

## **RAFTING WITH CHILDREN & TEENS**

There are wonderful, scenic, river rafting trips in California suitable for children as young as 4 years old and we have raft trips located close to Sacramento and Lake Tahoe, and further north in the Shasta-Trinity and Klamath National Forests. You can opt for a short half-day run, where you can bring your own picnic lunch, or a great family rafting vacation of 2 to 4 days or more. A great way to experience our multi-day trips on some of our easier runs is our [Special Family Trips](#) where on specific dates, youths raft for half-price. Child friendly meals are provided and prepared by our courteous, professional river guides. On regular trips, youths and seniors (bring the grandparents) receive a 10% discount. Group discounts are also available for groups of 6 or more. [Youth groups](#) receive big discounts and Tributary caters to many scout and youth groups.

There are age limit recommendations, but children's capabilities vary considerably and we will be glad to discuss this to ensure the best possible experience for the family. We suggest a minimum age of 4 years old on Class 2 rivers, 8 years on Class 3 and 13 years on Class 4.

**For the younger or more timid child**, try a brief introduction on a half-day, Class 2 run on the [Lower Middle Fork American River](#). This scenic wilderness raft trip in the Gold Country is a little gem. It is more relaxed, mellower, and much less traveled than the nearby South Fork American. Though close to civilization, it is possible to feel that you are really getting away from it all. There are safe beach areas for picnicking and play, and side hikes up creeks into shady dells with waterfalls. Wild-life is often seen, and in late summer, stops are made to pick the most incredible juicy black berries. Inflatable kayaks are often supplied for some added adventure for the older youths and adults to share, so the trip can accommodate a diverse group quite happily. Also for a mixed group, we offer a 4 mile run on the [South Fork American River \(Lotus Run\)](#) above the more advanced Gorge Run. Youths from 5 years and the less able bodied can raft with the group at the beginning of the trip, and everyone lunches together. The younger group stays at our riverside camp to play, or can visit the nearby Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park or local nature areas. The rest of the group continues on the river for a 9 mile Class 3 run. The [East Fork Carson River](#), close to South Lake Tahoe, is another Class 2 run for 1-2 days, which offers wonderful hot springs, wilderness camping and unique High Sierra scenery. In a good snow-pack year it can be rafted into July. Also see below for trips on the Trinity and Lower Klamath which provide both Class 2 and 3 sections of river, so these trips can be customized to accommodate the younger child.

**For youths from 7-8 years and younger teens**, the [South Fork American River](#), located in the historic Gold Country, is one of the most popular rivers in the state. It provides an excellent first time trip, with options from half-day to 2+ days. Near Lake Tahoe and Reno, a fun, ½ day run on the [Truckee River](#) is available from mid-May through September. This should not be confused with the raft rental float trips out of Tahoe City. The [Trinity River](#) and [Lower Klamath](#) in N. California both flow throughout the summer and inflatable kayaks are available on these rivers. Include a trip to Mount Shasta or the Redwoods, and you have the complete vacation. Wild-life sightings are frequent, the fishing is good and great riverside camping on gently sloping beaches.

**For adventurous teenagers**, the [Middle Fork American River](#) is a good step up for those who have already rafted or for the more athletic youth. Its 17 miles provide Class 4 action throughout the summer on 1-3 day trips. For a wilderness camping experience raft the Middle Fork American for 2-3 days and enjoy side hikes up shaded creeks, plunge pools, waterfalls, and great fishing. A combination of the [South Fork American and Middle Fork American](#) also makes a great 2-3 day trip. In the spring and in some years into July, the [North Fork Yuba River](#) is a very scenic, un-crowded Class 4 trip, just an hour from Nevada City. The area also offers great scenery and rustic, historic towns.

**Our experience** in running safe and fun trips on any level of whitewater is a great reason to pick us for your family or youth group trip. Often parents are more nervous about their child's first river trip than the child themselves, so it is a good idea to pick an outfitter like Tributary that has been in the business for many years. We have an excellent safety record and a low turnover of staff.

**Our guides** are very versatile and responsible. We select them for their personalities, as well as their guiding skills. At a minimum, they are certified in first aid, CPR and swift-water rescue and many have more advanced training like Wilderness First Responder and Emergency Medical Technician. These skills are rarely utilized, but bee stings, scrapes and bruises etc. can happen on shore, and people should be more confident about their trip knowing any incidents can be handled in a professional manner.

**Our trips** will always commence with a safety talk and some paddling instruction. Life jackets will be checked for the correct fit, and this a very good reason for us asking for the ages of youths participating. Most often, the rafts are paddled by the clients with a guide controlling the raft from the rear and calling out commands to turn the boat, paddle or stop. Oar boats or oar/paddle combination are also possible and can be a good idea when a parent wishes to be able to hold onto a child or just to give the younger ones a break, though most people like to paddle for a more involved experience. We will provide a detailed list of what to bring, which is very basic for day trips during the summer.

**Our licenses** to run on these rivers are issued by the managing agency, which may be the USDA Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, State Parks or the county.

**Our owner:** since 1978 has been Dan Buckley, and his son Scott is a veteran rafter who went on his first river trip before he was a year old. Scott has now rafted on many rivers throughout California, Colorado, Idaho and Oregon. Tributary Whitewater Tours looks forward to introducing your family to the joys of an outdoors adventure. We hope that the experience will be remembered for a long time and with much laughter and that such trips will become regular family outings.



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## ***Tributary Whitewater Tours LLC***

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***Guiding California Rivers Trips for 30 years***