

My name is Matthew Bernard and I am writing this letter to share my experience at ALE with all parties involved in this decision. I spent thirty days at the wilderness boot camp called ALE. Below I will express my comments and concerns in hopes that my voice will be heard in a case that has everything to do with my future.

One of my biggest concerns my left foot which has possibly been permanently due to first degree frostbite. Since day four I had expressed my concerns about the well being of my feet but no action was taken. I was simply told to continue on with telling field instructors about the condition of my feet. They did not take me to urgent care until Wednesday, March 19th which was day twenty-six for me at the wilderness boot camp.

Every Thursday there was a staff change along with the arrival of new bear bags which were small duffle bags with a weeks worth of lunch food. The food that is given to us that needs to last seven days could easily be eaten in three, four days at most. I was forced to ration my food constantly and on a daily basis eating not nearly till I was full.

When the group went on expo or whenever we were in a situation where we either had not toilet paper or could not use toilet paper I along with the rest of the group had no choice but to wipe our bottoms with icy snow in below freezing temperatures. This left private areas of mine damp and very cold and because of the region of the body it was hard to find a sanitary way of drying and keeping that area warm after the wiping process.

Every day we were forced to drink excessive amounts of water. We had to drink four thirty-two ounce Nalgene water bottles in a day or we were threatened with being put back to Turtle Phase or the possibility of being sent on solo which consists of hiking up Haystack Mountain with a sled loaded with two five gallon sport jugs full of water. We also couldn't eat the next meal unless we had x amount of water in our bodies.

Constantly we had to redo calls because one person did not make it. This consists of but is not limited to unpacking our packs, redoing layouts, setting camp back up, getting undressed and getting back in our sleeping bags all because one kid continually does not make call in the allotted time. As a negative consequence for missing calls or just not living up to certain staff expectations, we would do pack drills. Pack drills happened frequently and often just because the staff "said so". We would take our fully packed packs outside and we would be given a time usually ten or twelve minutes. In that time we had to take everything out and off our packs and toss it on the ground which was covered in wet snow while it was snowing. All our gear became damp and cold and snow covered. Then we had to pack everything back in our packs before time ran out. Though there was always the same kid who never made it so we would end up doing it two or three more times. At the end of the day our gear and clothes would be wet and cold and it would remain that way until the end of the week.

When we received showers we were given ten minutes but the water would get cold after seven or eight minutes so we were forced to rinse off in really cold water.

For the first two weeks we received Emergen C which is a powder which we put in our water to get 1000mg of vitamin C in our body. We were told that they gave us the Emergen C to us for health reasons. Though the following weeks we were told that we didn't get them due to it being a negative consequence. Meaning that we didn't get it because they took it away as a consequence for not doing something properly.

Two negative consequences have to do with sanitary eating conditions. There is the two sump chuck and the ten sump dirt sump. If your cup is dirty for the second time showing it to an instructor they can