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Outdoor Environmental Education Goals

YMCA Camp Colman's Outdoor Environmental Education (OEE) Program is based on the following goals:

- **To build within students a basic understanding of ecological principles of the components of the environment and of their interaction with the natural world.**
- **To promote respect of the environment as the foundation of life and health in their community.**
- **To teach students how personal and community choices and actions can affect the environment both locally and globally, while showing them how they can apply their personal decision-making skills to enhance their own local environment.**
- **To facilitate the development of the knowledge and skills necessary for being a productive member of society, particularly by encouraging communication and cooperation.**
- **In the YMCA tradition, to encourage people to reach their fullest potential and realize self-awareness through the development of spirit, mind, and body.**

Predominant themes in the educational experience are COMMUNITIES and RESPECT. We foster an understanding of what a community is, how the elements in a community work, and our relationship and responsibility to all communities. The “Four Respects”—respect yourself; respect others; respect the environment; and respect the camp community are themes stressed in the classes we teach and in the day to day camp activities.



Introduction

Welcome to the Outdoor Environmental Education Program at YMCA Camp Colman. We would like to thank you in advance for agreeing to put your own life on hold in order to make a difference in the lives of children. Your job at Camp Colman will be a tough but rewarding experience. Being a cabin leader is not a vacation, but it is an excellent opportunity to learn about kids, yourself, and how to work as a team member. Here at Camp Colman, we have compiled the following information to help prepare you for the adventure that awaits...

Your Role as Cabin Leader

The cabin leader plays an essential role in the functioning of the Outdoor Environmental Education Program. Together with the teachers and Colman staff, the cabin leaders help to supervise the week's activities. The basic duties of the cabin leaders are to assume responsibility for the welfare of the students in their cabin during the camp experience and to be certain that each student makes the best possible use of their stay at Colman. You will be eating with your cabin, helping them get ready for bed, drift off to sleep, and wake up to get ready for the day, as well as making sure the students get to class on time and organizing things to do during cabin time. This is a 24 hour task, involving a great deal of patience, humor, leadership, and understanding. You won't be on your own, the teachers and the Colman staff will be there to help in your responsibilities.



Cabin Leader Expectations

Teachers and camp staff agree that being a cabin leader is the most important job in camp. The kids need your guidance in order to have a successful and SAFE camp experience. As cabin leader you will be responsible for the well being of your cabin group. The kids will remember you forever if you do a good job.

BE HERE FOR THE KIDS - You can visit with your friends on your time off or after camp. Put your time into the kids so they have a great experience. Get involved in activities so the kids will learn from your example.

FOLLOW THE CAMP RULES - Camp rules are there for safety and apply to everyone.

KNOW WHERE EACH INDIVIDUAL CABIN GROUP MEMBER IS AT ALL TIMES - Unless they are being directly supervised by someone else, i.e. teachers, OEE instructors, parents, or other leaders.

BE SAFE - Safety is a priority at YMCA Camp Colman. Make sure your cabin group is following the safety rules.

BE A POSITIVE ROLE MODEL – In your speech and actions.

BE ON TIME - Make sure that your group arrives to meals, classes and activities on time so other groups are not waiting for your cabin and your kids don't miss out on something.

MOVE AS A GROUP – If you move as a group, your kids will always be supervised and not left to wander in camp.

SUPERVISE YOUR TABLE AT MEALS – Make sure the kids are following the procedures. Help us get through cleanup and announcements quickly.

STAY WITH YOUR CABIN AFTER LIGHTS OUT – Unless you have permission from the head teacher and the cabin is being supervised. (“Raiding” other cabins is strictly prohibited.)

HAVE FUN! – If you have fun, your kids will too!



Typical Schedule

Day of Arrival

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 11:00 | Arrive at camp, unload |
| 11:20 | Camp tour (Students and OEE Instructors) Teachers and Adults meet with Program Director in Lounge of Lodge |
| 12:00 | Sack lunch, Orientation, Recycling Rendezvous, Ort Skit 1:30-3:30Class |
| 2:00-3:30 | Class 1 |
| 3:30 | Snack (Camp Colman can provide snack for an additional fee) |
| 3:45-5:00 | Recreation time |
| 5:10 | Meal Duties: KP, weather, flag |
| 5:20 | 1 st Meal Line-up |
| 5:30 | Dinner |
| 6:30 | Cabin Time and/or Teacher Time |
| 7:30-8:45 | Evening program (Camp Colman can provide snack for an additional fee) |
| 9:00 | Cabin time |
| 10:00 | Lights out |

Second Day

| | |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| 7:45 | Duties: KP, weather, flag, garden |
| 8:00 | Breakfast |
| 9:00-10:30 | Class 2 |
| 10:30-12:00 | Class 3 |
| 12:10 | Meal Duty: KP |
| 12:30 | Lunch |
| 1:15 | Rest Time |
| 2:00-3:30 | Class 4 |



3: 30 Snack (Camp Colman can provide snack for an additional fee)3:45
3:45-5:00 Recreation time
5:10 Duties: KP, weather, flag
5:30 Dinner
6:30 Cabin Time and/or Teacher Time
7:30-8:45 Evening program
9:00 Cabin time
10:00 Lights out

Day of Departure

7:00 Pack up (luggage out of cabins before breakfast)
7:40 Duties: KP
8:00 Breakfast
8:45 Evaluations and Cabin Clean-up
9:30-11:00 Class 5
11:10 Duties: KP
11:30 Lunch
12:30 Closing Ceremony
12:45 Load and board buses, depart (Come back next year!)



Classes & Recreation Time

CLASSES – In addition to their cabin groups, the students will also be divided into study groups for their schedule of classes (see sample schedule and class grid). Your responsibility is to make sure your cabin group members arrive on time to the class assemblies (a little early is better). During classes, you will be asked by the Colman staff to be involved in helping with different parts of the class. For example, running some equipment, passing out materials, helping with crowd control, and being enthusiastic and excited about the class.

RECREATION – After the last class of the day, the students will have recreation time until dinner. Colman offers different activities depending on the school and the season. Several cabin leaders are needed to help out at all recreation areas. Sports games, such as volleyball, baseball, basketball, badminton, and pickleball are recreation options that are facilitated solely by cabin leaders and not Colman staff. Cabin leaders will be responsible for the supervision, location, and head count of all students involved in sports games.

Cabin Time & Camper Well being

HEALTH – The most important responsibility of the cabin leader is the health and safekeeping of his or her cabin group. The school will be providing a nurse or staff person who is responsible for First Aid and medicine dispensing. Cabin leaders are not allowed to give any medicine to children, or to have any medication in their cabins. If anyone in your cabin needs medical attention, please report it immediately to the nurse.

CABIN TIME – “Cabin Time” is any time the cabin group is together outside of classes, meals, or structured recreation time. During this time, you should get to know your students, prepare them for activities and keep them busy with activities of your own. We have included in this manual ideas for you to use as a resource.

CABIN CLEANUP – Cabin cleanup occurs right after breakfast on the day of departure. Split up the list of duties, which is posted on the cabin wall, and have each student be responsible for one of the duties. Wait until a Colman staff member has inspected your cabin and then move all of the luggage to the bus parking lot. Ensure that your students take pride in leaving the cabin better than they found it.



Duties & Meals

DUTIES – FLAG, KP, WEATHER, and GARDEN

Flag and Weather Duties occur 20 minutes before breakfast and dinner, and KP (Kitchen Patrol) Duties 20 minutes before breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Garden happens only in the morning 20 minutes before breakfast. This is a chance for the students to participate in the daily running of camp. It is important that you understand where your group is supposed to be. This information will be on your final schedule, and your group won't be assigned to more than one duty per meal. You will need to bring you cabin to the specified meeting place on time and there will be a Colman Staff there to run the activity.

- **FLAG** – Flag raising or lowering is conducted by one cabin group. The meeting place for this duty is at the flag pole.
- **KP DUTY** – Students have the opportunity to set up and clean up the dining hall before and after meals. Cabins assigned to KP should meet outside the dinning hall and wait for a Colman staff member. As a cabin leader, you should make sure that your assigned KP's arrive on time before the meal.
- **WEATHER** – Students have a chance to take the weather report and then present it and a creative forecast to the rest of the school after the meal. Cabins assigned to weather should meet at the baseball field and wait for a Colman staff member.
- **GARDEN** – During this morning garden visit the students will have a chance to turn the compost, go on a mini tour of the garden and harvest what can be used in the kitchen. Garden meets at pickleball. Please make sure the children wash their hands before they eat breakfast.

MEALS – It is important that there is at least one cabin leader at each table during the meal. Keep your group talking low so the dining hall doesn't get too loud. Colman staff will announce when it is time to start cleaning up. At this time, please make sure that your table understands and carries out the clean-up procedures in a timely manner (you will be familiarized with these procedures once you arrive at camp). During clean-up, only one designated student should be up from your table. During the meal, to cut down on traffic and spills, please only allow 2 people up from the table at any one time. Have the children use the bathroom BEFORE they come to the meal.



Bedtime

Getting students to bed at night is an important challenge for the cabin leader. Since the kids are much more excited and active than they usually are at home (especially the first night), they are not always interested in going to sleep. Your job, however, is to create a warm, safe, and quiet environment in the cabin so the students can calm down and get the sleep they need to be active all day. Here are a few tips:

- Set up a timeline for getting ready for bed. Make it fun- create a game, race, or song that gets the kids ready quickly.
- Always use a calm and quiet voice with your group at night. If you raise your voice to get them quiet, it will only serve to excite the kids, and do exactly the opposite of what you hoped.
- Create a quiet, low-key atmosphere in the cabin as the kids are getting into bed. Planning a special activity at night helps your kids calm down and is a great way to end your day. Ideas that work:
 - Highpoints – each student tells a favorite part of their day, something that made them feel good.
 - Tell or read a story. Before you come to camp, check some bedtime storybooks out of the library.
 - If you are musically inclined, sing or play for your group.
 - Pick a topic to talk about – school, family, friends, etc. For many kids, this may be their first opportunity to talk to someone older, who isn't their parent.
- Nighttime is not a good time for scary stories. We are working to help the kids feel more comfortable in the outdoors, not make them frightened of it.

BEDWETTING – To prevent bedwetting, make sure every child uses the bathroom before going to bed. If you do have a student who has wet the bed, be discrete about taking care of it, children can be very self-conscious. Put the sleeping bag in a garbage bag and bring it to the downstairs of the lodge. A Colman staff member will wash and dry the sleeping bag and give you an extra sleeping bag for the night.



Behavior Management

Most kids misbehave because they are bored or need attention. If you keep your cabin group busy you will have less need for any type of discipline. You will be working alongside Colman staff members and teachers and will share the responsibilities of behavior management with them during activities. However, in the cabin you are the one in charge. Below are three steps to follow at camp:

1 – **Redirection**, if a student is simply not listening, talking during class, or other minor misbehaviors, redirect their attention to something else, something appropriate that will catch their attention.

2 – **Warning**, if a student continues to misbehave after redirection, give them a warning or a “time out.”

3 – **Tell a Teacher**, continuous misbehavior after redirection and a warning need to be taken care of by a teacher. A teacher will always be available in the lodge and can follow through on any discipline that needs to be taken. Teachers will make the decision of whether to call a parent or send a camper home.

Corporal Punishment is Illegal!!

Corporal punishment (i.e. having kids do push-ups, making them sit outside in the rain, having them skip a meal, or striking them) is considered physical child abuse. **DO NOT** use any type of physical punishment to discipline a camper. **YOU COULD GO TO JAIL!**



Child Abuse Prevention

Cabin leaders need to be aware of the definition of child abuse. There are four types of child abuse:

- **Physical Abuse:** When someone inflicts bodily harm to a child that leaves a physical injury.
- **Neglect:** This occurs when an adult fails to provide for the child. Most cases involve lack of proper food, shelter, clothing, medical care, and supervision.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Encompasses a wide variety of inappropriate behaviors, generally involves the sexual mistreatment of a child by an adult or other child.
- **Emotional Abuse:** Also known as mental abuse and psychological abuse. It is defined as the persistent act by an adult that endangers the mental health or emotional development of a child.

DON'T BE ACCUSED OF CHILD ABUSE!

Some Guidelines:

- Never be alone with a child. If you must speak to a child alone, do it in view of others.
- Children should not be allowed in staff quarters.
- Do not use corporal punishment.
- Report any type of abuse that you observe to a teacher or camp staff.



Secrets of the Cabin Leader Trade

- If your cabin needs more toilet paper, trash bags, matches, or fire-starting newspaper, check the brown cabinet in the dining hall to the right of the front door.
- The meeting times and locations for your cabin group can be found on your official schedule, which will be given to you by the Program Director.
- For safety and conservations reasons, please wait until after dinner to start a fire in your cabin. There are a few firewood huts located between cabins.
- If you are in a cabin that has a propane for electric fireplace please remember to turn down the thermostat while not in the cabin. Please Do Not adjust the controls on the fireplace as they are set for optimum efficiency.
- For our Climbing Wall and Challenge Course, students will be required to wear close-toed shoes in order to participate. Please make sure your cabin members are wearing the appropriate footwear.
- In order to prevent visits from rodents, food is not allowed in cabins. Also, gum is not allowed in camp.
- In a nighttime emergency, contact the head teacher. He or she will have a radio to get in touch with the Colman staff member on duty. You will be informed of where the teachers will be staying when you get to camp.
- Please make sure the children and yourself are prepared for the weather. Carry a warm layer and/or rain gear with you all the time – it can get very wind and cold at times.



Child Mover Ideas

Here are some great, creative ways to keep track of your campers and to move them from one place to another.

- By hair color (brown first, blond second, etc.)
- Eye color (green first, blue second, etc.)
- Birthdays (all January birthdays first, etc.)
- Bunks (bunk closest to the door first, etc.)
- Shoe size (size 10 shoes first, etc.)
- Braces (those who wear braces first, etc.)
- Glasses (those who wear glasses first, etc.)
- Brush teeth (those who brushed their teeth this morning first, etc.)
- Left or right handed (all left handed people line up first, etc.)
- Number of kids in the family (those who are an only child first, etc.)
- Alphabetical (all those whose last names begin with Z go first, etc.)
- Numbers (the first to guess what number I'm thinking of, go first, etc.)
- Questions (the first to answer a question goes first, etc.)

But wait ... Your group doesn't always have to move in a line. Here are some other ways to move:

- Move as a blob
- Be a train
- "Follow the Leader"
- Walk in slow motion
- Hop on one foot
- Keep a balloon in the air while you walk
- Sing songs
- Walk backwards



Building Cabin Spirit

The students in your cabin will be very proud of being in your cabin group. Building a cohesive group is not easy. Everyone needs to be comfortable and have a sense of belonging. Here are some activities that you can use to help your cabin feel like a group.

- Come up with a good cheer or song.
- Make and wear name tags.
- Wear something that identifies your group (hats, ties, arm bands, etc.).
- Decorate your cabin.
- Walk a certain way (see Child Movers).
- Play a game.
- Have each member complete a sentence: "Right now I feel..." or "My favorite thing to do is..." or "My favorite food is..." Think up something yourself. The main thing is to get them talking. Remember, it's OK to pass if someone doesn't want to talk.
- Let the kids come up with a cabin rules list. They will buy into the ideas better if they have a part in creating them.
- Have cabin cleanup inspections. Kids will want to impress you.



Cabin Leader Checklist

- Do you know where your kids are at all times?
- Are you taking care of yourself?
- Do you know your schedule?
- Have you read the camp and school rules?
- Is your first priority always safety?
- Are you consistent in your dealings with campers, especially in the area of discipline?
- Do you deal with the campers as unique individuals?
- Are you having fun yet? (If you aren't, the kids won't)
- Do you take time to listen to a bird and to examine a blade of grass?
- Do you try to keep a positive attitude?
- Do you give Tommy Trouble and Quiet Kate as much positive attention as Sweet Susie?
- Can you laugh at yourself?
- Do you keep a close eye on your group for their health needs - sunburn, bathroom stops, eating, coats in cold weather, etc?
- Do the KIDS COME FIRST?
- Are you flexible?
- Do you participate in all activities? (If you do, the kids probably will)
- Are you a good example? Do you practice what you preach?
- ARE YOU ON TIME?
- Are you helping your campers to gain a better understanding and respect for the natural environment they are playing in?



What do I pack?

What to Bring

Sleeping bag and pillow (be prepared for cold nights)

Raincoat, rain pants, and a rain hat (a poncho from the dollar store is perfect)

Warm coat and sweater

Pajamas

Two pairs of tennis shoes or boots

Daily change of socks and underwear

Heavy and light shirts

Two or three pairs of long pants

Shorts (in warm weather)

Hat and gloves in cool weather

Plastic bag for dirty clothes

Towel

Toothpaste and toothbrush

Soap, washcloth

Shampoo, brush and comb

Tissues

Chapstick, sunscreen (in warm weather)

Optional

Flashlight (recommended for cabin leaders)

Books, notebook and pencils

Inexpensive camera and film

Waterproof boots

Shower shoes

What NOT to Bring

Money* or valuables

Radios, tape players, electronic games

Knives, matches, fireworks

Food (including soda, candy and gum)

Your best clothing

Bug repellent in a spray can

Weapons

Clothing with inappropriate advertisements or logos

Please mark everything with your name!

*** The store can be opened for espresso in the morning for the teachers and cabin leaders (no children).**