

Hiking and Backpacking Standards

Day trips suggested for Grades K –12
Extended trips with overnight camping suggested for Grades 4 – 12

Equipment

For all hikes, each participant must have:

- Suitable footwear; boots with rigid soles and ankle support are needed for extended trips,
- sun protection,
- whistle or other signaling device, and
- any necessary medication.

For hikes that are greater than 2hrs. All participants must also have:

- Water bottle(s).

For extended trips with overnight camping all participants must include:

- waterproofing method for essential items (sleeping bag, change of clothes, medication etc.),
- a compass with knowledge of its use,
- comfortable “campsite” shoes with light treads, and
- extra socks (2 pairs).
- see general guidelines for full list of equipment required.

For all hikes, group equipment must include:

- map of route (If hike originates from base camp, leave a copy of the map at base camp);and
- first aid kit (including moleskin).
 - In addition, for all hikes that are greater than 2 hrs group equipment must include:
- adequate and safe water supply,
- repair kit for backpacks,
- bear spray – leader use only (minimum number as per leader/student ratios in the



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supervision section), and

- matches, stored and waterproofed in 3 different locations.
- communication equipment (satellite, radio, cell phone or any other two-way communication system) as needed.

Instruction

- length and difficulty of trip must be commensurate with age and ability of students.
- Educators should postpone the trip if there is the possibility of threatening weather that could put student safety at risk.

Pay attention to:

- The temperature during the day,
the length of time in the sun,
- previous training, and
- length of preparation.

Before any hiking activities students should be instructed on:

- how to recognize and treat hypothermia/hyperthermia and dehydration,
- foot care,
- proper clothing,
- fire safety,
- bear safety,
- minimal impact hiking methods, and
- hiking safety rules (see below).
- drinking water safely and sanitation (e.g. how to treat water for Giardia, etc.)



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For overnight trips, students must receive instruction on:

- navigation, map reading, route selection, use of a compass.

Before the hiking trip, students must demonstrate:

- their familiarity with the route,
- an adequate fitness level for the planned hike,
- their awareness of emergency procedures and signal to assemble
- knowledge of the hiking rules outlined below, and
- how to properly fit and load a pack.

While hiking students must:

- stay with their group at all times,
- use a buddy system,
- stay on existing trails, and
- Avoid travelling in darkness except in an emergency.

Supervision

- At least two leaders must have current first-aid certificates (see *guidelines* for first-aid requirements).
- For extended hikes into mountainous areas, at least 2 leaders must be familiar with mountain rescue techniques, avalanche safety and emergency evacuation.
 - Recommended Leader: Student ratios.
 - Grades 4-9 1:6 (min. 3 leaders)
 - Grades 10-12 1:8 (min. 2 leaders)
- Duties of leaders should be clearly outlined by the staff member in charge.
- A leader should be assigned to the front and back of each group.
- The front and back of each group should be within whistle contact at all times.
- Designate regular check-in points/sites
- Hiking pace should be adjusted to ensure it is comfortable and accessible to all participants.



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- Designate an adult to accompany an injured student to hospital. This cannot be the staff member in charge.
- Where appropriate alert First Nations, Wardens, Rangers, and/or other officials that your group is in the area and for how long.

