

# Deschutes Wilderness Therapy (DWT): **Accountability to Quality and Outcomes**

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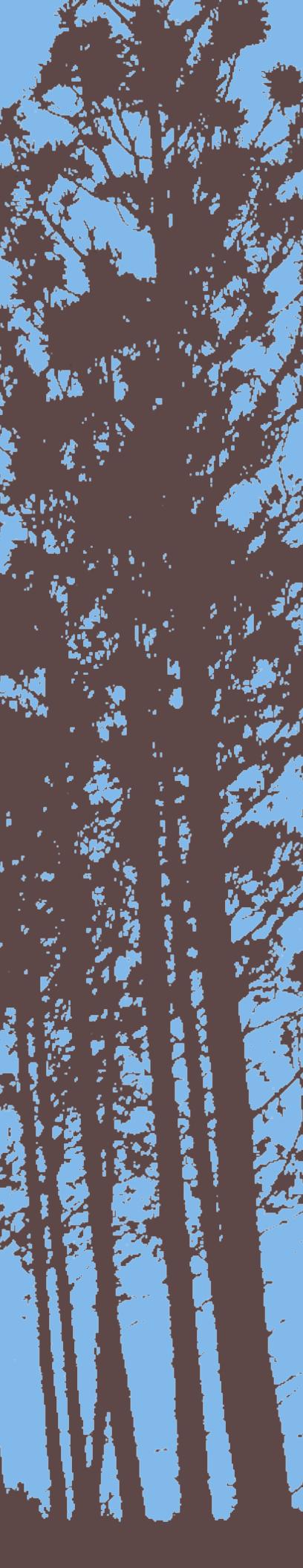
Deschutes Wilderness Therapy values the accreditation and licensing process in order to better serve students and families. We see this as a continued growth process.

## **State Licensing:**

- Re-licensure every 2 years for the state of Oregon (Licensed since 2013)
  - There are 27 implemented state statutes for Outdoor Youth Programs with multiple subcategories for each statute.
    - ◆ Statue expectations include: staff qualifications and training, student therapeutic consent, student health and safety requirements, transportation while in the program, staff ratios, treatment planning, health services, physical activity limits and requirements, program services, quality improvement, behavior management, and solo experience.
    - 1-2 state licensing coordinators perform a site visit in which they review employee and student files as well as meeting with students and staff in the field.
- Additional Unannounced Site Visit Annually: Performed by 1-2 state licensing coordinators yearly with field visit and review of paperwork.
- DWT sends reports and updates State Licensing Coordinator on incidents.

## **Joint Commission:**

- Currently awaiting site visit which has been pushed back 8 months due to Covid
- Re-accreditation every 3 years.
  - There are 725 accrediting standards in 13 categories. The accrediting categories for the program are about care, treatment, and services, environment of care for students, emergency management, human resource management, infection control, information management, leadership structure and governance, medication management, patient safety, performance improvement, documentation of student records, and rights and responsibilities of individuals.
  - One external trained professional in health care performs a 2-to-3-day site visit reviewing paperwork, employee and student files, and interviews students and staff in the field.



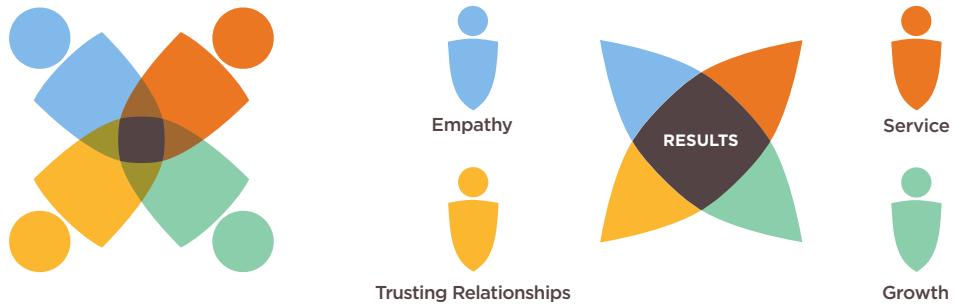
### **Association for Experiential Education (AEE) and Outdoor Behavioral Health (OBH):**

- Re-accreditation every 3 years (Accredited since 2015)
  - There are 211 accrediting standards. These standards address philosophy, therapy, education, ethical principles, program governance, program oversight and management of activities, human resources, transportation, nutrition and hygiene, environment and culture, and activity specific risk management and the therapeutic process.
  - Three external professionals in wilderness therapy or experiential education perform a 3-day site visit reviewing paperwork, employee and student files, treatment planning, and interview students and staff in the field.
- OBH partnered with AEE as the accrediting body, with additional therapeutic standards
- Yearly report submitted every February with all incidents for the previous year.
  - An analysis is created comparing risk data between OBH programs
- Outcome research is analyzed in a biannual meeting of wilderness programs to discuss best practice for therapeutic growth.

### **Cognia Academic Accreditation (previously AdvancEd):**

- Re-accreditation every 5 years (Accredited since 2019)
  - Seven key accreditation standards focused on the programs healthy culture, clear direction, high expectations, impact of instruction, resource management, efficacy of engagement, and improvement of the organization.
  - Three to four external academic professionals perform a 2-to-3-day site visit reviewing the academic processes as well as interviewing students and staff.

## Deschutes Wilderness Therapy Core Values:



### **Empathy**

Empathy is one of the most powerful agents of change used within our company. Whether interacting with our coworkers or facilitating treatment in the field empathy is pervasive throughout our culture. These positive, empathetic interactions result in authentic relationships where they can be the catalyst of growth and change. When our students feel understood they feel valued. This sense of personal and professional value, formed from an authentic relationship with a caregiver, therapist or peer helps everyone feel understood and heard.

### **Service**

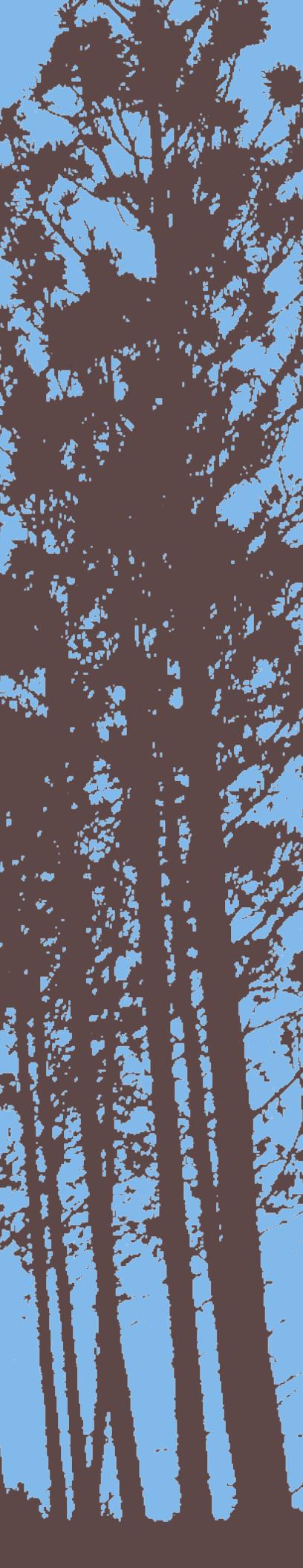
'Service to others' is a trait often lost in today's busy world. We model what it means to live a life of service to others. This deeply held value helps to build a strong sense of community and repair trust and offer a hope for others who may have lost a sense of belief in others. By serving others, we restore a sense of faith in others and repair any self-worth that may have been taken in the past. Service empowers our community to realize our true potential.

### **Trusting Relationships**

Every person that enters the doors of an Embark program, from our professional staff, to our students, is key to our success. We understand that only through Empathy and Service are we able to build Trusting Relationships, which allows us to reach our Core Purpose of Creating Joy and Healing Generations.

### **Growth**

We believe living and working in the growth zone where we are a little uncomfortable, this is the growth mindset that we strive for in both ourselves and our students. Our core values provide the framework for life-long success by overcoming early emotional, traumatic or attachment challenges.



## **Research and Outcomes:**

At Deschutes Wilderness Therapy, we have found the consistent need to learn more and implement best practices within our program. In order to gain this information, we collaborate with cutting edge researchers and practitioners.

Below are the following tools Deschutes Wilderness Therapy utilizes:

### **Heart Math/Heart Rate Variation Testing**

Students take part in Heart Math/Heart Rate Variation Testing. Deschutes Wilderness Therapy collaborates on Heart Math data with the Trauma Center in Boston, which is nationally recognized for their cutting-edge research on the betterment of trauma treatment. These assessments can tell us a great deal about a child's internal stress and successful coping mechanisms. Based on the biofeedback results, our team is able to assess the appropriate Trauma-Informed Approach for each child. New Vision and Deschutes Wilderness Therapy is nationally recognized as the largest source of Heart Math data for analysis.

### **Outcome Questionnaires**

Youth Outcome Questionnaires (YOQ) are administered to parents and students to help identify significant risk factors in substance abuse and mental health. During enrollment, the assessments help shape the therapist's focus for the first few weeks of treatment. While graduation assessments identify the depth of the treatment provided for the risk factors. Additionally, questionnaires are completed every six months post-treatment to identify the continued therapeutic process. The responses to these questionnaires remains anonymous. The questionnaires are analyzed by the University of New Hampshire and the Outdoor Behavioral Health Consortium to identify the efficacy of wilderness therapy.

### **Satisfaction Surveys or Net Promoter Scores (NPS)**

Students complete a program satisfaction and a therapeutic alliance survey every 30 days while enrolled at Deschutes Wilderness Therapy. Parents also receive the program survey every 30 days. The feedback from these individual surveys are processed in the monthly treatment team meetings and used to guide both programming and the therapeutic process.