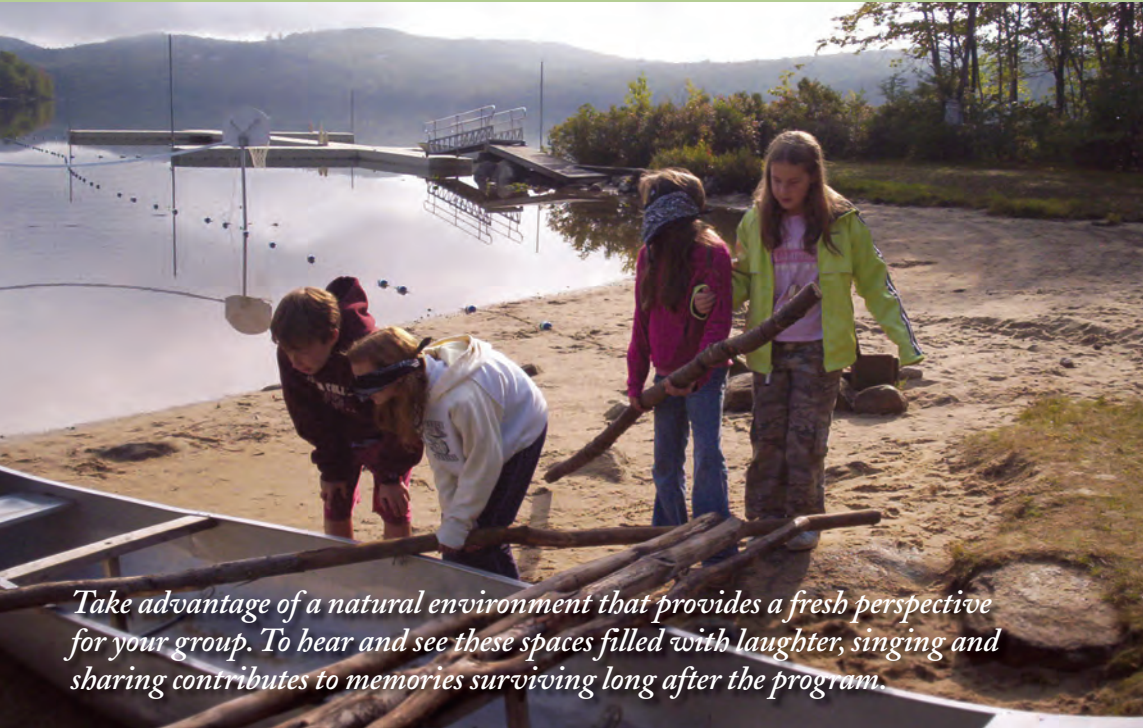




# Merrowvista Community & School Programs



*Take advantage of a natural environment that provides a fresh perspective for your group. To hear and see these spaces filled with laughter, singing and sharing contributes to memories surviving long after the program.*



“Things we learned like leadership, trust, responsibility, are things that aren't really taught. They're things that are 'picked up' with practice. To do this you need to be in a comfortable environment. The staff are nice and fun and can introduce things in a way that we as teens can understand. I learned how to be the 'real' me.”

— 9th Grade Student



*Merrowvista is fully accredited by the American Camping Association.*

### Our Staff

All Merrowvista Program Staff are skilled and energetic role models for our participants. They bring extensive experience working with young people through summer camps, youth programs or classroom teaching. Our staff receive an extensive two-week training program that prepares them to be intentional youth development professionals. All staff are fully trained and certified for the activities they lead. Our staff work closely with the teachers and adults of the school.

### Setting

The strength of Merrowvista lies not only in the community spirit created during our programs, but also in the beautiful backdrop of the natural surroundings. Nestled in the Ossipee Mountains of New Hampshire, Merrowvista offers an experience that is rustic yet comfortable, uncomplicated and filled with excitement. Trails lead through the forest to peaks waiting to be explored. At the base of one of these trails is Dan Hole Pond, a crystal clear lake, and the hub of waterfront activities.

### Facility

The Merrowvista facilities include original historic structures as well as newly constructed cabins, bathrooms, eating lodge, and our indoor activity center. Participants live in cabins with heat and electricity or our modern winterized lodges, depending on the season. Our facilities are equipped to host and deliver programs year round for groups of 25 to 160 people.



### AYF Open Enrollment Programs

A great time to discover a place, a community and a philosophy that has been inspiring lives since 1925:

- Summer Camp for ages 8-13
- Wilderness Adventure Trips for ages 14-17
- AYF Leadership Conference for ages 16-21
- Alumni and Family Weekends

Merrowvista's Community and School Programs serve hundreds of youth, educators and youth advocates through programs designed to enhance not only a participant's skills, but their **confidence** in themselves and their future. Merrowvista programs help participants develop their **character** and their **connections** to the wider world. Our outstanding staff work to create communities where youth feel supported and empowered. Children discover **who they are** and **what they are capable of achieving**.



# Welcome to Merrowvista



## Mission

The American Youth Foundation is a national, not-for-profit youth development organization with regional centers in Michigan and New Hampshire. AYF inspires people to discover and develop their personal best, to seek balance in mental, physical, social and spiritual living and to make a positive difference in their communities and in the wider world.

Since 1925 young people have been inspired to discover and develop their personal best at Merrowvista. The pristine Ossipee Mountains set the stage for students to open their minds to new ways of seeing themselves and each other. Participants create a community where respect, cooperation, and kindness serve as a guide for all interactions. Merrowvista staff help create opportunities for children to practice our motto, "My own self, at my very best, all the time". Merrowvista's programs encourage students to take on challenges and real responsibility as they live, play and learn together.

## The Value of a Merrowvista Experience



At Merrowvista, we value the need to address the social issues present in a child's daily life in order to maximize academic and social learning. Research tells us that when a child feels social anxiety, the brain's ability to absorb new information is limited. Therefore, we create a learning environment and intentional community where young people feel a sense of belonging, safety and trust. We use play, adventure and challenge to increase self confidence and academic success for the students we serve.

We believe participants in American Youth Foundations programs will:

- Gain new confidence in themselves.
- Talk about who they are and what they are capable of achieving.
- Discover and develop their personal best.
- Act in ways consistent with their values.
- Help to create a community where respect, responsibility, trust and kindness are the foundation.

### Core Values

- We seek to develop excellence in people by motivating them to discover and develop their best self.
- We commit to providing a safe environment in which people can take emotional and physical risks.
- We seek to involve people from diverse cultures, values and perspectives and to impart respect for others.
- We strive to instill responsibility to act for the good of others and for a sustainable environment.

Your leaders and staff are highly skilled and professional. Your openness to our goals and philosophy is highly appreciated. I personally thank you for providing a facility and program for our students that will remain important and memorable for them.

— Teacher, Fenn School, Concord, MA

## MERROWVISTA PROGRAMS

### Core Program Curriculum

Merrowvista's Community and School Programs are intentionally designed to develop individual skills, enhance group effectiveness and positively influence school or organizational culture. Utilizing our core program curriculum, we are able to customize a two to five day program to meet the specific needs of your school or organization. Our staff facilitate fun and engaging experiential activities as metaphors for real world challenges. These experiences have a lasting, positive impact on children's academic achievement and social skills as they return to their home and school communities.

### Community Building



Strong communities are intentionally built and maintained by a group of caring and committed individuals who share a common vision. This program focuses on the importance of developing the individuals within the group and strengthening the community as a whole. Each student is encouraged to discover his or her "best self" while exploring their own leadership style. Participants work to develop a strong foundation of important life skills that include responsibility, active listening, respect, trust and cooperation. Students are challenged to create and maintain an inclusive community culture that will be carried back to school and home.

### Earth Explorers

Merrowvista is situated within a unique ecosystem. Its volcanic lake, forests, streams and meadows provide a rich, bio-diverse environment for students to learn about the world around them. In alignment with the state school curriculum standards, this program reinforces lessons taught in the classroom. Fun and informative activities allow participants to learn through observation and hands-on exploration of nature. Students explore concepts such as environmental awareness, service and interdependence in order to understand and act upon issues impacting the natural world.



### Taking on Transitions



This program helps build students' self-confidence as they transition into new and challenging phases of their lives. It is applicable to transitions such as entering middle school, high school, or college. Students will examine concepts involved in transitions such as embracing new community members, creating a support network, and building self-esteem. Through facilitated discussions, students address topics relevant to times of transition that help them discover more about themselves and what they are capable of achieving.

### Healthy Choices

This program enables students to explore and define their personal values and examine how these values influence their choices and decisions. Students evaluate their decision making process, develop tools and identify resources which allow them to make healthy decisions in the absence of adults. When students are caught in unhealthy decision making patterns, their academic achievement and personal confidence will suffer. Students practice assertive communication in conflict situations while building greater confidence, and taking responsibility for their own actions and well being.



### Fourth Quarter Kickoff



The Fourth Quarter Kickoff is designed to re-focus and re-energize students for a strong fourth quarter performance. When interest and performance decline with the approach of summer, students often carry that inertia through the summer and into the next academic year. To ensure an upward turn in performance, we immerse students in dynamic activities that focus on taking responsibility for their own learning and growth. They will engage in activities that encourage them to be their Best Self as a student and member of the community.