



## Leadership Development Base Camp Information Package

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### Dear Camp Thunderbird Family,

Welcome to Camp Thunderbird! Summer will be here before we know it and soon it will be time to start preparing for camp.

**Information in this booklet is updated every year, and all of the information is vital for your camper(s) to have a successful experience. Please read carefully even if you have been to camp before!**

Life at camp is different from the routines and patterns of home. Taking the time to talk with your camper(s) about their upcoming experience is an important step in preparing. Setting a positive tone and clarifying expectations can really help your child make the adjustment. In doing this, your child will take the most out of their Camp Thunderbird opportunity.

If you, or your camper, have any questions about their upcoming experience, we encourage you to give our Summer Camp Program Manager a call, or come out and meet us at Camp Thunderbird for our Open House on June 14, 2020.

We look forward to having your child join us at Camp Thunderbird this summer!

## **Camp Commitment**

Camp Thunderbird strives to be a fun, safe and nurturing environment where everyone has a chance to be their best. All camp participants, staff and volunteers pledge to treat each other with dignity and respect. Behavior that prevents others from enjoying a positive camp experience will not be permitted. If necessary, parents will be required to collect their camper early. Inappropriate behavior including the use of offensive language, aggression, or use of prohibited items such as but not limited to tobacco, alcohol, non-prescription drugs or offensive materials will not be permitted.

The Camper's Commitment is a very important aspect of Camp Thunderbird's philosophy and speaks to our core values of caring, respect, honest and responsibility. We ask that you take the time to read and discuss the Camper's Commitment with your child.

You will be asked to acknowledge and agree to the commitment during registration.

## **Camper Commitment**

I want to be a camper at Camp Thunderbird. I agree to behave respectfully at camp. I will do my best to make this a great experience for myself and my fellow campers. I understand that failure to live up to my Commitment may mean that I am sent home from camp early. I also understand that by making this Commitment, I can look forward to fair treatment from my cabin mates, fellow campers and staff.

## **Parent/Guardian Commitment**

I have discussed the Camper's Commitment with my son/daughter and confirm that they agree to cooperate in the camp experience, to follow safety instructions and refrain from behavior that is harmful or disruptive to themselves or other campers. I understand that by supporting this Commitment, my child may look forward to fair treatment from their fellow campers and the camp staff.

I also understand that camp prohibits the use of offensive language, inappropriate behavior, and the use of tobacco, alcohol, or non-prescription drugs. I acknowledge that their use, or the failure by my camper to abide by this commitment is cause for my camper to be sent home early without refund of camp fees.

## **Risk Awareness**

### **Participant Safety and Risk Management**

The YMCA-YWCA of Vancouver Island Outdoor Centre and Camp Thunderbird is committed to providing quality outdoor experiences that support healthy growth and development of young people. The camp environment and programs provide unique opportunities for children, youth and adults to challenge themselves, learn new outdoor and interpersonal skills and make new friends.

We invest significant resources to create programs that provide these benefits to our participants without exposing them to unacceptable hazards. Participants and their families should be aware of the risks involved in participating in camp programs and accept that by participating they are taking those risks. Please take the time to review this summary of risks and our risk management approach. Risks will vary for each program, so we ask that you also take the time to review the information provided about each program on our website. We are happy to speak with you should you have any questions or comments.

### **Risk Management, Planning and Safety**

The unique nature of an outdoor education or summer camp experience comes with risks called “inherent risks”. This means that we cannot eliminate the risk without destroying the unique character of the activity – the aspects that make it beneficial for the participants. Although we cannot eliminate those risks, we actively take steps to reduce or control them, with the intent of bringing them to a tolerable level. For example, riding a bicycle has certain risks, and most people would agree that by wearing a helmet and obeying traffic laws, the risks are tolerable.

At the Outdoor Centre and Camp Thunderbird, we manage the risks specific to our environment and programs by being experts in our field, providing thorough staff training, and buying and maintaining quality program and personal protective equipment. While these measures do not guarantee safety, they allow us to offer programs that provide the many documented benefits of outdoor education and summer camp experiences, such as personal growth, connections to nature and a sense of accomplishment.

### **Risk Encountered at Camp Thunderbird**

Activities we encounter in our everyday lives, and those that take place at the Outdoor Centre and Camp Thunderbird involve risks. Risk may vary based on the nature of the activity. Any of the activities at the Outdoor Centre and Camp Thunderbird involve certain emotional and physical risks, and many of them include the risk of disability, psychological trauma or even death, in the event of a serious incident.

Some of the hazards encountered as part of Outdoor Centre and Camp Thunderbird programs may be familiar from our home communities: inclement weather and storms, motor-vehicle accidents, uneven ground, treefall, fire, hot liquids, infectious illnesses, and equipment failure.

## **Camp Programs**

Campers will be offered individual instruction in skills areas, take part in cabin group activities, and participate in special games and theme days involving the entire camp.

Most activities at camp are done in a cabin group. Y camps across North America have found that activities focused around a small group of peers encourage the development of close friendships and interpersonal skills as campers play and meet challenges together.

We do our best to foster an atmosphere of cooperation rather than competition. If we run an activity containing some element of competition, we focus on challenging campers to achieve their own goals, rather than encouraging them to measure their accomplishments against the achievement of others.

## **Out Trip**

Unlike other Base Camp programs our LD Base Camp does include an Out-trip. This is because the program is designed to transition our 5 day Outpost Base Camp and Quest campers who may not have an interest in our 19 day programs but are interested in the possibility of joining the staff team. All of our staff are required to lead overnight and two night camping trips on our property in Sooke. This program includes a two night out-trip in the first week of the program that is focused on learning how to cook, clean and the other tasks involved with leading short front country camping trips at Camp Thunderbird.

## **What to bring**

The following checklist is a good guideline for packing for camp. We encourage you to wear old clothes you won't mind bringing home dirty or getting lost. We do recommend that you do not bring expensive clothing to camp.

Label everything! We suggest sew-on labels for clothing items, and an indelible marker for other items. Include the camper's full name. Try to ensure that your camper can recognize the items that belong to them.

## **General Packing List**

**The quality of a Camper's clothing and gear is an important part of the comfort and safety of their experience in the Leadership program.**

### **Clothing**

- 5-day supply of underwear
- 5-day supply of socks (wool socks are best)
- 2 pairs of shorts

- 2 pairs of pants (sweatpants are warmer than jeans)
- 4 t-shirts
- 1 long-sleeved t-shirts
- 1 warm pullover (wool or fleece)
- 1-2 sweatshirts
- Warm jacket
- Hat (for those rainy or sunny days)
- Raingear (needs to be waterproof, jacket and pants – try standing under the shower to make sure it is indeed waterproof)
- Toque and mitts (for cool nights on out trip)
- Pajamas
- 2 pairs of shoes (1 for daily wear, athletic shoes or sport sandals, close-toed preferable & 1 sturdy pair of hiking shoes or boots for out trip)
- 2 bathing suits (easy to move, paddle, and swim in)
- Sunglasses
- Flip-Flops for showering

#### **Personal Items**

- Biodegradable soap and shampoo
- Toiletries, comb, toothbrush, etc.
- A watch and/or alarm clock
- Sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher)

#### **Other**

- Water bottle
- Pillow
- Towel
- Day pack
- Overnight Hiking Pack
- Stationery and pens (stamped envelopes)
- Flashlight (extra batteries)
- Breathable laundry bag
- Camera (optional) *\*Please do not bring your cell phone as a camera\**
- Book (optional)

#### **Please do not bring**

- Cell Phones or Smart Phones
- E-Readers
- Portable music devices
- Hair Dryers

- Expensive clothes
- Hatchets and large knives
- Money
- Tobacco
- Food
- Video games

- Tobacco
- Food
- Video games
- Other valuables
- SPOT or other emergency communication device

### **Cotton vs. Synthetic Fabrics**

Cotton does not insulate the wearer when it becomes wet and takes a very long time to dry. Synthetic fabrics such as polyester, polypropylene, nylon, spandex and fleece are better suited for spending lots of time outside in different elements. These fabrics keep the wearer warm even when wet and they dry very quickly. Wool takes a long time to dry but insulates relatively well even when wet.

### **How do I get all this stuff?**

Getting everything you need for camp together can be a long process. The out-trip gear list is necessary and important. Everything else is just a guideline. If you feel one bathing suit or one towel is all you need please don't feel like you need to go buy a new one.

When getting out-trip specific gear try borrowing things first. Try looking on the [Mountain Equipment Co-op gear swap](#), if you start keeping your eye out early you might find a good deal. Some families have found it more affordable to rent certain gear\*. For those things you do have to buy, here are some local Victoria stores to consider:

#### **Mountain Equipment Co-op**

*www.mec.ca*  
 1450 Government Street  
 Victoria, BC V8W 1Z2  
 (250) 386-2667

#### **Ocean River Sports**

*www.oceanriver.com*  
 1630 Store Street  
 Victoria, BC V8W 1V3  
 (250) 381-4233

#### **Capitol Iron**

*www.capitaliron.net*  
 Multiple Locations  
 Victoria, Sidney and Langford  
 (250) 385-9703

#### **Robinsons Outdoor Store**

*www.robinsonsoutdoors.com*  
 1307 Broad St  
 Victoria, BC V8W 2A8  
 (250) 385-3429

#### **\*Sports Rent**

*www.sportsrentbc.com*  
 3-1950 Government Street  
 Victoria, BC V8T 4N8  
 (250) 385-736

## Information for Families & Campers

### Typical Day at Camp

7:00 am	Wake-up
7:30 - 8:00 am	Morning walk or run around the lake (a great start to the morning), and Polar Bear dip.
8:15 am	Table setters, two campers from each cabin group set their cabin's table in the dining hall.
8:30 am	Breakfast
9:15 am	Cabin clean up - Campers return to their cabin to clean up and prepare for day.
10:00 am	Morning Activities (e.g., canoeing, archery, orienteering, kayaking)
12:15 pm	Table setters
12:30 pm	Lunch
1:15 pm	B.O.B. (Bodies on Bunks) - Everyone is given time after lunch to sleep, read, or write letters home
2:30 pm	Afternoon activities
4:30 pm	Discovery Hour/Swimming - Campers get the opportunity to pick an activity from several choices.
5:15 pm	Table setters
5:30 pm	Dinner
7:00 pm	Evening Program (cabin, section group or camp-wide)
9:30 pm	snack/bedtime prep/check-in/lights out

## Contacting Your Camper

### E-mail

We use a summer camp email service called Bunk1. It provides free contact with campers (called bunk notes) on a limited basis, and the option to purchase extra bunk notes for families wishing to have more regular contact. **We will post a link on our website in June with the Bunk1 access code on it.**

Bunk Notes are printed once per day, at 11:00am and distributed at breakfast, lunch or dinner of the same day. Campers do not receive bunk notes while on out-trip. **Bunk Notes sent after 11am on the last Thursday of the program will not reach the camper before they leave.**

Send Bunk Notes day or night! Your camp receives a pdf at 11am containing all Bunk Notes received in the last 24 hours. Camp prints each Bunk Note and delivers them to your camper with the regular mail. You can purchase more credits anytime in the Bunk Notes menu.

**On the go?** Purchase Bunk Notes Express and receive a unique email address to send your Bunk Note directly from an email account. Your message is still delivered as a Bunk Note. Each time you send a message, 1 credit is deducted from your account. Your Bunk Note will not be sent via Bunk Notes Express unless you have credits in your account.

Stay in touch with your camper at YMCA of Vancouver Island: Camp Thunderbird with Bunk Notes. Your message will be delivered to the camp within 24 hours. No need to wait for snail mail – Bunk1 makes it easy to communicate with your child. Follow Bunk1 on Facebook and Twitter for the latest updates and deals!

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Can other relatives use these services? Absolutely! In your Quick Links you'll select Invite Family Members, enter their details and they will be sent an email. PLEASE NOTE this will prompt them to set up their own account. It does not provide them access to your account OR your Bunk Note Credits.

**Questions or Problems?** The Bunk1 team is available to support you 7 days a week during peak season. They guarantee a response within 24 hours and it's usually much quicker than that.

Please call Bunk1 at 1-888-465-2267 or email [support@bunk1.com](mailto:support@bunk1.com).

**Google Chrome is the preferred web browser** for using Bunk1. Download Chrome for free by visiting: [www.google.com/intl/en/chrome/browser/](http://www.google.com/intl/en/chrome/browser/).

### KEEP UP WITH CAMP ALL SUMMER LONG!

#### Why do we use this service?

Bunk1 is a 3<sup>rd</sup> party service that we use. Bunk1 is a reliable service that is quick and easy to distribute. All families receive at least one free bunk note per child, per week of camp. Bunk1



is a for-profit venture, and they charge for any additional bunk notes at a cost of \$1.00 per note. 50% of all profits from bunk notes sent to Camp Thunderbird campers are donated to the Strong Kids fund, which helps send kids to Camp Thunderbird programs who otherwise could not afford it.

### **Regular Mail**

Thunderbird's Mailing Address:

Camper Name and section (explorer, pioneer, etc.)

c/o Camp Thunderbird

5040 Glinz Lake Rd, Sooke, BC V9Z 0E3

Sending a letter before your child arrives at camp can help allow them to receive a letter during their stay. That being said, our mail pick-up is inconsistent and slow, this is because we need to leave our site to collect the mail and this may not take priority on any given day. Sending the letter so it would arrive at our mailbox by the first day of camp is your best bet to ensure your camper can get it. A letter from home can be a wonderful treat if it is positive and light-hearted. If you get an unhappy letter from your child, don't panic. In all likelihood, whatever made them unhappy when they wrote the letter is long since forgotten or has been addressed by your camper's counsellor or another camp staff. If you have a concern, please call.

### **Telephone**

No phone is available for campers to regularly make or receive calls while at camp. If you would like to speak with the Program Manager for any reason, please feel free to phone the camp at: 250-642-3136.

## **Camper Wellness**

### **Preparing Your Child for Camp**

Camp is an exciting and fun filled place: new friends, new adventures, new skills, stories, songs, campfires and games. It's also a very different place: different bed, different washroom, different food, different schedule and different people.

Along with the excitement of all these new experiences, there is bound to be some anxiety. Here are a few things you might do to keep the anxiety low and anticipation high.

- Read this package, camper and parent together, and talk about preparing
- Talk about ways to solve problems at camp—talking with a counsellor or other camp staff
- Attend our annual Family Fun Day and try activities together, and see what the cabins will be like.

Parents and Guardians:

- Write and mail a letter before the camper leaves for camp so it will be waiting at camp when he or she gets there
- Focus on the positives like all the new skills they will learn and build confidence in the skills they already have

### **Camper Health**

Make sure that you have provided all of the necessary medical information on the registration form. Please feel free to provide us with more information if you think it would be beneficial. We will keep it in your campers file and staff will have access to that information.

### **Medications**

All medications are stored in a locked cabinet unless otherwise arranged. Staff keep a written record of the date and time of medication distribution. Please make sure that any medications your camper may have are in the original package and are labeled clearly with the camper's name and instructions for use. If you are dropping your child off by car you can choose to meet with the Team Leader or Medical Volunteer on the first day to discuss the medications necessary for your child. All campers have a "Wellness Check" on the first day of camp.

We stock basic over-the-counter medications including: Ibuprofen, Acetaminophen, Antihistamines, cough syrup, throat lozenges, and upset stomach relief medications. We encourage families not to send these medications to camp with their campers unless they take them on a regular basis. We will always do our best to make contact with guardians to communicate your campers wellbeing before administering medications, however if we are unable to make contact we may decide to administer the medication on the advice of our medical staff as per your sign off agreement.

### **In case of emergency or illness**

If your camper becomes ill and is diagnosed as being either contagious or too ill to remain at camp, we will contact you. Until they are picked up your child will be isolated from other campers in the Wellness Centre and cared for by the Medical Volunteer or another senior staff member. If your child becomes injured and needs to be seen by a physician, you will be contacted. If contact cannot be made in a timely fashion the Program Manager or designate will arrange what s/he feels is best in terms of treatment.

*If any prescription drugs are necessary as a result of the doctor's consultation, you will be billed for that cost.*

## **Homesickness**

It is reasonable to assume that until they become adjusted to camp life, your child might go through a period of homesickness. It is natural for children to experience homesickness when they come to camp. Our staff are trained to detect early symptoms of homesickness and to help children/teens feel comfortable at camp. Our counsellors are people who enjoy being with children/teens and will take the time to listen. Our Team Leaders, who oversee the counsellors, have years of camping experience and excellent counseling skills.

If your child is homesick, we will take the following steps to ensure a positive experience:

- Your child's counsellor will comfort and work with your child to overcome the negative aspects of homesickness
- If your child continues to show strong signs of homesickness, the Team Leader will become involved
- Staff may contact guardians to discuss options and strategies for working with your child
- As a last resort, we may ask you to talk to your child to help him or her through the experience.

In most cases these steps will allow your child to overcome their homesickness and enjoy their remaining time at camp.

## **Supervision at Camp**

Our staff are trained in providing high quality care for our campers and ensuring that the needs of each individual are met. We strive to provide a safe, comfortable and supportive environment. Camp Thunderbird provides 24-hour supervision of campers. This means that a cabin group will always have at least one counsellor present. If the cabin group is separated for activities (during interest groups or other individual choice time) there will also be at least one Thunderbird staff with the campers.

Some activities (orienteering, capture the flag, scavenger hunts, etc.) involve groups of campers being out of direct supervision. During these activities there may not be a staff member in direct line of sight with campers, but someone will always be within earshot and campers are given clear directions on what to do if they need assistance. These activities are only run with groups where all campers are able to interact positively together.

## **Sleeping Arrangements on Out-trip**

Up to 12 people will make up the mixed-gender group for Out-trip (2 or 3 leaders and up to 9-10 participants). Camp Thunderbird LD groups will take tarps for their sleeping shelters. In most cases, this will mean 2 tarps for the participants and Leaders. Each night, a little game or activity

will determine which individuals are in each participant tarp. This randomises the tent groups, enabling each participant to get to know all other participants and helps to prevent cliques from forming.

### **Camp Behaviour Policy**

If a situation arises where a camper threatens the safety or security of another camper, or if a camper shows disregard for camp guidelines, we will make every effort to encourage appropriate behaviour and contact the parents.

**If we are not successful in encouraging appropriate behaviour, the child will be dismissed from camp at the management team's discretion. Camp will not be held responsible for any costs associated with a dismissal on the grounds of disruptive behaviour.**

Parents of campers are kept abreast of any concerns and progress. Parents may also be asked to assist in creating a positive environment for all.

## Miscellaneous

### Lost and found

Lost and found items are displayed outside the dining hall during the session and are available for review by parents on pick-up days. Lost and found items are kept at camp for 14 days after the session ends and are then donated to charity unless... you fill out our Lost and Found request form (found on our website) and a staff member will check the lost and found for you. If the item is found, we will contact you and make arrangements to hold it for you at camp until September 15, at the latest. This will give you time to get to camp during our office hours for collection. **We do not transport items into Victoria or Langford.**

The best ways to help us reduce the amount of lost and found is to talk to your camper about keeping track of his or her things before getting to camp and putting your camper's name on anything brought to camp.

### Your privacy

The YMCA-YWCA is committed to maintaining the confidentiality, privacy, and accuracy of personal information it collects, uses and discloses about its participant, members, donors, parents/guardians, staff and volunteers. At the YMCA-YWCA of Vancouver Island (the "Y") your privacy is and always has been very important to us. We are dedicated to provide you with superior service while protecting your privacy and safeguarding your personal information

### Camp Office

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