



YMCA-YWCA
Vancouver Island

OUTDOOR EDUCATION 2026

SCHOOL/GROUP ORGANIZER INFORMATION

BOOKLET

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INTRODUCTION

Camp Thunderbird / Y Outdoor Centre is located on the traditional territory of the T'Sou-ke and Scia'new (Beecher Bay) Nations. We acknowledge this land as their unceded territory.

At Camp Thunderbird, Big Ideas, competencies and content are lived and experienced through deep connections with the outdoors. Visit our website for documents showing the curricular connections.

While participating in Outdoor Adventure Programs at Camp Thunderbird, students will:

- Build healthy relationships with peers and teachers through shared outdoor experiences
- Practice taking a leadership role, or standing back to gain a new understanding of their role as group members or leaders
- Develop and apply a variety of movement concepts and strategies in different physical activities
- Gain an appreciation for the forest and lake habitats of the Sooke area
- Learn about biodiversity of the local ecosystem.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

The YMCA-YWCA of Vancouver Island commits to our core values of respect, honesty, responsibility, caring, and inclusiveness. These values guide us in everything from our everyday decision making, our programming choices, and how we build and guide our camp community. In our commitment to these values, we recognize that we have room to grow and improve.

Camp Thunderbird is situated in, and benefits from, the territories of the T'Sou-ke and Scia'new Nations, who have lived in harmony with this land since time immemorial. We recognize the history of colonization and systemic racism that has shaped the world we operate in today, and we commit to increasing our awareness of where improvement is needed. We are dedicated to continuing to do the work of listening, learning, and making changes to make Camp Thunderbird a place for everyone, where people who are Indigenous, Black, racialized, or may experience discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, age, health status, neurodiversity, body size, or ability are truly welcome and included.

We recognize that this critical work will take time, may be uncomfortable, and will ultimately be a great benefit to the Camp Thunderbird community and those we serve and interact with.

INCLUSION

Camp Thunderbird welcomes diversity in all its forms. We spend time in staff training each year discussing how to include all people and make our programs adaptable and accessible. We encourage groups to include students who require any additional support. EAs supporting students attend at no fee, and Camp Thunderbird can work with EAs and teachers to ensure success in programs. We can arrange for additional supports such as all-terrain wheelchair rental. Please contact us to discuss how we might work together.

We also provide financial assistance, see page 10.



CHALLENGE BY CHOICE

As part of our philosophy of inclusion, and support of healthy body, mind and spirit, we provide a safe space for participants to experience the outdoors. Camp activities may be new, unfamiliar and challenging for students. We encourage students to tune in to their feelings, express their needs and participate at a pace that is right for them. Instructors receive training on supporting students through this process.

ACTIVITIES OFFERED

Our Camp Thunderbird team will work with you to create a well-rounded schedule for your students. Teachers will need to arrange students into activity groups of 10-14 students. Each activity group will have one student and one school-provided chaperone (teacher or parent volunteer). We aim to provide at least one block of time on the water (canoe, kayak or SUP) for each student, balanced with land-based activities. We cannot guarantee that every student has the same experience.

SUP (Stand-Up Paddleboarding): Camp Thunderbird has two full fleets of Stand-Up Paddleboards. Participants learn how to stand, paddle and maneuver safely. They learn paddling techniques as they apply to this sport.

Rock Climbing: Participants receive basic instruction in climbing safety, equipment, and techniques. Our trained instructors engage participants in proper climbing preparation and command sequences. We have two climbing areas: Cougar Rock, located in main camp, has three climbs varying in technical difficulty. Nicola Ridge is located just less than a kilometer (20 minute hike) northeast of main camp. Nicola is slightly more challenging as it is about 2-3 meters higher. Both climbing sites are natural rock and use similar equipment and lesson plans.

Archery: Participants have the opportunity to learn about archery safety and technique. We encourage personal improvement and development over competition with other participants. Participants receive instruction and practice on one of our three outdoor archery ranges and get a chance to use their new skills in archery games.

Canoeing: Participants become familiar with parts of the canoe and the paddle, paddle sports safety, and basic canoeing strokes. Besides the opportunity to practice their paddling skills, participants have time to explore Glinz Lake and check out the wildlife and natural wonders of the area.

Kayaking: Participants learn about the parts of a kayak and kayak paddle, paddle sports safety, and basic kayaking strokes and techniques. Thunderbird boasts a fleet of lake and sea kayaks. During a kayaking session, participants are given the opportunity to develop their paddling skills and to explore Glinz Lake.

Swimming: Our waterfront area, including three metre jump tower, provides an excellent fresh water swimming environment. Thunderbird staff are certified with Bronze Cross or National Lifeguard Service Award from the National Lifesaving Society. All participants must complete a swim challenge prior to swimming. The swim challenge is closely supervised by staff. Swimming can only be scheduled for groups that stay overnight, due to the time it takes to complete the swim challenge.

Hiking: Thunderbird boasts nearly 1200 acres of forest that provides beautiful hiking routes that range in difficulty. During a hiking session, participants learn about safe hiking, preparing to go on a hike, and appropriate clothing and safety gear to have. As well, participants learn about their natural surroundings,



and play a variety of trail games. We can offer hikes ranging from one or a few hours, to full days and overnights.

Campcraft: A campcraft session provides participants with the opportunity to practice some of the necessary skills of an extended wilderness experience. Participants learn about and practice building fires and shelters, finding appropriate campsites, and engaging in minimum trace camping techniques.

Orienteering: Orienteering is one of the world's most popular competitive sports, requiring both an understanding of the outdoors and map reading skills, as well as a keen sense of observation. At Thunderbird, a basic orienteering session provides participants with the opportunity to learn about using a map, and to practice their skills by navigating through a basic orienteering course.

Teambuilding Activities: Teambuilding activities are group-based sessions that provide participants with the opportunity to engage in activities and games that encourage group development, teamwork, and personal challenge. During a session, participants are encouraged to think about and discuss concepts such as teamwork, co-operation, and communication, and are challenged to push themselves to succeed as members of a team. We progress through a series of simple to more complex group challenges during each session, based on the groups' needs.

Low Ropes Courses: The low ropes course offers a variety of challenge elements that encourage participants to work together to achieve a specific goal. Participants have the opportunity to take on leadership roles and work cooperatively in order to achieve various levels of success. This session involves cooperative games, trust activities and group initiative tasks and progresses towards the various elements on our low ropes course.

Owls of Camp Thunderbird (Owl Pellets): Students will learn about the diversity, evolutionary adaptations and feeding behaviours of owls of the Camp Thunderbird forest. In this hands-on activity, students will dissect an owl pellet and identify the skeleton of the owl's prey. Students can then take the bones home if they like.

Forest Learning Chain: Students take on the roles of both learner and teacher in this engaging activity conducted along a section of trail. In small groups, students become "experts" on a particular organism or phenomenon, and teach it to their peers while exploring one of Camp's forest paths.

Sensory Nature Walk: This program diverges from a traditional nature hike by encouraging students to experience the forest around them through all of their senses: touch, sight, smell and sound.

The Animal Game: Students learn about food chains while playing an interactive high-energy game in the forest. Each student takes on a role in the food chain and hunts for food either by looking for food stations in the forest or by tagging other students. Up to 75 students at a time can play. This is one of our most popular activities!

Grade 7 Programs: Climate Change and Evolution. Through the generous support of TD Friends of the Environment and European Society for Evolutionary Biology Outreach grants, we are offering new curriculum aligned programs focused on Climate Change and Evolution. Students explore the concepts of climate change and evolution through hands-on activities and high energy science fun in a place-based setting.



Climate Alive!

Through exploring the local forest ecosystem at Camp Thunderbird, students investigate past climate patterns through tree ring observations, understand stressors to the ecosystem through forest inquiry activities, then make predictions about the findings of their inquiry and hypothesize what may happen moving forward in our changing climate. The program integrates curricular competencies including applying First Peoples perspectives, observing, measuring, and recording data, scientific questioning and predicting, and generating new ideas and applications in problem solving. Students will leave the program understanding the story that forests can tell us about the climate and their importance in this time of a changing climate. The climate change program is built as a stand-alone two-day immersive program or can also be selected as an activity option for other Camp Thunderbird programs.

Natural Selection in the natural environment

Students investigate the processes of natural selection and adaptation by comparing real mammal skulls from local wildlife including: bear, wolf, cougar, deer, bat and beaver. They will also participate in wide games that demonstrate natural selection in an immersive way. Students take on roles of prey with varying amounts of camouflage and predators and look at the effect of camouflage over generations of predation.

SOME OF THE CHOICES FOR EVENING ACTIVITIES

- Active group games such as Capture the Flag, Animal Game, etc.
- Lower energy group games run by our staff or Disc Golf
- Prepare skits/songs to present at campfire

LENGTH OF STAY

The magic of camp is best experienced with an overnight stay. Our most popular overnight stay is 2 nights (see example schedule below). We also offer shorter or longer stays and day-only programs. **New for 2026:** we are now offering extended day programs, for those wishing to have something similar to an overnight stay, just without the sleepover. These longer days run from 9am-7:30pm, can include both lunch and dinner, and have lots of time for activities and even a sing-along campfire.



DAY PROGRAM SCHEDULE EXAMPLES

Time	Activity
9:00 – 9:30	Arrival, Icebreakers, Orientation
9:30 – 10:45	Rotation #1
10:45 – 10:55	*snack (bring your own), transition/get changed as needed
10:55 – 12:10	Rotation #2
12:10 – 12:20	Transition and prep for lunch
12:20 – 1:20	Lunch in Hyas
1:20 – 2:40	Rotation #3
2:40 – 3:50	Wide Game: Capture the Flag or Stones
3:50-4:00	Closure and Goodbye
4:00	Load Bus & Depart

	Rotation #1	Rotation #2	Rotation #3
Group 1	Teambuilding	Archery	Kayaking
Group 2	Teambuilding	Kayaking	Archery
Group 3	Canoeing	Teambuilding	Archery

Time	Activity
9:00 – 9:30	Arrival, Icebreakers, Orientation
9:30 – 10:50	Rotation #1
10:55 – 12:10	Rotation #2
12:10 – 12:20	Transition and prep for lunch
12:20 – 1:30	Lunch in Hyas
1:30 – 2:40	Rotation #3
2:40 – 3:50	Rotation #4
3:50 – 5:20	Animal Game
5:20 – 5:30	Prepare for dinner
5:30 – 6:20	Dinner in Hyas
6:20 – 6:30	Transition to Campfire
6:30 – 7:15	Campfire
7:15 – 7:30	Closure and Goodbyes

	Rotation #1	Rotation #2	Rotation #3	Rotation #4
Group 1	Teambuilding	Archery	Kayaking	Orienteering
Group 2	Teambuilding	Kayaking	Orienteering	Archery
Group 3	Canoeing	Teambuilding	Orienteering	Archery



OVERNIGHT PROGRAM SCHEDULE EXAMPLE

Stoneybrook School

School Contact: Jayne Dough

Arrival: 10:00 am May 22

Participants: 58, ages 10-12

Departure: 2:00 pm May 24

Number of Activity Groups: 5

Day One		Day Two		Day Three	
<u>Cabin Assignments:</u>				Cabin clean-up and move out	
		8:20 – 9:10	BREAKFAST		
10:00 – 10:30	Arrival, Icebreakers, Orientation	9:10 – 9:30	Transition and prep for first activities *chaperone supervision	9:10 – 9:30	Transition and prep for first activities *chaperone supervision
10:30 – 11:45	Tour of camp: safety, rules, and nature facts	9:30 – 10:50	Rotation # 3	9:30 – 10:50	Rotation # 7
11:45 – 12:10	Move into cabins *chaperone supervision	10:55 – 12:10	Rotation # 4	10:55 – 12:10	Rotation # 8
12:10 – 12:20	Transition and prep for lunch *chaperone supervision				
12:20 – 1:30	LUNCH				
1:30 – 2:40	In-cabin rest period (chaperone supervised) or games with staff	1:30 – 2:40	In-cabin rest period (chaperone supervised) or games with staff	1:30 – 2:00	Prepare for departure, debrief and play games with camp staff
2:40 – 3:50	Rotation #1	2:40 – 3:50	Rotation # 5	*Some activities require multiple rotation blocks.	
3:50 – 5:10	Rotation #2	3:50 – 5:10	Rotation # 6		
5:10 – 5:30	Prepare for dinner *chaperone supervision	5:10 – 5:30	Prepare for dinner *chaperone supervision		
5:30 – 6:20	DINNER				
6:20 – 6:40	Prepare for evening program *chaperone supervision	6:20 – 6:40	Prepare for evening program *chaperone supervision		
6:40 – 8:00	Evening program (wide game, skit night)	6:40 – 8:00	Evening program (wide game, skit night)		
8:00 – 8:45	Campfire	8:00 – 8:45	Campfire		

Rotation	#1	#2	#3	#4
Group 1	Orienteering	Rock Climbing	Canoeing	Archery
Group 2	Orienteering	Canoeing	Archery	Rock Climbing
Group 3	Canoeing	Orienteering	Archery	Rock Climbing
Group 4	Canoeing	Rock Climbing	Archery	Orienteering
Group 5	Archery	Orienteering	Canoeing	Rock Climbing
Rotation	#5	#6	#7	#8
Group 1	Kayaking	Hiking	Atlatl	Teambuilding
Group 2	Atlatl	Kayaking	Hiking	Teambuilding
Group 3	Hiking	Atlatl	Teambuilding	Kayaking
Group 4	Kayaking	Teambuilding	Hiking	Atlatl
Group 5	Hiking	SUP	Teambuilding	Camp Craft



MEALS AND ACCOMMODATION






We typically host multiple groups on-site at the same time. All groups with meal service eat together in the dining hall, with meals typically served at 8:20, 12:20 and 5:30. Day groups can choose to eat in the dining hall or bring their own lunches, which are enjoyed in a picnic area at camp.

MEALS





Our menu is based on the Canada Food Guide, and is always fresh, nutritious and kid-friendly. We can accommodate special diets such as: specific allergies, Celiac, diabetic, vegetarian, and vegan with advanced notice. Menu items include things like stir-fry, lasagna, roasts, and there is a fresh salad bar served with lunch and dinner. Breakfast includes a hot item such as pancakes as well as a breakfast bar of cereal, yogurt and oatmeal. An evening snack is provided for overnight groups. Meals are served family style, at tables of up to 10. At each meal, special diet items are designed to match the general meal as closely as possible. For example, gluten free buns are provided if lunch is burgers.

CABIN ASSIGNMENTS

Cabins are assigned to balance availability with ages and needs of all groups on-site. You are welcome to request particular cabins at time of booking. While we try to meet your request to the extent possible, we cannot guarantee particular cabins. Chaperones are required to sleep in the cabins with the campers to provide support and supervision. All cabins are furnished with bunk beds with mattresses. We have 3 additional cots that can be added upon request.

Cabin Type	Cabin Names	Photos
3 Animal Cabins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 36 beds, 12 in each cabin arranged as 6 bunks Electricity, heat, lights 3-piece washroom in cabin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deer and Eagle (duplex) Crow 	   
2 Insulated Yurts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28 beds total, 12 in each yurt, arranged as 6 bunks Shower and washroom house nearby Being built in early 2026, amenities TBD 	Names TBD	



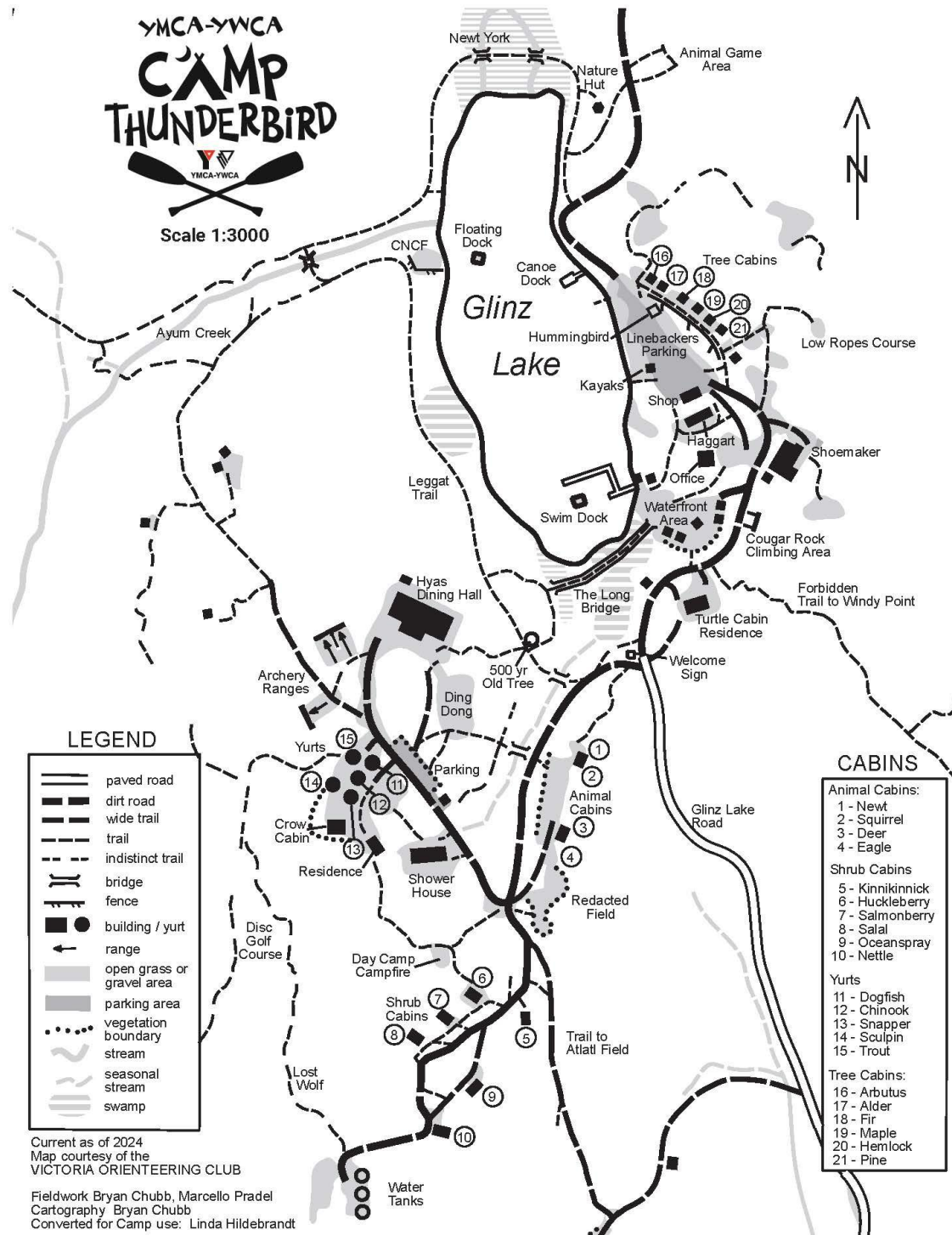
<p>5 Fish Yurts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • total 60 beds, 12 in each yurt, arranged as 6 bunks • Shower and washroom house nearby • Skylights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snapper • Chinook • Trout • Dogfish • Sculpin 	 
<p>6 Shrub Cabins; total 72 beds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shower house & outhouse nearby • Skylights • 12 beds per cabin (6 bunks) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Huckleberry • Salmonberry • Salal • Kinnikinnick • Oceanspray • Nettle 	 

PHONE AND INTERNET

Our instructors model a “technology free” environment where students can disconnect from the everyday bustle of social media and screens, and we request that students not bring electronics to camp. For chaperones to stay connected, we do have a land-line available and can provide access to wifi internet, but we also strongly encourage visiting adults to model the art of being present in nature by keeping screen time to a minimum while at camp. If possible, please bring cameras to take pictures. There is cellular reception in a few areas of camp, but it is not reliable.



FACILITY MAP





BOOKING

When booking your group's visit to Camp Thunderbird:

- Fill out the [booking form online](https://vancouverislandy.com/program-services/outdoor-education-overview/) (Go to: <https://vancouverislandy.com/program-services/outdoor-education-overview/> and click the "Submit a Booking Request").
- We tentatively hold equivalent dates for approximately the same number of students for returning groups year to year until our re-booking deadlines in the fall.
- The Program Manager takes all booking requests and tries to make it work for everyone.
- Once your dates are selected and agreed on, our Registration Services department will send you a Program Package.

CONTRACTS AND BOOKING PAPERWORK

Registration Services will email you your Program Package, which includes the following:

- Contract
- Initial Payment Invoice
- Chaperone Orientation (one-page)
- Confirmation Sheets (numbers, dietary and medical info)

RETURN THE CONTRACT, INITIAL PAYMENT, AND CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE (due 1 month after receipt).

- Details on what is required for the insurance are listed in the contract. Most Public Schools are listed under the School Protection Program Memorandum of coverage, listed at: <https://www.bcspp.org/?q=moc> If you are listed, then you do not need to provide us with a copy of liability insurance.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Late cancellations cause significant hardship for our charitable operation, and impede our ability to provide affordable programs and services. As a result, if a written cancellation is received prior to the scheduled start date of your booking, the following conditions apply:

- Over 90 days notice – initial payment will be returned less an administration fee of \$100.00
- 60-90 days notice – initial payment is forfeited
- Less than 60 days notice - your group/organization will be billed for 90% of the total booking cost

Cancellations must be submitted in writing.

FINAL INVOICE

- Will be sent to you after your visit.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

YMCA-YWCA Vancouver Island is a registered charity and believes that everyone should have the opportunity to take part in our programs. Financial Assistance is available to those who are unable (not unwilling) to pay full participation fees.



Please help us to stretch these funds to as many children as possible; these funds are not meant to take the place of fundraising. These forms are due two weeks before your arrival date at camp. Please contact Camp Thunderbird General Manager Luke Ferris at lferris@vancouverislandy.ca for a copy of the application form or if you have questions.

PRE-TRIP PAPERWORK CHECKLIST

Return your CONTRACT, and INITIAL PAYMENT within a month of receipt to secure your space. Then,

TWO MONTHS prior to visit

- Confirm number of students attending. After this deadline, if your number of participants drops by more than 10%, you will be billed at a minimum of 90% of the confirmed number of participants indicated on the contract.

TWO WEEKS prior to visit

- Review, complete and return your program confirmation sheet (dietary and medical info) to us at tbirdoutdoored@vancouverislandy.ca
- Financial assistance applications due. Send to lferris@vancouverislandy.ca

PRE-TRIP PLANNING CHECKLIST

Prior to your trip, you will need to organize the following.

- One of the accompanying adults must be a certified first aid attendant.
- Camp Thunderbird only requires the documents listed above, but you should:
 - Share the Risk Awareness document at the end of this document with your families
 - Bring medical information about all participants with you.
- Organize your students into Activity and Cabin groups (see templates in this booklet).
- Prepare your chaperones by giving them the Chaperone Orientation sheet.



GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS

To make your stay safe and pleasant, we ask all teachers and chaperones to thoroughly read and comply with the following. Update for 2025 is highlighted in yellow.

- For the health of all participants, students/teachers/chaperones who are experiencing or displaying symptoms of communicable disease, including but not limited to COVID-19, cold/flu, or gastrointestinal (Noro-) virus should not attend Camp Thunderbird, and if symptoms develop after arrival, the school will be responsible for arranging their transportation to care off property at the earliest possible time.
- The school or client group representative must obtain informed consent from parents/guardians and participants for the activities (and associated risks) that will take place at The Y Outdoor Centre. Please share our Risk Awareness Document with participants and parents/guardians.
- **Coach buses do not fit on Camp Thunderbird roads. Only school buses should be booked for student transportation. If this poses a barrier, please contact us.**
- The school is required to provide adult (parents and teachers) supervision in order to have one adult in each cabin and one adult in each activity group (as a minimum). This requires a 1:8 chaperone to child ratio for overnight groups and a 1:14 ratio (or one per activity group) for day groups. One chaperone for every 8 (overnight) or 14 (day) students is complementary. Camp Thunderbird can provide these chaperones for an additional fee.
- Chaperones are expected to be active leaders in behaviour guidance/management, and to directly supervise children. Children under the age of 12 must be directly supervised at all times (Y Child Protection Policy).
- One teacher/chaperone must be designated as the first aid attendant; teachers/chaperones are responsible for overseeing first aid given to their students. A first aid kit is required for the attendant. A vehicle must be brought to the site and must be available and designated as the emergency vehicle. One teacher/chaperone must be designated as the emergency vehicle driver (may or may not be the same person as the first aid attendant). Ambulance service will be called when required and will be the financial responsibility of the injured party. Camp Thunderbird staff will help provide first aid if needed. Camp Thunderbird will not provide medication.
- The school must collect participant medical information and bring it Camp Thunderbird. The school will notify Camp Thunderbird of severe medical conditions using the "Confirmation Sheets".
- Food allergies and dietary requests must be indicated on the "Confirmation Sheets", and most limitations can be accommodated. We ask that in general, schools not bring any additional food to camp. We have limited storage space for food, thus any additional food will need to be stored in the first aid vehicle. Our kitchen/cooking facilities are not available for group use.
- No food is kept in the cabins (a health and safety precaution). Any damage or unnecessary cleaning that is caused by food in the cabins will result in a charge.
- We ask that peanut and nut products are not brought to Camp Thunderbird.



- A group's behaviour, program objectives, and activities must be consistent with the values and mission of the YMCA-YWCA of Vancouver Island.
- Staff and Instructors reserve the right to terminate any activity if weather, participant behaviour, or other factor is jeopardizing the wellbeing or safety of participants, chaperones, or staff.
- PFDs must be worn by all children and adults while boating and on boating docks. Camp Thunderbird staff must lifeguard while student & adult participants are in the swimming/waterfront area.
- Groups may not have media relations on YMCA-YWCA property without the prior written consent of the CEO.
- Damage to facilities, equipment or the environment will be assessed at replacement value and will be charged.
- Possession of alcohol, non-prescribed cannabis, controlled substances, and illegal drugs on YMCA-YWCA property is prohibited.
- The Y Outdoor Centre / Camp Thunderbird is a non-smoking and non-vaping facility. Those adults needing to smoke or vape must leave camp property to do so.
- Camp staff will manage all outdoor campfires, in designated campfire sites only.
- Pets are not permitted.

Failure to comply with these Guidelines and Expectations may result in decreased priority for future bookings or the termination of the contract and the removal of the group from the site. If there are any questions regarding the policies detailed above, please feel free to email hkucera@vancouverislandy.ca.



CHAPERONE ORIENTATION

Emergency Situations

- To contact the Duty Manager (DM) at anytime, use the emergency pager. State your location and the nature of the emergency. There are phones in the dining hall and office.

Dial 250-413-3683

- The school first aid attendant is responsible for first aid, treatment and care decisions
- If an ambulance is called, the Camp T Duty Manager must be informed.

Chaperone Care for Students

- **During program time.** Our instructors will work with you to help the students make the most of their time. When instructors are teaching, it is super helpful if chaperones can encourage students to be listening and focussed.
- **During non-program time.** Given some of the risks of our site, chaperones need to directly supervise students before and after each meal, and overnight. Staying with the students during these times helps them navigate the risks, as well as have positive experiences.
- **Participation in Programs.** The challenge by choice model supports students in pushing their comfort zone without causing fear. Chaperones play a key role in this by participating in the programs. For example, chaperones should be on the water (in/on a canoe, kayak or SUP) when students are on the water.

Good to Know

- There is a coffee station in Hyas that is available for teachers, school staff, and parents.
- We ask students to keep their phones/tech at home, so it's helpful if adults model this by having their phones tucked away during program and meal time.
- Please do not bring nut products to camp.
- PDFs must be worn on docks when not swimming.
- Camp Thunderbird is a non-smoking, no vaping, cannabis-free and alcohol-free site.

We appreciate your support in making this the best possible experience for your students. Questions are welcome, please speak to Hana Kucera or the Duty Manager.



RECOMMENDED GEAR LIST – OVERNIGHT GROUPS

Camp Thunderbird is a nut-safe zone. Please leave nut product at home.

The following list is a packing guide for your child's upcoming experience at YMCA-YWCA Camp Thunderbird.

WHAT TO WEAR TO CAMP:

CLOTHING – Be sure to check the weather before dressing for camp. Spring and fall temperatures at Camp Thunderbird can be 5 degrees cooler than Victoria. Have your child wear clothes they can be active in. Jeans are not good on rainy days – once wet they can really slow down a child's ability to participate in the activities and can increase the risk of hypothermia.

STURDY SHOES - Lace up sneakers or light hikers are the best. New hiking boots just for camp are not necessary and can cause blisters.

SUN HAT AND SUNSCREEN

WHAT TO PACK FOR CAMP

SLEEPING BAG or BEDDING (twin bed)

PILLOW - optional

COMPLETE CHANGES OF CLOTHES (dependent upon the length of stay) - underwear, socks, shorts, pants, t-shirts, sweater, warm jacket, and pyjamas

TOQUE - For chilly evenings

TOILETRIES - Tooth brush, toothpaste, soap, sunscreen

DAY PACK - This is to carry the rain gear, water bottle, towel, bathing suit, sunscreen etc.

RAIN GEAR – An affordable poncho works great! A hood helps a great deal.

BATHING SUIT AND TOWEL

WATER BOTTLE

FLASH LIGHT

EXTRA SHOES OR RUBBER BOOTS

SLIPPERS OR SANDALS - For inside the cabins

OPTIONAL – camera, insect repellent

SCHOOL ITEMS - Exercise books, pens and pencils, if the teachers wish

Lost and found will be held at the Camp for 2 weeks after which it will be donated to those in need.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING:

Knives, money, valuables, music devices, cell phones, perfumes or scents.

RECOMMENDED GEAR LIST – DAY GROUPS

Day visitors should bring the following:

• Day pack	• Closed-toed shoes	• Snack (please pack out garbage)
• Water bottle	• Swimsuit and towel (for wet boating)	• Lunch if not eating in dinning hall
• Sunscreen	• Full change of clothing	• Hat



CAMP THUNDERBIRD FORMS

These forms are for your use to divide your students into groups.

We do not need copies of these forms, however we recommend that chaperones receive copies of the groups and your schedule as they are responsible for the supervision of these students.

It is important to note our expected group sizes, shown in the chart below, before making your activity groups. Also, please check with us about which cabins you have been assigned to find out how many beds those cabins have before completing the Cabin Group Template.

ACTIVITY GROUP SIZES

<u>Range</u> (Groups of 10-14 participants)	<u>Thunderbird Staff</u> Provided for Activity Groups
1-14	1
15-28	2
29-42	3
43-56	4
57-70	5
71-84	6
85-98	7
99-112	8
113-126	9
127-140	10



ACTIVITY GROUP TEMPLATE

	<u>Group:</u>	<u>Group:</u>
Teacher/Chaperone:		
Students:		
1)		
2)		
3)		
4)		
5)		
6)		
7)		
8)		
9)		
10)		
11)		
12)		
13)		
14)		

(Activity groups range in size from 10-14 students. Please check the number of groups assigned to your visit on your contract.)



CABIN GROUP TEMPLATE

	<u>Cabin Group:</u>	<u>Cabin Group:</u>
Teacher/Chaperone:		
Students:		
1)		
2)		
3)		
4)		
5)		
6)		
7)		
8)		
9)		
10)		
11)		

	<u>Cabin Group:</u>	<u>Cabin Group:</u>
Teacher/Chaperone:		
Students:		
1)		
2)		
3)		
4)		
5)		
6)		
7)		
8)		
9)		
10)		
11)		



RISK AWARENESS FOR YMCA-YWCA OF VANCOUVER ISLAND OUTDOOR CENTRE AND CAMP THUNDERBIRD

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.

Risks Encountered at the Outdoor Centre and 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, equipment failure, and communicable disease such as, but not limited to, flu, gastroenteritis, COVID-19, and other viruses.



Some hazards may be more unique to the Outdoor Centre and Camp Thunderbird programs and settings. These hazards include, but are not limited to: lake and ocean water, marine traffic, boat capsizes, wildlife encounters (including bears, cougars, wolves, mice or other rodents, and stinging insects), hypo- or hyperthermia, fall from heights, including falls while hiking in steep terrain, falls or injuries due to equipment failure, error in judgement, natural rock or tree fall on our property, on out-trips, and on our real-rock climbing areas, remoteness from emergency medical or evacuation services, including the failure of communication technology.

The hazards listed, and other hazards not listed, can pose a risk even a well-trained and highly certified instructor, leader or guide is present. Any of the Outdoor Centre and Camp Thunderbird programs or activities can, due to an error in judgement or factors beyond the leader's control, become hazardous and potentially life-threatening.

Participants and their families must weigh the risks that may be encountered with the strengths of the Outdoor Centre and Camp Thunderbird's Risk Management approach and plan as well as with the benefits of an outdoor education or camping experience.

Risk Management Plan Summary

The following is a short list of examples of the types of procedures and policies that are part of our larger Risk Management Plans:

- All staff and volunteers have a Criminal Record Check with Vulnerable Sector Screening.
- All staff and volunteers have program-appropriate first aid training, with a minimum of Standard First Aid which includes CPR-C.
- Camp Thunderbird sea kayaking programs are led by guides certified by the [Sea Kayak Guides Alliance of British Columbia](#).
- The Outdoor Centre and Camp Thunderbird is accredited by the [British Columbia Camping Association](#). This accreditation ensures compliance with stringent training, health and safety protocols and auditors regularly visit the site for inspections.
- Camp Thunderbird cooperates with land managers and permitting authorities.
- The Outdoor Centre and Camp Thunderbird are supported by the YMCA-YWCA of Vancouver Island Health and Safety Committee.
- The Outdoor Centre and Camp Thunderbird inspects, maintains and reviews all safety equipment, particularly emergency communications devices, regularly.
- The Outdoor Centre and Camp Thunderbird reviews all family and staff surveys.

Contact Us

We encourage participants and their families to share questions or comments concerning risk management with us. Please contact General Manager Luke Ferris lferris@vancouverislandy.ca 250-386-7511 about any aspect of the inherent risks of camping and about our risk management plan. *This document was updated on March 5, 2024.*