

# PHYSICAL ACTIVITY SAFETY CHECKLISTS

## CAMPING—WINTER

Camping is an outdoor recreational activity that involves spending one or more nights in a tent, primitive structure, a travel trailer, or recreational vehicle with the purpose of getting away from civilization and enjoying nature. Winter camping is a higher-risk activity than summer camping, due to the increased risks caused by the cold. While winter camping is not a physical activity, per se, it provides the student with opportunities for alternative pursuits that are specific to a different or natural winter environment.

Risk Factor Rating

3

### General Learning Outcome

The student will demonstrate safe and responsible behaviours to manage risks and prevent injuries in physical activity participation and for daily living.

### Risk Management Strategies

Safety information and recommendations contained in this safety checklist are believed to reflect best practice to reduce risk. The suggested risk management strategies are considered minimum standards for physical activity in an organized or formal setting. They may not apply to all situations (e.g., home-based, recreational, or modified activities), and more stringent safety standards may be applied by instructors/coaches/program leaders of OUT-of-class physical activities in organized programs.

### Instruction

**Note:** The amount and level of instruction/directions required by the student may vary based on circumstances such as the student's personal experience, skill level, and physical condition. The use of media resources, such as books and instructional videos, may replace direct instruction if deemed appropriate and safe.

Instruction is received from an experienced winter camper, competent to organize, demonstrate, instruct and supervise the trip as is appropriate, depending on various factors such as level of risk, intensity, accessibility, experience, and skill

Leader has recently visited the site to be used for the program

Students are aware of potential risks involved in winter camping

Safety rules/techniques, including buddy system, are learned prior to trip

Instruction is received in the use of compass/GPS and what to do if lost

Winter camping and survival skills, including low-impact camping, are learned prior to the actual camping trip (Warm weather camping skills may have to be taught first.)

Students are encouraged to eat more food each day via snacks

Activity sessions are appropriate for the abilities of the students; if the trip will be strenuous, students need to be in good physical condition before setting out

Behavioural expectations, boundaries for activity, and assembly procedures are reviewed with students

Program must be planned in detail and shared with students/parents, and includes detailed menus, cooking, group and personal equipment as well as contingency plans for inclement weather

Local weather conditions/forecasts and fire restrictions are checked before the start of trip

Leader is familiar with weather conditions/forecast, normal storm patterns, and risks characteristic of the area (e.g., avalanches)

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### Supervision

**Note:** The level of supervision is provided as is appropriate, depending on various factors such as level of risk, intensity, accessibility, experience, and skill.

Designated person responsible for providing first aid is available

Recommended level of supervision: **constant visual supervision** for higher-risk activities, such as preparing fires and chopping wood, and otherwise **in-the-area supervision**

Copy of itinerary is left with a responsible adult, including such details as the make, year, and license plate of each vehicle, the equipment being brought, the route plan, the weather anticipated, and the anticipated date/time of return

Process for the accounting of the students must be in place

Buddy system is in place as it is safest to camp/hike with at least one companion (If entering a remote area, the group should have a minimum of four people, allowing one to stay with the victim when someone is hurt while two go for help.)

Safety rules and procedures are enforced

Emergency action plan is in place to deal with accidents/injuries and evacuation

Detailed plans for contingency and inclement weather are recorded in writing

If traveling into avalanche territory, group is registered with authorities and the services of a guide certified by the Association of Canadian Mountain Guides or a certified Ski Guide have been enlisted

### Facility/Environment

Location of local emergency services have been identified

Long range forecast and fire restrictions in area have been verified before heading out

Detailed maps are provided of area where students will be camping

Washroom facilities are accessible

Permission/permit to use site(s) is obtained; regulations about campfires, or guidelines about wildlife are verified

Access to adequate and safe water supply is available and water is consumed as needed

Food is properly stored outside of tent in a closed container that can't be easily broken into by animals (Food that is left out in the open can attract dangerous wildlife and can deplete the food supply.)

### Equipment

Equipment to be used is suitable and in good condition

Equipment is checked by qualified person prior to departure/usage

Instructions are given regarding the proper use/maintenance of equipment

Leader and each student has a whistle or other signaling device and a personal survival kit

All students should have an adequate sleeping bag and sleeping pad

Portable media players (such as an MP3 player) are discouraged/restricted as they reduce awareness of one's surroundings

First aid kit and phone are available (An alternative emergency communication system can also be used. GPS [Global Positioning System] is now affordable. Walkie-talkies are available for communication within the group.)

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### Clothing/Footwear

- Appropriate boots for surface and conditions must be worn
- Appropriate clothing is worn in layers and provides unrestricted movement while protecting the body; adequate extra dry clothing is packed as appropriate for weather
- Jewelry is removed/secured when safety is a concern
- Adequate protection from the elements is packed (e.g., hats, mitts, sunglasses)

### Other Considerations

- The student has completed a regular medical checkup and a medical history prior to starting the program
- The student has submitted the signed Parent Declaration and Consent & Student Declaration Form (student under 18) or Student Declaration Form (student 18 and over) prior to beginning the program
- Registration in an accident insurance plan is encouraged
- Students who suffer an injury are referred to appropriate medical personnel for treatment and rehabilitation, and should not return to training until cleared by a qualified medical professional
- The activity is suitable to the student's age, ability, mental condition, and physical condition
- The student demonstrates self-control at all times and avoids any behaviour deemed inappropriate

