to bring a group even if it seems too small. If the group is small, it is possible that your group will be combined with another small group.

Crew Leaders

Select one Crew Leader for every 7 participants and begin preparing them for their responsibilities (see attached sheet titled “Crew Leaders”). Crew Leaders are asked to step up during the course of the week and lead the group’s overall attitude and spiritual focus both in the wilderness and in the city. They will also be responsible for the organization of meals and mealtime (assigning who packs what meal, who cooks, who cleans, who gets water, etc.). The Crew Leader position should be filled by a teen (14-18 years old). This is an excellent opportunity for a student who has leadership potential.

Planning For the Beginning and End of Your Trip

Mark Wilson, Program Director, will confirm the dates of your group’s trip from beginning to end. Travel days are NOT included in these dates. Plan to arrive at the Lakewood Church of Christ at 455 S. Youngfield Ct. Lakewood, CO 80228 at **10:00 a.m.** on the first day of your trip (which will be a Monday).

Elevations will provide all meals beginning with lunch on the first day of your trip and ending with dinner on the final night of your trip. All other meals are the responsibility of your individual group.

Your trip will conclude **around 7 p.m.** the final evening of the trip (which will be a **Saturday**). When making travel arrangements, **please keep in mind that the program will not conclude until around 7 p.m. on the final night. Unless you are planning on driving back late that night, it’s the group coordinator’s responsibility to find sleeping accommodations for Saturday night.**

Step 3: Responsibilities from March 15th to May 1st.

Collect

Collect all **Registration Forms** prior to the **May 1st Final Balance Deadline**. Please review all forms for completeness including all appropriate signatures (parent/guardian, participant, and physician, if required). All pages of the form must be completed. **Note: Individuals who do not submit a signed and completed**

Registration Form along with the Medical Information form CAN NOT be allowed to participate in Elevations. Please bring all ***Registration/Medical Information Forms*** with you to Lakewood on your arrival day. ***Do not mail them beforehand!***

Remember that the ***Final Balance Deadline is May 1st.*** In order to qualify for the ***discounted fee of \$395*** per participant, send the full amount in one check, money order, or cashiers check made out to: **Dry Bones Denver** with the memo line clearly marked: **Elevations Final Balance.** Please mail the payment and your group's name, date of trip, and number of participants to:

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Friday night, while you are in Denver, your group will have some free time from about 4 p.m. until your group decides to arrive back at the church for the night. Elevations will provide each participant with \$10 for their meal. Many groups like to bring additional money to go out for a nice meal, shop for souvenirs, go to a Rockies baseball game, or do something else fun. Please keep this in mind and advise your participants of this free time.

Review & Remind

Review the ***Crew Leader Training*** information to better understand the role of a Crew Leader. After selecting your group's Crew Leaders, be sure they clearly understand their role.

Remind participants of the ***May 1st Final Balance Deadline*** in order to qualify for the discounted fee.

Make sure all participants that require a doctor's signature have obtained one.

Discuss what each participant needs to bring, travel plans, and money needed for meals, etc.

Step 4: Before You Arrive

Adding Spots

If you would like to add a participant after the ***Final Balance Deadline*** has passed, call Mark Wilson at (720)240-8585 to check on the availability of an extra spot.

Double Checking Registration/Medical Information Forms

Collect any ***Registration/Medical Information Forms*** that have not yet been collected. Double-check each form to insure all information is complete and all signatures have been obtained. This is crucial! **Elevations** CAN NOT allow any individual to participate without the proper information and signatures.

Preparation Curriculum

We have prepared a preparation curriculum that will challenge participants to start thinking about how contemplation and action are important in our faith lives. The group coordinator should distribute this material in plenty of time for each participant to complete it and have time to process their thoughts. We encourage you to meet with your group once a week during this experience to process together.

Transportation

You will be providing transportation for your group to the wilderness and around the city. Plan enough room to transport the group and their camping equipment (backpacks, sleeping bags, tents, etc.). You will be able to unload and store the group's luggage and city gear in a secure place before you head to the wilderness.

Step 5: What to Expect When You Arrive

Please arrive by 10 a.m. on Monday. There is much to do on that first day, so prompt arrival is critical (we are generally not ready for your group before 10 a.m., so please make every effort to come right at 10!).

Have the ***Registration/Medical Information Forms*** for each participant ready to hand in first thing.

All meals are provided from Monday lunch to Saturday dinner. We will give you free time on Friday evening from 4pm to 9pm (later if you need). We will give each participant \$10 for this time, but if you want to plan something more, please bring additional money.

Day One, Two and Three:

At the start of the week your group will spend 3 nights away from the city, camping out in the wilderness. They will set up a campsite, do some day hikes and engage in outdoor fun. They'll observe and experience God's creation in some very distinctive new ways.

Your group will share a deeply contemplative experience together in the mountains. We hope to introduce them to some new ways of connecting with God - practices that they'll want to take home with them. It will be a time of fun, seeing and learning some new things, and soaking in God's creation. They'll laugh and talk a lot together but will also be guided in some times of silence, solitude and introspection. Their three days of contemplative mountain life will inspire action and lead them back into the city.

Day Four: Into the Valley

The group will pack up camp and leave the wilderness. After returning to Lakewood Church of Christ to unload, clean and turn in the camping equipment, lunch will be served. The group will then head into downtown Denver to take a "Turf Tour". The group will spend the day familiarizing themselves with the lives

and surroundings of the kids they will be spending time with for the remainder of the week. The day will end with “Dry Bones Night”. This is the weekly gathering event that the Dry Bones ministry hosts every week. It is an opportunity for the **Elevations** participants to meet some of the street kids, play some games, and instill value as they make new friends.

Day Five: On the Streets

The time in the city will be covered in prayer. The activities of each day will be an adventure while discovering some of the realities for those who live without homes. Therefore, flexibility is a must. The focus of this day is to provide various opportunities for the group to meet, serve, love and build relationships. The activities are relationship focused, rather than work focused. It is **Elevations’** desire to place the group in a variety of situations that encourage conversation. Our hope is that Christ’s love is shared. Day 5 is the day that you will have free time in the evening.

Day Six: The Final Day

Experiences each day in the city will be tied directly into those from the wilderness. The group will be involved in more relational activities downtown. Late afternoon will be spent in some final wrap-up activities. The week will conclude with a good meal and a time of processing the experience. We will end our time together by challenging your group to go home and live their faith in a real and loving way.

The group coordinator will be responsible for sleeping arrangements on day six.

Step 6: Once You’re Back Home: “Back to Life”

You have an option to host a member of the Dry Bones team for a follow-up weekend in the Fall. This weekend, named **Back to Life**, will be a time of celebration for what God has done, evaluation of what God is doing, and excitement about what God will do through your group in the future.

The name **Back to Life** implies two things. First and foremost, it reminds us that Christ has brought us back to life. We have been made whole; brought from dry bones to true life with Him. Second, after the **Elevations** experience, we all have a choice of what we will do now that we are back to our real lives...what will we do now that we are **Back to Life**?

Please contact Mark for more information on Back to Life.



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