

# Okanagan Mission Secondary Lake O'Hara



Guide for Chaperones

## Dates and Time Commitments for Lake O'Hara (Students and Chaperones)

<p>Visit the WEBSITE at <a href="http://okmlakeohara.weebly.com/">http://okmlakeohara.weebly.com/</a> for up to date information and specific dates for this years trip. Attendance at ALL meetings (whole group and your hiking group) is MANDATORY!</p>	
Thursday, Feb 23rd @ 6:00 pm in the Multi	<p><b>Launch Meeting for Students, Parents and Prospective Chaperones:</b> Information meeting about this year's trip. Go over registration process, National Park rules and regulations, history of the trip, student and chaperone expectations and assessment expectations..</p>
Friday, March 10th	<p><b>Registration Deadline:</b> All steps in registration process for students and chaperones need to be complete. Please see the website for more information on the required steps and specific deadlines.</p>
Tuesday, April 11th @ 6:00 pm	<p><b>Chaperone Meeting #1: (Chaperones ONLY)</b> Meeting to go over expectations for chaperones. We will cover routes/park information, Criminal Record Checks, and First Aid training. You will get the chance to 'Meet the Expert' for your assigned route.</p>
Wednesday, April 12th @ 8:00 am	<p><b>Groups Revealed:</b> Groups will be posted on google classroom. Keep in mind that groups are carefully selected and reviewed by many staff in order to challenge your 'comfort zone'. Switching groups is not an option and not everyone gets their first choice of hiking categories.</p>
Tuesday, April 18th @ 6:00 pm	<p><b>Whole Group Meeting #1: (Mandatory attendance by students and chaperones)</b> We will meet together as a Lake O'hara class to review safety, gear/equipment, and food. You will also meet together with your hiking group for the first time today. You will review your route and make a communication plan. You will also start to plan your first practice hike with your group.</p>
April - September	<p><b>Practice Hikes/Small Group Meetings:</b> You will complete 2+ practice hikes with your group. The duration and intensity of your practice hike will depend on your route. You will also have meetings with your small group for gear checks, food planning, and other details deemed necessary by your chaperones.</p>
Thursday, May 23rd @ 6:00 pm	<p><b>Chaperone Meeting #2: (Chaperones ONLY)</b> Mandatory check-in for chaperones. Report on practice hikes and group cohesiveness.</p>
July-August	<p><b>Summer Fun:</b> You will not have mandatory meetings or practice hikes over the summer, but it is your responsibility to build and maintain your fitness level in preparation for your trip. Check out the website for some local hiking suggestions. It is also important for you to maintain communication with your group and let your chaperones and trip leaders know if there are any concerns regarding your participation on the trip.</p>
Thursday, September 7th @ 6:00 pm	<p><b>Chaperone Meeting #3: (Chaperones ONLY)</b> Go over route updates, logistics, emergency procedures and complete Driver Declaration forms.</p>
Tuesday, September 12th @ 6:00 pm	<p><b>Gear Check: (Mandatory attendance for all students and chaperones)</b> We will meet together as a whole group for some logistics regarding the trip. You will also meet with your small group for a gear check. All students must bring all of their gear, packed into their backpack, to be checked by their chaperone team.</p>
Thursday, September 14th @ 6:00 pm	<p>Chaperone Meeting #4 (Chaperones ONLY) We will hand out park passess, medical kits and camping confirmations. Go over logistics and transportation plan, and review park rules/expectations.</p>
Sunday, September 17th - Friday September 22nd	<p><b>Lake O'hara:</b> Plan for a 6:00 am departure on Sunday and an after dinner return on Friday night. This is when all of your hard work will pay off. Enjoy this week in the Rocky Mountains!</p>
Early October - TBA	<p><b>Final Reflections</b> Final reflections must be completed and submitted on google classroom. Your small group may also wish to celebrate the trip with a pot luck or gathering of some sort. There will also be an optional chaperone debrief/celebration.</p>

**Parents, Chaperones, Students, and Teachers  
HAVE HAD TO SIGN OFF AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE FOLLOWING RISKS:**

**INHERENT RISKS INVOLVED WITH THE LAKE O'HARA HIKING TRIP**

Our School District demands that we identify the inherent risks for any activity that involves students. Before a student can be involved with an outdoor activity, their parents/guardians must be aware of the **Inherent Risks** associated with that activity and sign off acknowledging their willingness to have their son/daughter participate understanding the risks involved. It is our job as a school to make sure that all precautions will be taken to minimize and or eliminate these risks. Through proper planning and experience, we believe that our students will be able to be involved without risk to themselves in the activities planned as long as they use common sense and good judgment while on the trip. **Students are required** to attend educational seminars on safety, food equipment and preparation, equipment choice, clothing choice, physical fitness as well as general discussions dealing with team-work in small groups. When students arrive in the National Parks, before any hiking is done, they are given a seminar by Parks Officials on safety, flora and fauna, trail etiquette, what to look out for, disposal of wastes, and how to keep a clean camp-site so as not to attract animals.

**INHERENT RISKS ASSOCIATED with BACKPACKING AND HIKING IN YOHO, KOOTENAY, and BANFF NATIONAL PARKS**

1. Risks associated with traveling by vehicle to and from the activity.
2. Risks associated with camping such as coldness, wetness, and getting over heated. Hypothermia and hyperthermia can always occur regardless of the level of planning that has been involved.
3. Risks associated with vigorous physical activity such as hiking. There will be some level of discomfort with participating in a hiking activity. There is always the possibility of blisters, muscle pulls, twisted ankles, knee or arm injuries, cuts and scratches.
4. Risks associated with creating warmth by fire such as burns or cuts.
5. Risks associated with wilderness camping such as conflicts with animals.
6. Risks associated with disruptive weather. In the past we have had sun, rain, snow, and extremely cold weather. Students are expected to be prepared for any kind of weather.
7. Risks involved with getting lost in the wilderness despite the fact that we are always travelling on National Parks trails to and from all destinations.
8. Risks associated with poor decision making by individuals such as leaving the group.
9. Risks involved with the fact that there are few park rangers in the area when we are there. Any problems we may encounter will have to be solved on our own. Cell phones do not work.
10. Risks involved with drinking water from creeks and streams. We have not had any issue to date with water born diseases and we recommend that each group have at least one water purifier and or water purification tablets or boil the water before consuming it.

## **Responsibilities of Group Leaders**

1. Attend all meetings
2. Be physically fit. Obtain doctor's permission to go on the trip if any physical vulnerabilities exist.
3. Abide by the same code of conduct as the students.
4. Meet with their groups several times in the planning process in order to establish relationships with group members, pass on valuable information regarding park rules, equipment, menu planning first aid, safety etc.
5. Ensure that each group member has a good level of fitness by planning several day hikes for the group.
6. Be in touch with the parents of each group member to establish trust and rapport and discuss any concerns throughout the preparation process.
7. Be in touch with the Lake O Leadership team to express any concerns about group members.
8. Be with the group from OKM to the Rockies and back to OKM – door to door commitment.
9. Be prepared for any unexpected occurrence on the trip and be ready to make a decision about how to best deal with the occurrence.
10. Be prepared to continue on your route in foul weather, deviating from that route only in extreme situations where safety is at risk. Remember that being uncomfortable is different than being in danger.

## **Tips from previous chaperones:**

- Do the practice hikes!!! It gives you a great idea where the kids are at and also motivates them to get prepared.
- Communicate any apprehensions you are having about any group members to the leadership team during the entire process. It is important that they are 'in the loop' even if you don't want them to take any action yet.
- You need to constantly remind kids of the following while on the trail - Eat! Drink Water! Take off a layer! Add a layer!... when they are just trying to survive they actually forget to do these things!
- Use the sandwich method between two chaperones while hiking, but also use strategies to keep your group together on the hike and change who is in the lead. For example; assign a fast kid to carry the med kit and they have to stay at the back with you, try 'speed date' hikes, or redistribute shared gear - it doesn't have to be equal!
- Bring a Chap Kit - suggested items include; extra snacks/special treats for the group (Gatorade snow cones is a fun one!), extra zip lock bags/bread bags, blister bandages, cold medication, water purification tablets, electrolyte tables... try to predict what students will need/want and what might brighten their day.
- Bring an extra Mountain Meal or two in case of emergency.
- Bring some fun camp activities - cards, beach ball, games...
- Take lots of pictures!

## Philosophy

*We believe that participation in outdoor activities allows for the following;*

- The development of communication, teamwork and collaboration skills in a complex and dynamic environment*
- An understanding and appreciation of the natural environment, ourselves and others*
- Character development, including self-confidence, endurance and empathy*



**Safety Precautions:** Students will participate in the following opportunities to mitigate risk;

- Mandatory attendance at whole and small group meetings, including route information, food and gear preparations/checks, park and campsite rules and participant expectations
- Mandatory completion of practice hikes with small group to demonstrate physical ability to participate in 5 days of hiking or backpacking
- Completion of a Safety Presentation by National Park Rangers, including bear safety

**Learning Outcomes:** Students will be able to demonstrate;

- Effective planning and preparations for safe participation in outdoor activities
- Knowledge and skills for participation in outdoor activities, including leadership, collaboration and communication
- Environmental awareness and stewardship, including risk management and ways to reduce potential impacts of outdoor activities on the environment
- The ability to reflect on participation in outdoor activities, including transferable skills, overcoming challenges and potential lifelong participation



## Don't underestimate your role in the program!

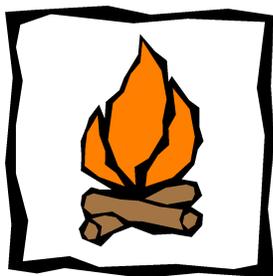
### MOUNTAIN MANNERS

#### GENERAL SAFETY



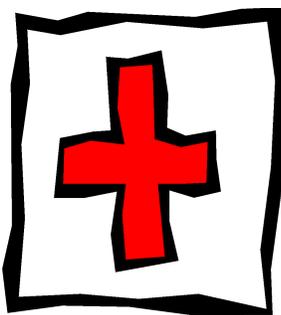
1. Obey your leaders (chaperones and teachers) and communicate and cooperate with your group.
2. Never go out alone. Always practice the buddy system and make sure your leaders know where you are and when you will be back.
3. Check the weather and dress accordingly.
4. Pack a first-aid kit and a repair kit.
5. Don't over-exert; hypothermia and accidents occur more often when the body is tired or cold.
6. Plan ahead to reach the campsite well before dark.
7. Learn to recognize potentially dangerous conditions and take appropriate precautions.
8. On the scree slopes, avoid crossing directly above or below other people. Cross diagonally and stay in a group. Take sure and steady steps to reduce rock fall.

#### BE AWARE OF THESE DANGERS!



1. **Hypothermia** - lowering of body temperature caused by becoming wet, exhausted and cold. **Symptoms:** shivering, loss of coordination; impaired judgement. **Treatment:** dry out, warm up and get food and drink.
2. **Rock Fall:** – Be aware of your surroundings and the potential for any potential rock fall.
3. **Bears** – The best defense against bears is to stay in a large group and always make a lot of noise. All bears are potentially dangerous. They are very unpredictable. It is unlawful to feed the bears. Watch for bear signs (tracks or scat). Pick up garbage and keep your campsite clean. Don't cook or eat in your tent. No food, of any kind in your tent. Store your food away from tent – use the bear poles where provided. If you encounter a bear: Don't make sudden moves; running is not a good idea. Speak softly; remove your pack, back toward a tree and climb as high as you can. We will have a bear safety presentation and get the most up-to-date sightings/problem areas on our way to the trailheads.

#### IF YOU GET LOST OR INJURED!

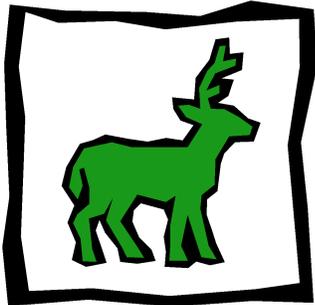


The best way to avoid becoming lost or injured is to always stay with your group and follow your itinerary. If you get lost:

1. Do not panic.
2. It is usually best to stay in one place.
3. Make your position known to your searchers by three blasts of your whistle.
4. Make yourself as comfortable and safe as possible. Avoid hypothermia. Conserve water and food.
5. If injured, have a member of your party, or another hiker contact the warden service.
6. Have word passed on to your group area leader and OKM.

*Be sure to check the rules for your specific park! But here are some general courtesies:*

## PARK RULES



**Litter:** When packing – organize to minimize garbage. You are responsible for packing everything you bring out. Do not throw food scraps away – they will attract animals. If you see litter on the trail – pick it up.

**Wildlife:** Do not feed the animals under any circumstance. Fishing / hunting is not permitted on this trip.

**Natural Objects:** Do not cut, move, or remove anything including: Rocks, fossils horns, antlers, plants, flowers etc. Do not make walking sticks out of dead or living wood/branches/trees.

**Camping:** Camp and sleep only in designated areas. One tent allowed per camp pad. Maximum number of sites used per group is five. Permits are necessary. **LEAVE THE CAMPSITE CLEANER THAN IT WAS WHEN YOU ARRIVED.**

- **Groups:** The size is limited to 10 persons maximum. Do not camp or hike in larger groups.
- **Campfires:** are not permitted at most sites. They are allowed ONLY in designated facilities. Use only the wood provided; do not cut your own.
- **Trails:** Stay on the trails at all times. Shortcutting causes damage that takes years to repair.
- **Pollutants:** Dispose of grey water in designated areas. Dispose of soapy water and wash yourself and dishes away from the lakes and streams. Use biodegradable soap.
- **Human Waste:** It is a must that facilities are used where provided. If not provided, dig a hole away from the trail and cover after.
- **Closures:** Fire hazard, avalanche or bears may cause closures. Obey all signs or instructions.
- **Quiet Hours:** There must be absolute quiet in the campgrounds and huts after 11 pm. (Preferably earlier)

## HUT RULES



1. Be courteous; be courteous; be courteous.
2. Leave your boots at the door.
3. Do not be the last to go to bed. (Observe quiet hours)
4. Keep your personal gear well organized.
5. Store food in the designated area.
6. Clean your own dishes etc. and offer to do the same for others.
7. Replenish firewood. Offer to split and cut at least the amount you and your group used. **BE EXTREMELY CAREFUL CUTTING WOOD.**
8. Do not leave any food behind.
9. Pack out all your garbage.
10. Respect other hut users. They deserve quiet, space, and courtesy. Talk to the people, they are usually friendly and interesting.
11. Use the appropriate bathroom facilities.
12. Offer to dump waste water in the grease pit.
13. Keep up the supply of drinking water (without being asked).
14. Bring extra fuel for the stoves and lanterns. Leave left over fuel behind.
15. Leave it cleaner than you found it!