



# beyond boundaries

A DIVISION OF PORTER-STARKE SERVICES, INC.

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601 Wall Street • Valparaiso, IN 46383 • **Phone** 219.476.4686 • [www.porterstarke.org](http://www.porterstarke.org)

Dear Parents & Guardians:

Beyond Boundaries is the team-building program of Porter-Starke Services, Inc. Our purpose is to help people effectively work, live, play, and learn together. Through interactive workshops, retreats, and programs, we help people develop stronger relationships within their organization. We believe relationships based on open communication, creativity, support, and trust are essential to the strength of any group.

For over thirty years, schools throughout northwest Indiana have been sending their classrooms to the Beyond Boundaries Challenge Course located in Valparaiso, IN. The Challenge Course is a set of group “initiatives” providing endless team-building opportunities. Exciting adventures such as the “Hot Lava Pit” and the “Giant Spider’s Web” await the creativity, cohesion, and concentration of the students. Students discuss teamwork strategies during group huddles and apply them to the challenges. They quickly understand why it is called the “Challenge” Course. After noticing what it takes to work together at Beyond Boundaries, they discuss ways to transfer these concepts to their school setting.

The team initiatives are mostly constructed of beams, rope, and cable. It is a “low ropes course” meaning no event is higher than normal playground equipment. Most challenges are less than a foot off the ground. Many areas of the course are covered with recycled-tire mulch providing a protective and soft surface. Beyond Boundaries staff facilitates each challenge and monitors safety. The focus is on enhancing teamwork, not dramatic physical feats. Although many of the challenges involve physical movement and occasional lifting, the facilitators adapt the day to the needs and abilities of each group. Each student chooses his or her level of participation. Safety is the top priority.

## **You’ll Get the Most Out of Your Day on the Challenge Course When You...**

- **Bring your completed and signed Release Form.** It is required for participation.
- **Pack a sack lunch.** Soda/pop is discouraged as it often attracts bees. Water is provided.
- **Wear shoes that enclose your entire foot.** Gym shoes are great. No sandals, slides, Crocs, etc.
- **Dress for the weather.** We will be outside the entire time. On sunny days, sun block, hats, and sunglasses are excellent ideas. On cold days, wear plenty of layers, a winter hat, gloves, warm socks and even waterproof boots. Bring a raincoat if rain or drizzle is possible. Wear clothes that could get a bit dirty. Students dressed for the weather will maximize their enjoyment.
- **Inform your teacher and Beyond Boundaries staff of any medical or special concerns.**

If the weather is extreme the day of the event, the day may be rescheduled or canceled. Students should dress for the day just in case. There is indoor shelter if severe weather arrives while on the challenge course.

If you have any questions regarding the day, please call me at 219.476.4686 or send an email to [kotten@porterstarke.org](mailto:kotten@porterstarke.org).

Kind Regards,

Kyle Otten  
Director, Beyond Boundaries