

Wilderness Survival Kit for Every Kid (and their parents!)

- **Backpack** – If your backpack is a bright color, it can be used for signaling. A nylon pack dries quickly.
- **Whistle** – No one can scream or yell for more than just a minute or two. A sturdy whistle will save your throat and voice. Be sure to use the official distress signal of three short whistles, pause, three more short whistles, pause, and so on. Keep this whistle on a long cord so you can wear it around your neck, and your hands will be free to do other things.
- **Signaling mirror** – In a pinch, a CD can also be used for signaling, but an actual mirror is best. A mirror made of unbreakable material is best. Practice signaling with your mirror. Three quick flashes indicates to rescuers that you're in need of help.
- **Bandana** – A bandana in a bright color will come in handy for signaling. You can use it as a dust mask; tie it over your nose and mouth to avoid breathing in smoke. If the weather is warm, wet down the bandana and tie it around your forehead or neck. There are many other uses for a bandana. What others can you think of?
- **Emergency blanket** – This item can be used as a reflector to get attention from rescuers. You can use it to gather water, a covering in case of rain, and of course, a blanket.
- **Water** – If you store your water in a heavy-duty bottle, you can wrap two or three yards of rope or paracord around it, along with a few feet of duct tape. Water is the most essential item in your pack. Don't go out on the trail without at least one filled bottle.
- **Food** – Keep a few pieces of hard candy in your pack, a high calorie energy bar, maybe a bag or two of unsalted nuts. Avoid foods that are too salty. They'll just make you thirstier. Dried fruit or trail mix is another good choice.
- **Tissues** – Throw in a small package of Kleenex. These will come in handy if you have to go to the bathroom.
- **Light stick** – A light stick or LED flashlight is a must. You might be stranded in the wilderness when it becomes dark, and a lightstick can be used for signaling and to light your way. String some yarn through the end of your lightstick so you can wear it around your neck. Another tip is to tie the lightstick to a tree branch in order to alert rescuers to your location.
- **Paper and pencil** – You may need to leave a message for someone, draw a map, or write some poetry.
- **Zip-loc** – Keep your food in a sturdy Zip-Loc bag. It can double as a water container. It's always a good idea to have some sort of container with you.
- **Pocket knife** – A pocket knife is a useful tool in any number of situations. You'll be glad to have this in your pack.