

# BURNING MAN

AUGUST 26-SEPTEMBER 2 2013

# FAMILY SURVIVAL GUIDE





# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Burning Man Family Survival Guide! Here you will find important information and helpful hints for making your family's time at Burning Man safe, comfortable and fun.

By now, you should have read and studied the general **Burning Man Survival Guide**, which is **REQUIRED** reading for all participants. A copy of the Survival Guide was included with each mailed ticket and is also on the Burning Man website (<http://survival.burningman.com>). Everything in the Survival Guide applies double to kids. **Read it** and trust the suggestions.

Bringing children to Burning Man presents unique challenges, so we have compiled this guide to help your family enjoy the event to its fullest. We wish you and your children a safe and magical time in the desert play land called Burning Man.

## BURNING MAN IS A KID-FRIENDLY EVENT

Burning Man enthusiastically welcomes children of all ages to Black Rock City. Children are an integral part of our community, and have been present at every burn since the very first man went up in flames on Baker Beach in 1986. BRC's infrastructure supports the presence of families, and has an excellent record in regard to the welfare of children.

Children of all ages are welcome, however, anybody under 18 years of age must be accompanied by an adult. Children 12 and under are admitted for free. Children ages 13 and older require full-price tickets. Be prepared to show proof of age at the event.

## SHOULD I BRING MY CHILD TO BURNING MAN?

Deciding whether to bring the kids to Burning Man is not an easy choice, nor one to be taken lightly. While it may prove to be one of the best experiences you've ever had with them, not every child's personality is suited for Burning Man and not every parent's dream of Black Rock City includes children.

Parenting on the playa is not for every parent. Don't kid yourself: parenting is demanding enough surrounded by the comforts of home. On the playa it takes more effort, preparation and work. We recommend parents attend Burning Man solo (or in the company of adults) at least once before bringing their children.

As you consider whether to bring your kids to Burning Man, think through the implications. Will your child be able to sleep in a city where sound never stops? Do you have childcare alternatives so your kids will be supervised when you need a break, a nap or some adult time? How might your child react to the stimulation and harsh conditions?

Make your decisions and plan your time on the playa based on your kids' ages and abilities. With some thought and care, the experience can be super fun for you, your kids and everyone around you.

## BASIC SURVIVAL IN THE BLACK ROCK DESERT



Burning Man takes place in the beautiful, remote, and inhospitable Black Rock Desert of Nevada, in a temporary metropolis called Black Rock City. As wonderful a place as it is, the desert is governed by physical laws that cannot be ignored.

You are responsible in every regard for your own and your kids' survival, safety, comfort, and for ensuring that you Leave No Trace. This Family Survival Guide will help your family survive and thrive at Burning Man. It is essential reading for every parent and guardian — first-timers and veterans alike.

Read it carefully, and discuss what you learn with your children. Preparing for the playa together can be a really fun and engaging part of the experience that your family might really enjoy!

# BASIC SAFETY

You are legally responsible for your children. The fine print on the back of your ticket applies to all member of your family. Read it! Don't assume your kids will be safe in someone else's camp, or on mutant vehicles or art structures. It's up to YOU to be aware of what is happening and determine what is safe. Children need supervision and protection at all times. Do not turn your children loose without supervision.

## HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS ON KEEPING YOUR KIDS SAFE AT BURNING MAN

In addition to registering with the FUN program, make your own laminated ID card for younger kids with his/her name, your name, and your camp name and location in Black Rock City. This will help the Rangers and other friendly Burners get your kids back home to you. Put the ID card on a fun lanyard, fanny pack, or belt clip along with a whistle, a toy and lip balm (and bring extra copies). Folks have had success with writing their camp location and information on their child's arm before going out for adventures.

Set some key non-negotiable safety rules for your kids. For example:

- Never go outside of the pre-established boundaries in camp.
- Never run into the streets unattended.
- Never leave camp without checking in first.
- Never leave camp without water, goggles and a dust mask.
- Never enter any enclosed space without pre-approval.
- Never get on an art car without permission.
- Never jump off of an art car while it's moving.



Practice and review a dust storm drill. Instruct kids to put on goggles and mask, get inside a predetermined shelter (car, RV, or tent), and stay with parents at all times. Instruct your child to ask an adult for help getting back to camp or to take them to a Ranger Station. Tell children to show their ID card or wristband to an adult so they can be taken home.

Talk to your children about common-sense safety, like not looking into the mouth of a fire-breathing dragon and not standing under scaffolding. Reinforce the "stop, drop, and roll" response to clothing on fire. Advise them to be cautious about getting too close to fire art, moving vehicles and other potential hazards.

Instruct your child to ask you first before accepting any gifts, food, or drinks. Tell older children to avoid foods that may contain unknown ingredients or beverages that may contain alcohol.

## JOIN IN THE FUN: Family Unification Network

The Family Unification Network (FUN) is an important program that helps facilitate a speedy return if your child is separated from you. After you arrive at Black Rock City, visit the Black Rock Ranger headquarters in Center Camp (available daily from 9am to noon or after 2pm) to register yourself and your children with the FUN. While you're there, familiarize your children with Rangers and the Ranger Station.

Registered children will receive a wristband with a unique serial number, which will identify the child, parents and camp location. Should your child become separated from you, all he or she has to do is find a Ranger. The wristband serial number will help the Rangers re-unite parents and kids. That's all you have to do!





## TEACH YOUR KIDS HOW NOT TO GET LOST

There's no better way of putting both grownups and kids into a panic than getting separated in a chaotic environment. Here's how to keep your family close at hand. Remember: you must always know where your children are!

Get to know your neighbors. Community is one of the greatest strengths of Burning Man. If asked, most folks will help keep an eye on your kids, your bikes, and your camp, while you do the same for them. Teach your kids the village names, so that they can ask directions if they get lost. Help kids memorize their address.

Set up recognizable landmarks at camp for both day and night, such as banners, flags, and light sticks on poles. Make note of major landmarks at nearby camps. The city grows and changes rapidly – distinct markers will help both you and your children navigate successfully throughout the event. Walk around with your kids, and stop every now and then to check out where you are, what you can see, and how to use landmarks to get back to camp.

Consider what your child is wearing. Unique and easily identifiable clothing can go a long way to help a lost child become a found child. Always be aware of what your child is wearing, in case he or she goes missing and you need others to help you look.

Older kids are going to want to stretch their limits and cruise around on their own, so make sure they have a map and know where their camp is. Children are curious – they may push the boundaries you have set up for them. It's also easy for them to get disoriented if they wander too far off. Set up some guidelines that you both feel comfortable with, including how far to go and how often to check back in.

At big events (like the Man or Temple burn), identify an easy-to-find meeting place where you can go if you're separated. Make a plan for what will happen if you become separated from your children.

### **If Your Child Becomes Lost or Separated Within Your Camp, Immediately:**

- Search your tent/RV/camp area.
- Ask your neighbors to search the surrounding camps.
- Send other adults out into nearby areas to search: porta-potties, surrounding streets, and neighboring camps.
- Contact a Black Rock City Ranger

### **If Your Child Becomes Lost or Separated Outside of Your Camp, Immediately:**

- Search your surroundings.
- Ask nearby adults to help search.
- Contact a Black Rock City Ranger

## KIDS NEED WATER

Daytime temperatures routinely exceed 100°F in the Black Rock Desert. The humidity is extremely low, which rapidly and continually wicks the moisture from your child's body. Because the atmosphere is so dry, you may not feel particularly warm, but you'll be steadily drying up.

Like everyone, kids need to drink a lot of water. Have your kids begin drinking more water as you approach the desert. Urge your children to drink water all the time whether they are thirsty or not. With that said, there is such thing as consuming too much water – so monitor their intake accordingly.

Dehydration can cause headaches, stomach cramps, abdominal pains, constipation, or flu-like symptoms and mood swings. It exacerbates heat-related and cold-related conditions (i.e. heat exhaustion and hypothermia), and makes it difficult for the body to mend itself.

If your child exhibits or complains of these symptoms, or shows signs of either severe overheating or (worse) a case of chills under the mid-day sun, get them to shade immediately and seek prompt medical help. In an emergency, go to the Medical Clinic at Esplanade & 5:15 or an Emergency Services Station near the Civic Plazas at 3:00 and 9:00.

If your children dislike the taste of water, mix in a little fruit juice, but don't give them juice or soda all the time. Bagged or boxed juices are great because the containers are easy to pack back to camp when they're empty. Sealed sippy cups are perfect for the little ones. Older kids might like to decorate their own canteen (with stickers, etc.) or to have their own hydration backpack (like a Camelbak). Get kids involved with their own hydration by giving a gold star every time they have to fill up their water bottle (which doubles as a way for parents to track how much water is being consumed).

For all kids, supplement water with electrolytes (which contain sodium and potassium salts) to replace the body's natural electrolytes lost through sweating. Dilute electrolyte drinks (like Emergen-C, Gatorade, or PowerAde) half-and-half with water.

## WHOLE FAMILIES ARE HAPPY FAMILIES!

If a child is reported as missing, Black Rock Rangers initiate a Lost Child Shutdown. An all-hands alert goes out to all law enforcement and key event staff. The gates of the city are SHUT DOWN! No one enters or exits until the child is located. Citizen alerts are broadcast on Burning Man Information Radio (BMIR).

This is a great system – what other city has the ability to lock its doors when a child is separated from his/her family? It is also massively time consuming and taxing to Black Rock City's infrastructure. Losing your child will not only stress you out, it will be a burden to the entire City!

Because shutting the city down means the flow of cars in and out of the city is stopped, PLEASE conduct a thorough search before reporting your child as 'lost'. The vast majority of 'lost children' in Black Rock City are actually children who have been briefly separated from their parents and are within a few hundred feet of where they were last seen. So, the moral of the story is: KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR CHILD AT ALL TIMES!



## FEED YOUR KID'S ENERGY AND WELL-BEING

The desert heat can keep hunger down, yet it's important for your children to eat nutritious food to keep their energy stable and to avoid meltdowns. There are many guides and references on cooking and eating on the playa, so they won't be repeated here. Make sure to bring lots of healthy foods that your kids really like to eat.

Have your kids snack frequently, and get them to eat before they realize they're hungry. Setting and sticking to a routine can be very helpful. Focus on high energy foods like trail mix, nuts, jerky, dried fruit, protein bars, and apples. Keep meals simple but plan on having protein every day. Pureed fruit/meal packets don't need refrigeration until they have been opened. Include salty foods to prevent electrolyte imbalance. Think about replenishing your child's fluids. Crackers and chips rob fluid, whereas applesauce, grapes, and moist granola bars replenish them.

Diarrhea is extremely difficult to deal with on the playa and often causes severe dehydration. Be extra careful to avoid anything that might give your child diarrhea. For example, never allow your children to eat tainted or questionable food. Be wary of milk and meats.

## DEALING WITH DUST

Dust is one of the biggest challenges of parenting on the playa. Dust will get into your tent or RV and into everything you bring. Make sure you and your little ones have protection (masks, goggles, and hats) every time you leave your camp, even for a trip to the bathroom.

Plan to hunker down during major dust storms. If you're not in an RV, keep an empty space in your car for kids to ride out dust storms. Set them up with water, snacks, a pee-bottle, water drinking bottles, and activities. When you're out and about, carry the What, Where, When with you. If you find yourself stranded away from your camp during an extended dust storm, find a kid-friendly activity (marked with the kids symbol) with a shade structure to hang out in until it passes.

It's hard (if not impossible) to get toddlers and small kids to wear face masks. However, bandanas can be great - especially

if you play "cops and robbers" or other similar games at home before you go. Teach your child to pull the bandana over his or her mouth when the dust flares up.

Playa dust hurts the eyes too. Make sure your kids have well-fitting goggles, anything from ski goggles, to swimming goggles, to industrial dust goggles. Practice wearing the goggles at home and incorporate them into the kid's play world.

The alkaline playa dust has a high pH (which means that it's the opposite of acidic). Keeping a neutral pH balance can make a big difference in your playa experience. Keep a spritz bottle handy with a little lemon juice, lime juice, or vinegar (all of which are acidic), which will help neutralize the pH. Wet down or wash your kid's skin with this mixture.

## CARE FOR TENDER SKIN

Playa dust will dry up your child's tender skin, dry up noses, and cause cracks in their hands and bare feet. Sunscreen, lip balm, and lotion are your best friends on the playa. At nearly 4,000 feet above sea level, the atmosphere provides much less filtering of sunlight. You will burn much faster and more severely than at lower elevations.

Put on sunscreen every morning and repeat as needed during the day. Avoid putting lotion-based sunscreen on your child's forehead, because it may run into his or her eyes and burn, but always put it on their scalp (hats often get lost). Instead of lotion, try using a face sunscreen or paste stick. Children's aerosol sunblock is also helpful. Sunblock should be applied when your child has no clothing on as clothes tend to move around or get discarded during the day. You may want to have a 'spa time' routine in the morning when you show them how you put on sunblock and encourage them to do the same.

Wipe your kid's skin down every night and apply healthy oils and moisturizers. Swab the insides of their little noses with lotion or oil to combat dried-out nasal passages.

Playa dust can be hard on tender feet, so socks are a good idea, even with sandals. Watch for blisters. Carry some bandaids or moleskin to keep blisters from getting out of control. Moisturize tender skin with lotion before putting on socks, which adds another barrier from the dust.

## HANDY FIRST AID

In addition to any prescriptions that your child is taking, bring some basic first-aid items. These may include: liquid or chewable acetaminophen, sunburn lotion with lidocaine, cough syrup, band-aids, Pedialyte and moleskin for blisters.

## TAKE CARE OF THOSE LITTLE EARS

Much of the fun of life on the playa comes with a lot of very loud noise, which can harm sensitive young ears. Always carry ear protection headphones for your child - you never know when you will come across some loud fun you'll want to enjoy safely. Nighttime on the playa is noisy with music, flamethrowers, and booms. Protect little ears and reduce anxiety levels with padded ear protectors.





# CAMPING WITH KIDS IN BLACK ROCK CITY

## WHERE SHOULD WE CAMP?

Families with children are welcome to camp anywhere in Black Rock City. However, giving some thought to where you will camp can make a difference in your Burning Man experience.

Consider, for example, the nighttime noise levels and how they might affect your child's ability to get a good night's sleep. Although there are no officially designated "loud" and "quiet" neighborhoods, the front edge of the city (along the Esplanade, and on "A" street) tends to be the loudest. Large-scale sound installations are located along the ends of the city (in the vicinity of 2:00 and 10:00). Consider, also, where you might want to hang out and what you may want to see. You may want to locate your camp away from adult-themed camps (for more info contact Playa Info). Find a site that will make travel convenient.

Going to Burning Man with a group that can share resources (kitchen gear, etc.) is almost always a good idea, and it's especially true for parents. Having other adults that you trust to back you up and provide support is really useful should you have a really tough day, suddenly feel overwhelmed, or get sick or injured. But don't assume your campmates will be happy to take care of your children for you – they may be struggling just to take care of themselves. Sharing this responsibility successfully requires open and direct communication prior to arriving on playa – set expectations together and make sure everyone is on the same page.

"Kidsville" is a village within Black Rock City that is committed to providing a community for all families and their friends. Members of Kidsville come from around the world and from all walks of life. The village of Kidsville spans the block from 5:30 & D to 5:15 & F, with the main entrance at 5:30 & E. Registration is required to camp in Kidsville. For more info please visit: <http://kidsville.org/>

Even if you are not registered to camp with Kidsville, camping anywhere between 5 and 5:30 may be a good choice because you will be close to Rangers, Medical services, Earth Guardians, Potties, information resources and Kidsville, and far away from adult-themed activities.

## SET UP A KID FRIENDLY CAMP

A large shaded area will go a long way to making your days in the desert enjoyable. Kids are mobile, so the larger the area, the more likely they'll stay in the shade. If you have toddlers, enclose your shaded area with inexpensive garden fencing. Bring little chairs and tables. Install a garden mister in their play area. Bring daytime activities that encourage your kids to stay in camp during the heat of the day.



When the sun drops over the horizon, temperatures can quickly plummet fifty degrees. Overnight lows in the 40's can seem exceptionally cold after extensive daytime sun. Bring warm clothing and a good sleeping bag. If your family is new to camping, have your kids

practice sleeping in sleeping bags before you leave home in the weeks leading up to the event. Whether it's a stuffed animal, special blanket, or sippy cup, be sure to pack a familiar object from home to make your kid more comfortable, and help them settle in and rest when they're tired.

## BLACK ROCK SCOUTS

Black Rock Scouts is a program for Burning Man kids, based on the Ten Principles of Burning Man. The goal is to teach kids what it takes to survive and thrive at Burning Man, how to embrace their creativity and how to get involved in their Black Rock City community. By engaging with them when they're young, these young Burners are more likely to volunteer as they get older, take ownership of their community and become model Burners.



Camps, services and the Black Rock community host educational events and offer volunteer opportunities for Scouts. This integration also helps to highlight the benefit of have kids at the event and recognize that they are, in fact, the future of Burning Man. To get involved with the

Burning Scouts, check out their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/blackrockscouts/>. On playa you can find the Black Rock Scouts at Kidsville (at 5:30 & D).



# HAPPY BURNING KIDS

Taking your children to Burning Man will validate their imagination, inspire their creativity and give them confidence. However, your kids are going to also get cranky, tired, overwhelmed and everything in between. Regardless of your kid's experience, one of the best pieces of advice is to just relax, enjoy the moment and do your best to make the experience a positive one for your child.

## PREPARE THEM FOR THE EXPERIENCE

Until you have been to Burning Man yourself, it is difficult to envision the depth and breadth of the community and the experience. If you haven't done so already, teach your children about Burning Man culture, compassion, responsibility, respect, self-reliance, courtesy and generosity. Talk to them ahead of time about the kinds of things they may see and hear at Burning Man (such as fire, nudity, explosions, mutant vehicles, etc.). Check out Burning Man's YouTube Channel for some videos to watch with your child before leaving home: <http://www.youtube.com/burningman>.

They still won't really know what to expect, but having some context is handy. Talk to them about the Survival Guide, about the leave-no-trace philosophy, and about what Burning Man means to you and to other people. Let them know which other family friends will be there. Like everyone, they will develop their own interpretation of the experience while they are there.



## KEEPING A SCHEDULE

While you'll be tempted by all of the fun happenings in BRC it's important to stay as close as possible to your child's normal daily routine. Observe and support their normal meal times and sleep patterns as much as you can. A regular schedule can wind up being their touchstone to help them feel confident and secure on playa.

## HAVING FUN

Having fun and enjoying Burning Man is one of the main points, right? Here are a few suggestions on how to have fun with your kids.

Want to see everything at Burning Man? Everyone does, but it's impossible. Most kids don't have the stamina to keep up with adults in a challenging environment. Break the day into chunks, with lots of breaks for resting, snacking, and rejuvenating. The best times for exploring the playa are early morn-

ing, late afternoon, evening and dusk. Avoid the midday heat by taking a nap!

If you're so inclined, check out the "What Where When" guide you will receive from the Greeters and pick a few kid-friendly activities to do throughout the day. Or just explore! Everyone is only able to see a small portion of what Burning Man has to offer. So relax and enjoy - at your child's pace.

At big events like the Man and Temple burns, stay toward the back of the crowd so that you can exit easily if it becomes overwhelming for your children. Take along folding stools that they can stand on to see above the crowd. Don't feel bad about pulling back when the chaos starts. Kidsville also has its own early burn which lets the little ones have their own fun if you opt to skip the main event.

Be sure you've got some fun things for the kids to do while you're hanging out at camp. Bring art projects (FYI crayons melt so stick to colored pencils or markers), body paints, costumes, water guns, and games. Have the kids help with theme camp art. Let them help set up camp, prepare food, or whatever else they like to do.

Parents need to have fun, too! Work up plans for how to get out and do grown-up things while someone else watches the kids. If you camp with friends or other families, try trading off nighttime watches. Above all, be patient. If you find yourself getting crabby and snapping at the kids, settle down and take a break.

## THE PLAYA WITH A KID

Black Rock City is a bicycle town. Bikes are good for older kids and adults, and wagons or bike trailers are good for younger ones. Child seats on bicycles are wonderful if they are rigged up with a parasol or umbrella for sun protection. Nothing beats a mobile shade structure for exploring the playa! Load up your wagon or trailer with drinks, snacks, fun stuff, and kids, so you can keep going when they've run out of steam.

Many people hop onto mutant vehicles to get around but beware that you'll likely not be dropped off where you were picked up. Ask if kids are allowed on a mutant vehicle before you board.



## COSTUMES AND NIGHTTIME LIGHTING

Loose, breathable clothes provide comfort and protection from the sun, and can be layered with warmer things as the sun goes down. Some kids are comfortable going naked, but need to be protected from sunburn and the alkaline dust.

Bring costumes like capes, animal ears, tails, wings, furry vests and sparkly clothes. Have your children wear sun-resistant clothing. There are great one-piece sun suits available in fun patterns that can double as costume and sun protection. Some children might like carrying an umbrella for shade and as part of their costume.

For night time, one-piece fleece animal suits and footed pajamas make a great top layer. Don't forget warm fuzzy hats for chilly nights. Write your camp name on his/her favorite things, in case they get lost.

Kids in costumes are incredibly cute and people will want to photograph your child and give them swag (bracelets, necklaces, stickers, etc). Official media photographers wear laminates and if you are uncomfortable with anyone taking a picture of your child, say so.

When moving around at night, make sure everyone has lights for themselves and their vehicles, preferably ones that help you keep track of each other. Flashlights are OK, but they're a bit harsh on the playa at night, and break easily if dropped. Glow sticks are much better, particularly multi-colored necklaces and bracelets. The necklaces can be a lot of fun for playing night games, and are great on bikes and wagons to help keep other people from running into you. Remember, not everyone is keeping an eye out for 3-foot-high people while walking around in the dark.



## KIDS AND BURNING MAN CULTURE

Children view their surroundings and lives through significantly different lenses than adults. Parents have an amazing opportunity to experience Burning Man through their eyes and their spirit.

Burning Man is an excellent place to reinforce open-mindedness and tolerance. You may be surprised at how kids interpret things they see and how quickly they become blasé about things you worry about most. Be prepared to answer challenging questions, but look at it as an opportunity to discuss issues on your own terms. Steer them away from whatever you feel uncomfortable with, but be matter-of-fact about the things they are curious about.

Even though Burning Man welcomes children, don't expect the community to change its culture to shield kids from things you may consider age-inappropriate. It's up

to parents to protect their kids as they feel is necessary.

Don't worry about the nudity. If you don't make a big deal about it, they won't either. Children will naturally spend the first few hours pointing at naked people, but they will soon get over it.

Some parents have a secret code for checking in with their children on their level of comfort with strange situations, for example, green/yellow/red (where green is "no problem at all," yellow is "I'm uncomfortable or uncertain, but willing to see how it pans out; keep checking in," and red is "get me out of here.") Having a code means you can check in on them in a group without having to potentially embarrass them.

It's parents' responsibility to control their kids and curb their behavior. It's not okay to let them run wild through camps, or climb unsupervised onto structures, art work, or mutant vehicles without permission of the owner. It's important for kids to be polite and respectful, just as all Burners expect of each other as part of the Black Rock community.



# CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

**Some serious considerations must be addressed before making the decision to bring a special needs child to Burning Man. For example:**

1. How urgent or severe are your child's health issues? The on-playa medical support is not equipped for extreme emergencies and the nearest hospital is a two-hour drive (without traffic). A medical evacuation via helicopter is extremely pricey.
2. Does your child require special medical equipment? Determine ahead of time how you will keep devices dust-free and operational, how you will supply power to the equipment, and what you'll do if the equipment breaks down.
3. Does your child require medication? Make sure you have proper storage that protects medication from extreme heat and out of the dust. Figure out how to keep the medication cool if it needs refrigeration.
4. Does your child have behavioral issues? Certain types of behaviors - such as hyperactivity, violence, or acting out in potentially violent, dangerous or lewd ways will not be acceptable in the Burning Man community, just as they are not acceptable in a classroom, grocery store or anywhere else in public.
5. Does your child react adversely to loud sound, music, bright lights, or strange costumes? There are all types of sources of sensory overload on the playa. These things may frighten your child, or may cause an anxiety attack or seizure.
6. Will there be another responsible adult with you to help you attend to your child's needs? Burning Man is supposed to be fun for your child and you! Don't try to go it alone. It won't do you or your child any good if you are overworked, overtired and overstressed.
7. Will you be prepared to leave early or in a moment's notice? If your child gets sick, hurt or emotionally overwhelmed, you must be willing and able to leave Black Rock City at ANY time in an emergency. This includes leaving all your camping gear behind and making arrangements to come back for it, or have someone else take care of it for you.

## BABY BURNERS

While many people have brought babies with them to Burning Man, parents should think long and hard before they decide to expose their babies to the dry desert air, dust, temperature extremes, and loud noises at Burning Man. If you're an experienced burner, feel that you're up to the task, have access to an RV or other cool, calm environment, and have plenty of support, here are some suggestions for making the experience a positive one.

### KEEP YOUR BABY FULLY HYDRATED.

The importance of hydration cannot be stressed enough. If you are breast-feeding, make sure that you drink at least 8 oz of pure water before and after you nurse. If your baby is drinking formula, dilute it more than usual. Train your babies at home to drink water from a bottle.

Watch carefully for signs of dehydration. These may include: decreased frequency of urination and fewer wet diapers, less tears when the baby cries, and a dry mouth or tongue. Your baby should wet a minimum of six diapers a day. If the baby seems lethargic and stops having bowel movements or begins to have small, hard, or dry bowel movements, seek medical help.

Products like Pedialyte can be used if your baby starts to get dehydrated, but try to avoid needing it. For planning purposes, bring enough Pedialyte to cover a full days' worth of fluids, i.e. if they are drinking about four 8 oz bottles of formula a day, then bring about 32 oz. per day of Pedialyte in case you need it.

### AVOID EXPOSURE

Cover your baby's skin and head. Babies need bonnets with brims, and light-colored long-sleeved outfits. Do not put the baby in an exposed backpack and spend time in the sun. Make sure the baby is shaded. If you have a baby that is crawling, make sure they have adequate leg coverings. Tender skin will be chaffed by the dust in your trailer or space; avoid putting babies directly on the surface of the playa.

### WATCH FOR LETHARGY

Lethargy means that your baby is in trouble! Signs of lethargy include inability to communicate in the usual way (for example, moaning instead of crying), and limpness or lack of normal movement. If your baby becomes lethargic, immediately take him or her to a cool (preferably air conditioned) place to cool down. Dowse the baby with mist or water.

If even slightly concerned, Burning Man Medical has doctors, nurses, medics, medicine, and air conditioning. Stations are located behind Center Camp at 6:00 and at the 3:00 and 9:00 plazas. Look for the neon red cross on top of the buildings.



# PLAYA TEENS AND TWEENS

Even though they sometimes look like and act like grown-ups, teens and tweens are still children who require a parent's supervision. Don't be shy about setting reasonable rules and boundaries for your teens. Their safety and well-being is ultimately the parent or guardian's responsibility.

When deciding whether to take your teen to Burning Man, consider the following.

- Do you have a great rapport and rock-solid communication avenues with your child? If not, difficulties with your teen will most likely be magnified by the intensity of Burning Man – which may lead to problems.
- Is your child promiscuous? If so, how do you feel about him or her exhibiting and/or engaging in sexual activity at Burning Man?



- Can you trust your child to maintain an age-appropriate level of responsibility for their own behavior?

Make sure you have "The Talk" with your teen before the event, whatever The Talk entails for your family. Prepare your teen may be exposed to many advanced or unconventional adult behaviors that they may never have experienced before.

While on-playa, monitor your teen's health and remind them to drink enough fluids, get enough sleep, and eat properly. Keep lines of communication open and check in frequently with your teen's level of comfort.

If you're comfortable letting your teen explore alone or with a friend, set clear time limits and establish a rendezvous time and location. Helpful hint: have your teen wear a watch! Parents should wear one too.

## ON-PLAYA RESOURCES

### BLACK ROCK RANGERS

The Black Rock Rangers are Burning Man's non-confrontational mediation volunteers that can help you resolve problems. The Rangers help to preserve the safety, welfare, and quality of experience of our community. Rangers patrol the event 24 hours a day.

When you arrive at Black Rock City, introduce your children to a Ranger. Help them become familiar with what Rangers look like (khaki shirts, khaki utility kilts or shorts, ID badge). Make sure they know Rangers are their friends, they can feel safe and comfortable with a Ranger, and they should seek out a Ranger if they're lost.

The Black Rock Ranger Headquarters is located on the Esplanade near Center Camp. Rangers can be located at Ranger HQ in Center Camp and the Ranger Outposts at the behind the 3:00 and 9:00 plazas on C street.

### EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

As a member of a community built on self-reliance, YOU are responsible for your own basic first aid needs. However, if you or your children require medical assistance, contact an Emergency

Services Department volunteer or a Black Rock Ranger, or visit the medical clinic or a medical station. Trained emergency medical personnel are on duty 24 hours a day and emergency evacuation is available.

The Medical Clinic is near Center Camp at Esplanade and 5:15. The Emergency Services Stations are just past the 3:00 and 9:00 plazas on C Street. At night, look for a neon-green medical cross.

### BMIR 94.5 FM AND EMERGENCY BROADCAST INFORMATION

Burning Man Information Radio (BMIR) is at 94.5 FM, broadcasting critical travel, emergency, and general information, 24 hours a day. In case of emergency, tune into 94.5 FM. If a child is reported lost, bulletins will be broadcast on BMIR.