

Summer Camping Standards

Standards for Grades 4 –12

Equipment

All participants must have:

- solid and broken-in shoes/boots,
- sun hat and a toque is recommended,
- rain gear,
- suitable layers of clothing,
- extra change of clothing,
- suitable sleeping bag,
- sun protection, and
- personal medication (where necessary)

Group equipment must include:

- communication equipment (satellite or radio phone as appropriate for location)
- first Aid kit(s)
- propane/liquid gas type stoves, if cooking on stoves,
- waterproof matches stored in 3 separate places
- shovel/trowel
- animal/bear spray - leader use only (minimum number as per leader/student ratios in supervision section)
- adequate and safe water supply
- shelters (tents, tarps etc.)
- latrine materials (where required)

An equipment check is required before departure.



Environmental Concerns (site selection, campfires, soaps, waste disposal etc.)

- all outdoor education activities should be conducted in a manner that minimizes the impact on the environment.
- Department of Environment's [Into the Wilderness](#) brochure should be followed.
- camping site selection should try to minimize the risks associated with leaning (falling) trees, wasp nests, bird nests, bears, animals and other natural hazards

Instruction

All programs must be planned in detail and with contingency plans for inclement weather. Program activities must be age and skill level appropriate.

Refer to other applicable Standards and Guidelines (hiking and backpacking, canoeing, etc.).

Prior to the camping trip students should receive instruction regarding:

- how to recognize and treat hypothermia/hyperthermia
- fire safety
- bear safety
- [Leave No Trace](#) (LNT) camping, waste management and ethics
- menu planning
- proper clothing
- camp safety rules (see below)
- water safety
- sanitation including precautions against Giardia
- search protocol



Prior to the camping trip students must demonstrate:

- proper use of camping equipment (stoves, tents etc.)

When group first arrives at site:

- The likelihood of bear contact must be assessed and minimized.
- Camp layout and camp boundaries must be established with the group.
- If possible eating and sleeping areas should be separated by 100 meters from sleeping areas.
- Behavioral expectations, boundaries for activities, and assembly procedures must be established with the group.
- A process to account for students and to identify any students who may be missing must be set with the group.
- Search protocols should be reviewed.
- Camp rules must be made clear to all participants.

Camp rules must include:

- All food items, gum, sunscreens, repellants and cosmetics can not be taken into tents or kept in tents at night,
- At night food must be stored in airtight containers and moved at least 100m away from nearest tent,
- Students can only use saws or knives under supervision, axes can only be used by adults.
- When camping with students in Grades 4-7, filling and lighting camp stoves is not permitted.
- Students filling and lighting camp stoves (Grades 8-12) should be under constant visual supervision
- No open flame in or near tents is allowed.



Supervision

- At least two leaders must have current first-aid certificates
- Camping specific recommended leader to students ratios for
 - 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 buddy system should be used to ensure student safety.
- male and female leaders should carry out night checks.
- A vehicle for emergency purposes should be accessible at base camp.
- an adult must be designated to accompany an injured student to hospital- this must not be the “staff member or supervisor in charge”.
- Where appropriate, communicate to First Nations, Wardens, Rangers, and/or other officials that your group is in the area and for how long.
- Group leaders must be knowledgeable of, and skilled in, safe camping techniques.
- Where appropriate, leaders will be skilled in wilderness survival camping techniques.
- Refer to Appendix 16 Outdoor Cooking Standards.



Winter Camping Standards

Standards for Grades 5-12

Equipment

Individual:

- emergency fire starting kit,
- weather appropriate clothing and equipment (checklist),
- personal medication (where necessary),
- -20C winter sleeping bag, or two good summer bags with equivalent temperature range,
- bivy-sacks may extend temperature of sleeping system, although they may also cause an accumulation of moisture,
- closed cell sleeping pad (1/2 inch).

Group:

- wall tent,
- appropriate frame/rope/support,
- wood stove/liquid fueled stove/propane/fittings,
- table(s),
- back/side of stove and floor heat protection,
- floor tarp(s) for sleeping tents,
- nail puller for spikes used as wood frame security in windy areas,
- rope lashing, axe(s), saw(s),
- latrine materials (where required),

Snow shelters, snow caves, and quinzhees

- terrain assessment for shelter construction and avalanche potential,
- tough shovels for student use and type of snow,
- manageable terrain and useable snow conditions are required,
- when building a snow shelter snow often occurs adjacent when camping in higher risk avalanche terrain,
- waterproof outerwear if snow cave or shelter building.



Winter Camping Standards

Instruction

- have a discussion on hypothermia, frostbite and trench foot before camping.
- [Leave No Trace](#) (LNT) camping, waste management and ethics
- students can help in assembling the wall tent, knot tying and lashing tent frames
- if you are cutting dry trees for the tent frame, use saws
- managing snow: use a wall tent base, shelter construction, kitchen area
- heat shields behind/beside and beneath wall tent stove
- stove pipes screwed and/or wired
- bottom of wood tent frames spiked
- dress like an onion, in layers
- limit cotton in any item of winter clothing
- emergency tent evacuation plan and rehearsal
- winter diets have elevated calorie needs
- plan for regular eating, food consumption and fluid replacement
- buddy system, general awareness, shelter construction
- ensure adequate ventilation in shelters
- toques, scarves and tubes for enhanced warmth
- no stoves or lanterns in shelters
- fuel containers well marked *North American fuel containers serve as water bottles in Europe.
- candle and candle lantern used away from sleeping bags
- secure equipment for overnight snowfalls
- check for leaning and wind-thrown trees
- alternate water treatment if not boiling water.

Supervision

Ratios:

- Grades 5-8 ratios of 1:5 required
- Grades 9-12 ratios of 1:8 required



Winter Camping Standards

Leaders

- two experienced adult leaders are required on all overnight camping trips including male /female.
- first aid certification and kit
- seasonal and non-seasonal familiarity with the area of higher risk terrain.
- terrain classification-SIMPLE
- avalanche course completion required in avalanche areas or if terrain analysis requires trip leaders with training.
- previous winter camping experience
- group travel procedures (see van, activity)
- previous camping experience with grade appropriate students
- hypothermia, frostbite and trench foot
 - ongoing checks using buddy system.
- check all clothing and equipment prior to trip departure
- gender appropriate supervisor in each tent for over-night trips in wall tents and cabins.
- wood stoves are restocked under adult supervision when grade appropriate.
- emergency escape plans are discussed for tent fires and shelter collapse.
- wood and personal gear are well organized, outside, or against inside walls
- drying racks are appropriately placed
- time and activity boundaries set
- snow shelter construction, 1 student inside at a time, buddy helping
- personal well-being sunglasses, sun screen, chap stick, fluid replacement
- snow shelters are collapsed immediately after use
- constant re-hydration reminders
- axe and/or saw use discussion
- check students regularly, provide for contingencies, adequate fluid intake
- camp out of known higher risk areas
- site location and terrain hazard assessment knowledge.
- green tree boughs should not be used for bedding in high use areas.
- leaders should be aware of ice formation variables and layered ice (aufeis) development in area.



Winter Camping Standards

- cook in a central kitchen area to monitor stove fuel use, food consumption and waste management
- for the purpose of accepted field practice, use only one stove and fuel type for the group

Additional notes for Winter Camping Standards:

Winter Camping most often occurs with van support to cooking shelters, cabins and/or wall tents, snow caves, quinzhees or snow trenches as shelters. It may also include self-supported activities such as skiing and snowshoeing as well as mechanical support such as snow machines, to and from these same overnight options.

Each of these learning support activities and shelter arrangements has inherent hazards and associated risks, which need to be documented and managed. Hazard definition, risk assessment, parent/guardian acknowledgement of risk and documentation of leadership judgment is critical to current outdoor education programming.

Winter environments present many experiential learning opportunities, which promote and encourage physical fitness, environmental awareness, traditional First Nations lifestyle learning and a practical application of many curriculum materials that have been defined in a more theoretical manner in the indoor classroom.

Outdoor education leadership in the winter requires comprehensive planning because of changeable environmental conditions, the diverse composition of school groups and their numbers, the lack of standard opportunities for teacher/leader qualification, limited documentation of outdoor education protocols and no formal assessment and evaluation processes.

Winter camping qualifications and knowledge most often evolve from personal experience. As a result teacher/leaders need to consider these standards and guidelines carefully, compare personal decision making with other outdoor educators and document agendas, environmental and group conditions and decision making on a daily basis. Daily logbook entries must become normal risk management procedure.

Winter activities range from shorter science, social studies, physical education and geography discovery classes in the school yard to snowshoeing, alpine skiing, snowboarding, machine sledding and cross- country skiing adjacent to the school or further away. Winter camping may incorporate any of these activities, which may include remaining out overnight for extended periods in a variety of venues depending upon programming.



Winter Camping Standards

Over-night stays may be facilitated in cabins, wall tents, traditional First Nations shelters, lean-tos, quinzhees, and snow caves or any combination of these shelter options depending upon snow conditions, terrain suitability, weather suitability and group leadership and preparedness.

** Where, when and how outdoor education activities are conducted will determine the authorization and documentation requirements needed.

Class oriented schoolyard activities are a first stage whereas multiple period, day and multi-day activities require different levels of authorization and documentation.

***The temperature and wind chill limits are specific to school groups when using vans for travel (air temperature of -30 C or wind-chill equivalent). When using snowshoes and skis as an activity base for outdoor education expeditions, away from secure sources of shelter and warmth, use -20 C or wind-chill equivalent, as a cut-off temperature.

Temperature inversions and cold air drains down activity-site valleys may easily decrease local air temperatures significantly from weather report information available, e.g. Whitehorse airport.

