



Preparing for Success: A Parent's Guide to Snowbird Mountain School

Keys to a fabulous experience:

Select the Right Program: Our programs are designed for the comfort of each developmental stage. Enrolling your child in the correct age-specific program will enhance their experience.

Eat Breakfast! Kids lose energy quickly in the cold and in new environments.

Plan Extra Time the First Day: It always takes more time than you think it will!

- Equipment rental
- Finding the correct meeting area
- Developing comfort to leave parents and select appropriate group

Prepare for Small Challenges When Leaving Your Child: Separation anxiety is common for young children (especially 3-year-olds). Our staff is very skilled at working with children. Please follow their lead and ask them for assistance in helping your child quickly acclimate to the Mountain School environment.

Inform us of Special Needs for Your Child's Safety and Well-being:

- Allergies
- Medications
- Learning needs

Dress Appropriately and Label Clothing: See the additional information in this guide.

Call Ahead with Questions: This will help you to be more prepared and relaxed!

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Is my child old enough to learn to ski? or snowboard?

Snowbird Mountain School provides group lessons for children as young as 3. However, just because your child is 3 years old, doesn't mean that he or she is ready to be in mountain school. Here are some things to consider:

- ◆ Is your child comfortable being with adults other than family?
- ◆ Does your child go to daycare or play groups?
- ◆ Is your child "potty trained" and able to use the bathroom facilities independently? (If your child regularly uses "pull-ups" they are not potty trained.)
- ◆ Has your child been exposed to snow and winter conditions?

Please check with Mountain School if you have answered no to any of these questions. Our main goal is to provide your kids with a positive and safe learning experience. Camp Snowbird may be a better option for younger children who may not be ready for Mountain School. Camp Snowbird is a licensed day care facility located in the Cliff Lodge. They can be contacted at; campsnowbird@snowbird.com.

Programs

Chickadees is a one of a kind program that is tailored for the success of our youngest guests. This program features a combination of a private lesson and indoor activities. This program was developed to address the flexibility needed to give your 3 year old a head start on the slopes. Lift ticket, rental gear, lunch (full day only), and snacks are included.

Kinderbirds, for 4 to 6-year-olds, is a full day program that provides a teacher to child ratio of three to one. This is a group program with an individual focus. It is important that your child is old enough for this program. A child who is almost four shouldn't be put into a class for four to six year olds—one year makes a

significant difference in the developmental skills necessary and the resulting experience. Lift ticket, rental, lunch and snacks are included.

We do not offer **snowboarding** until the child is at least age seven. This is due to equipment needs, and developmental processes of most children. We do, however offer **private instruction** for younger children wishing to learn snowboarding.

Mountain Adventure is a full day program for 7-15 year olds for both skiing and snowboarding. Lift ticket and lunch included.

Wings is a full day experience for 13-16 year olds that is offered during holiday periods. This program may combine skiers and riders for a social experience and instructional experience that will help them improve on their own terms. Lift ticket and lunch included.

Private Instruction is a good option for any child or family with special needs or time requirements that do not fit into the regular programming or children who would like a one on one experience. Private lessons are also a good option for groups of different age children of similar abilities to ski or ride together.

What can I expect my child to learn during the lesson?

Our programs are all designed to address the physical, emotional, and cognitive development of the participants. What you can expect is related to their maturity and development.

Chickadees and Kinderbirds (3-6 year olds) often take longer to “get their wings” and be able to ski on their own. The preparedness of the child, strength, willingness, ability to balance, and equipment fit are the keys to a success. Each child is an individual, so success is measured by their willingness to want to come back!

Older children will often learn to turn and stop on the beginner slope by the end of the first day. Snowboarding may take a bit longer. Be supportive at the end of the lesson, and encourage your child to be happy with small successes. Just balancing while gliding on skis or a board is quite an accomplishment! Once the basic sensations have been repeated enough times, there is often an “aha” moment when a child can glide and turn.

Our instructors use an activities-based approach, in which children are often familiar with the games they play, and the variable is the skis or snowboard. This will often appear that they are “just playing games” but basic skills are being absorbed by the children as they play, making the next steps come much more quickly... not to mention that the process is fun!

For children who already know the basics, the groups are split by **age first and then ability**. (We prefer not to have a very young child to be riding with a group of teen-aged kids.) This provides common ground for the children so they will make friends and have fun while learning. The groups often explore the mountain together, and find challenges through social activities that will build skills and help them learn resort safety and etiquette.

What are your goals for your child’s experience?

It is important to determine what your goals are for putting your child in mountain school. Are you hoping they will become the next Olympic racer, or, are you mostly interested in providing them with a challenging and exciting experience that they will want to repeat? Be as honest in your assessment as you can be, and you will find that your expectations will be more likely to come true.

What can I do to prepare my child for Mountain School?

- ◆ Talk about winter activities and what your child can expect. View the web site together, and look at photos of the places they will be visiting. Experience other winter oriented activities together if possible with your child. The idea is to eliminate the unknown variables in the sport to make the transition from the unknown to the known easier.
- ◆ For very small children, rent, borrow, or buy gear ahead of time and let your child walk around on carpets or on the lawn fully geared up. This will give some confidence and familiarity... be prepared to allow short exposures often!
- ◆ Kids should know their full name, age, parent’s full names, and phone numbers. If staying at the resort, put your business card with the room number and/or cell phone number where they can access it.
- ◆ Kids should know if they have allergies and what to do about them. Bring any medicines they will need, educate the staff, but remember that we are NOT licensed to administer medications, so either you will need to be there to do it, or arrange for medical personnel through our ski patrol to cover it.

- ◆ Older children should be prepared to learn safety rules (review safety etiquette called YOUR RESPONSIBILITY CODE that can be found at; www.nsaa.org/nsaa/safety/know_the_code.asp)

What equipment does my child need?

- ◆ Be sure to have your child's gear checked by a reputable shop. Be sure the bindings are set to the boots properly. Children grow very quickly, so double check... it can mean their safety.
- ◆ Water and wind resistant, breathable insulated pants and parka.
- ◆ Water proof gloves or mittens (mittens preferred for younger children). Remember they will be in contact with lots of snow all day long!
- ◆ Helmets are recommended, and are available with our rental packages. For information on purchase and fit, visit www.lidsonkids.org .
- ◆ Neck gaiters are a must; especially when it's snowing (and it does that a lot at Snowbird!)
- ◆ Eye wear is critical; if you can't see, you can't ski or ride! Please be sure your child has appropriately sized goggles or sunglasses (UV protective). Snow can burn developing eyes easily, so be sure your child can tolerate them.
- ◆ Put sunscreen on your child before arrival. Our staff will make the attempt to re-apply but please be sure that the first coat gets applied by YOU!
- ◆ SOCKS are critical. Be sure to provide one pair of socks that fit well, are NOT cotton (this will make for cold feet!).
- ◆ Mark all personal belongings with names and phone numbers! If you notice that something is missing after the lesson, let us know right away.
- ◆ When you return to your room, be sure to get clothing and gear dried out. This is often forgotten, and can make the next experience very soggy.
- ◆ Try to plan for a good night's rest, adequate time to eat well the day before and a nutritious breakfast. Load them up on water and/or juice or sports drinks. Altitude can be an issue for children, but if they are properly fed, rested, and hydrated, the day will be more enjoyable.

Pre-Registration is a MUST for young children!

Most programs will fill to capacity, especially during vacation periods, so register early to reserve your spot. Our small instructor-to-child ratio for Chickadees and Kinderbirds makes it especially important that you pre-register so that we can plan for your child's arrival. Call Mountain School directly (801-947-8222) or email us at mountainschool@snowbird.com, and

we'll take it from there. View our web site <http://www.snowbird.com/mtnschool/index2.html> to view all our programs and download necessary registration forms and release forms.

Another added tip, if you arrive at the resort the day or evening prior to beginning classes, rent your child's equipment then, and it will save you a step in the morning! Rentals are included in both our Chickadee and Kinderbird programs from the Mountain School rental shop, so there is no need to acquire them elsewhere.

OK, I pre-registered, now what?

We want to make your introduction to our program the best it can be. Use these tips to shorten your travel time and prepare you for a great day on the slopes.

Parking: if you are driving up the canyon, you can drive right to Snowbird Center and park in the drop-off parking while you register your child. You will need to return to park, but it will be worth the fewer steps with your child.

If you are staying at Snowbird, you can access a shuttle bus from your hotel to the Snowbird Center.

Plan to arrive at the designated meeting place at least 15 minutes early on regular days, and give yourself a half hour during busy holidays.

- ◆ Chickadees and Kinderbirds meet in the Cottonwood Room Children's Center; Level 2 Snowbird Center. AM & All day Check-in 8:30-9:00, PM Check-in 12:30-12:45
- ◆ Mountain Adventure-Children meet in the Chickadee Bowl, outside and adjacent to the Plaza Deck of the Snowbird Center, Check-in 9:00-9:15
- ◆ Bring your completed release forms with you-to speed up the check in process. Only one release form needed per season.
- ◆ Be sure to alert the staff to any special needs, including allergies.
- ◆ If your child needs to rent equipment, be sure to arrive early enough to fill out rental forms and be fit to equipment. The rental shop is the busiest during the half hour just before lessons begin Rental Shop for Mountain School is located adjacent to the Children's Center.

What level should my child participate in?

- ◆ Be specific as to how much, on what slopes, and where your child has skied before. It is important to know if he/she could turn and glide by themselves, or if they were held or used a device to hold the skis together.
- ◆ It is also important to note what other resorts your child has visited and how long ago. **Snowbird has challenging slopes to learn on, so be conservative.** A blue square slope at a different resort might be a green circle slope here, especially during inclement weather.
- ◆ Remember that it is always easier to graduate a child up a level than to move them down a level, so be conservative with your estimate. We will make the appropriate adjustments that are needed after assessing your child's skills. It is in everyone's best interests to place your child in the appropriate skill level group.
- ◆ Our goal for your child is first and foremost to have FUN and enjoy the company of the children that they are with. Be sure to speak with his or her instructor so you can find out what actually happened in the class if you feel your child is not challenged enough. Please remember that your child will have more fun and progress more quickly on appropriate terrain.
- ◆ Check out the web site for the skill level descriptions.
(<http://www.snowbird.com/mtnschool/children4-6.html>).

Can I observe my child in the lesson?

Children often listen better, and learn more with less fuss, when parents are not present. It is best to observe the lesson from a spot where your child can't see you. If you want to view your child's progress, you can ask the instructor where the class will be during the day. We encourage you to review your child's progress with their instructor at the end of the day. If that isn't possible you will receive a progress card from your child's instructor that explains what occurred during the lesson.

If your child has trouble separating from you, try to break away anyway. Leave a cell phone number, or a room number where you can be reached, or check in (unobtrusively) after about a half- hour. You may be surprised at how quickly your new skier will adjust when focused on the mountain environment and the great activities presented. Be sure to arrive at pick-up on time to share the stories of the day with your child and his or her instructor.

Security at Pick-Up

- ◆ Children must be signed in and out of the program by staff members. Please be sure to follow this procedure for your child's protection.
- ◆ Please plan to arrive on time to see your child and discuss their day with the instructors. You may arrive to a very sad child if they are the last one to leave! Make arrangements or call the children's center if you must be late, so we can make sure your child is aware and not sad.

What kinds of questions should I ask the instructor after the lesson?

- ◆ Ask about the best part of the day, or the favorite activity
- ◆ Ask what slopes and trails they experienced together
- ◆ Ask where you might be able to ski or ride together safely
- ◆ Ask if they made new friends, and what they are looking forward to next time

Please let us know how we did, and if there is anything we can do to make you and your child's visit more enjoyable!

We appreciate any feedback you may have so we can continue to improve our service levels. Fill out a comment card located at one of our sales locations, or simply email us at mountainschool@snowbird.com.

Helpful Websites

<http://www.snowbird.com/mtnschool/index2.html> , for additional program information

www.aasi.org for the American Association of Snowboard Instructors

www.lidsonkids.org for more information on helmets

www.nsp.org for the National Ski Patrol. Listed under safety/dressing properly

www.nsaa.org for the Responsibility Code

www.psia.org for the Professional Ski Instructors of America