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Outdoor Environmental Education Goals

We work to create an inclusive, low-risk environment in which all individuals are empowered to discover their unique talents and strengths and encouraged to share those with their peers, their community and the environment.

We do this through:

- Inviting Exploration
- Encouraging Curiosity
- Guiding Critical Thinking
- Supporting Effort

In the Environmental Science, Outdoor Skills and Challenge Education.

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. The kids need your guidance in order to have a successful and SAFE experience. As a leader, you are responsible for the emotional, mental and physical well-being of your cabin group. The kids will remember you forever if you do a good job!

Be Here For The Kids: Put your time into getting to know 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; make sure your cabin follows 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 a.m. | Arrive at camp, unload |
| 11:15 a.m. | Move into cabins |
| 12:00 p.m. | Sack lunch and Orientation |
| 12:45-2:30 p.m. | Class 1 |
| 2:30-4:00 p.m. | Class 2 |
| 4:00 p.m. | Snack (This is optional for each school) |
| 4:15-5:15 p.m. | Recreation time |
| 5:15 p.m. | Meal Duties: KP |
| 5:20 p.m. | Meal Line-Up |
| 5:30 p.m. | Dinner (After Dinner: Garden Duty) |
| 6:30 p.m. | Cabin Time and/or Teacher Time |
| 7:30-8:45 p.m. | Evening program (evening snack, optional) |
| 9:00 p.m. | Cabin time |
| 10:00 p.m. | Lights out |

Second Day

| | |
|------------------|------------------------------------|
| 7:40 a.m. | Duties: KP |
| 7:50 a.m. | Meal Line-Up |
| 8:00 a.m. | Breakfast |
| 9:00-10:30 a.m. | Class 3 |
| 10:30-12:00 a.m. | Class 4 |
| 12:10 p.m. | Meal Duty: KP |
| 12:20 p.m. | Meal Line-Up |
| 12:30 p.m. | Lunch |
| 1:15 p.m. | Rest Time |
| 2:15-3:45 p.m. | Class 5 |
| 3:45 p.m. | Snack |
| 4:00-5:00 p.m. | Recreation time |
| 5:10 p.m. | Duties: KP |
| 5:20 p.m. | Meal Line-Up |
| 5:30 p.m. | Dinner (After Dinner: Garden Duty) |
| 6:30 p.m. | Cabin Time |
| 7:30-8:45 p.m. | Evening Program |
| 9:00 p.m. | Cabin Time |
| 10:00 p.m. | Lights Out |

Day of Departure

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| 7:00 a.m. | Pack up (Move luggage out of cabins before breakfast) |
| 7:40 a.m. | Duties: KP |
| 7:50 a.m. | Meal Line-Up |
| 8:00 a.m. | Breakfast |
| 8:45 a.m. | Cabin Clean-Up |
| 9:15-10:45 a.m. | Class 6 |
| 11:00 a.m. | All Camp Activity |
| 12:00 p.m. | Lunch |
| 12:45 p.m. | Load and Board Buses |
| 1:00 p.m. | 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 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 gaga are recreation options that are also available. Cabin leaders are encouraged to play and help at each activity area.

Cabin Time & Camper Well being

Health

The most important responsibility of the cabin leader is the health and safekeeping of their cabin group. The school will provide 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 inform a Y staff member and report 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. Ensure that your students take pride in leaving the cabin better than they found it.



Duties & Meals

Duties: KP And Garden

KP (Kitchen Party) Duty begins 20 minutes before breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Garden Duty happens immediately after dinner. 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 will not 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.

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 dining 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.

Garden

During the garden visit, students will take the compost up to the garden and have a chance to turn the compost, go on a mini tour of the garden and harvest what can be used in the kitchen, and water the crops, depending on the needs of the garden. Garden meets near the compost in the lodge right after dinner is dismissed.

Meals

It is important that there is at least one cabin leader at each table during the meal. Try to keep your group talking low so the dining hall does not get too loud. Colman staff will make announcements about what is being served at each meal, what is available for children and what is only for adults (hot beverages), and how to get the food from the kitchen. 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 two designated students should be up from your table. During the meal, to cut down on traffic and spills, please only allow two people up from the table at any one time. It is helpful to have the children use the bathroom and wash their hands 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. Check the books in your cabin, or ask a Y staff member for other options.
 - ✓ 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-conscience. 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 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, inform them that their actions may be taking away from the other students' experience and if it continues, you will need to inform a teacher.
- 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 and Colman Leadership Staff 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 supplies please alert a staff member at meal times.
- 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.
- If you are in a cabin that has a thermostat for you propane fireplace please remember to turn it down while not in the cabin. A Colman staff member will instruct you on how the propane fireplaces work.
- 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, including yourself!
- 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 or the Camp Colman Director on Duty (DOD). You will be informed of where the teachers will be staying when you get to camp and be given the DOD number.
- Please make sure the children and yourself are prepared for the weather.
- Carry a warm layer and/or rain gear with you all the times – it can get very windy and cold at times.



Child Mover Ideas

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

- ✓ Birthdays (all January birthdays first, etc.)
- ✓ Bunks (bunk closest to the door first, etc.)
- ✓ Favorite Color (red goes first, then orange, etc.)
- ✓ Brush teeth (those who brushed their teeth this morning 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
- ✓ Sing songs
- ✓ Walk backwards
- ✓ Make a camper sandwich (adults are the bread, every camper gets to choose something that goes in the sandwich)



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?

Required:

- Sack Lunch (for the first day only)
- Toiletries
 - o Toothbrush
 - o Toothpaste
 - o Brush/comb
 - o Soap
 - o Shampoo
- Towel
- Sleeping bag
- Flashlight
- Waterbottle
- Sweatshirt
- Rain Gear (poncho/jacket)
- Closed – toed shoes (boots or tennis shoes)
- Underwear for each day + an extra pair
- Socks for each day + an extra pair
- Short sleeve shirts
- Long sleeve shirts
- Long pants
- A pair of shorts
- Pajamas

Optional:

- A second pair of shoes (just in case...)
- Shower sandals
- Pillow
- Stuffed animal
- Rubber rain boots
- Rain pants
- Disposable camera
- Journal & pens or pencils
- Book

Remember:

- Medications need to be turned into the school nurse
- We are a **nut free facility!** Please do not pack any snacks with nuts in them for your first lunch on arrival day!
- Money is only necessary if your school has chosen to have the Camp Store open

Not Allowed:

- Electronics (includes anything with a screen)
 - Weapons
 - Pets
- Food, candy, gum, soda, or other beverages