

## ACTIVITY INFORMATION AND RISKS

We believe in the power of outdoor ministry, as an extension of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. (ELCA). It is a privilege to welcome children into our camps. Our highest priority is for the health, safety and well-being of our campers and staff. We are accredited by the American Camp Association (ACA) and commit to continually adopting best practices. The following sections contain information about “reasonably anticipated” risks, and our strategies for managing that risk.



### FOOD SERVICE

We value the fellowship and community that is created around mealtimes. We provide nutritious, well-balanced meal options for our campers and guests.

#### **What risks can be reasonably anticipated with food service?**

- Campers with food allergies
- Poor food preparation, handling and serving practices
- Unlicensed kitchen
- Illnesses in food service staff
- Unapproved food sources

#### **What have we done to manage these risks?**

##### **Campers with food allergies or other dietary needs:**

- Food intolerances, allergies and special diets have become quite common. We do work with many different dietary needs, but this requires conversations between a parent and our kitchen staff before a camper arrives on site.
- It is very important to also include these special needs on the health form.

##### **Unlicensed kitchen:**

- Kitchens at all three of our sites are licensed by the state they reside in and Head Cooks are trained through a program called “Serve Safe”. They are inspected annually by a state Health Inspector and every five years by the American Camp Association (ACA).

##### **Unapproved food sources:**

- We only serve food that comes direct from nationally recognized food service companies. They also help provide resources for proper nutrition and meal planning.

##### **Illnesses in food service staff:**

- Staff in the food service area must report any illness and are then removed from the schedule until healthy again.

**Poor food preparation, handling and serving practices:**

- Food handling and preparation, dish washing and general cleanliness policies have been formulated through guidelines from Serve Safe training, from our State Health Inspectors and from ACA. These guidelines are enforced by our trained leadership staff and Director of Food Services.
- Wilderness Canoe Base provides on-site meals in the dining hall, as well as sending food out on trail for those on canoeing adventures. Trail meals consist of a mix of fresh food, as well as dehydrated meal options for cooking over a camp stove.

**TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation in varying degrees supports the program at each of our sites. This can include taking campers off site to a program location or to another of our sites for a different program activity low ropes course at Ox Lake. In the event of illness or injury it could mean transporting the camper or staff to the clinic/hospital.

Transportation is normally done in vans or other camp vehicle.

**What risks can be reasonably anticipated with transportation?**

Accidents or illness while on the road  
Untrained drivers  
Drivers with poor driving records  
Camper alone with one driver  
Lost camper while off site

**What have we done to manage these risks?****Accidents or illness while on the road:**

- Groups that go off site on a day trip are accompanied by at least one staff person who is certified in American Red Cross - First Aid & CPR or equivalent.
- Emergency response procedure training is provided to drivers and staff who accompany off site trips; these include accident/illness, lost campers, vehicle breakdown, passenger control, etc.
- All our day trips keep us within our emergency services radius.
- In the event of needed communication, cell phones are used.

**Untrained drivers:**

- Drivers receive training on camp driving safety policies, emergency response plans and are familiarized with camp vehicles during the two-week staff training period.
- Emergency response procedure training is provided to drivers and staff who accompany off site trips; these include accident/illness, lost campers, vehicle breakdown, passenger control, etc.

**Drivers with poor driving records:**

- All our approved drivers have gone through our training course and passed. Their names are then listed on our camp insurance policy.
- All drivers must be a minimum of 21 years old to drive 15 passenger vans, and 18 years old to drive cars or mini-vans.

**Camper alone with one driver:**

- For the protection of campers and staff, our camp policies never allow for a one-on-one (camper/counselor) situation in a private setting.

**Lost camper while off site:**

- Drivers and staff who accompany campers on offsite trips are trained in the Emergency Response plans to be implemented in the event of a camper who is temporarily separated from the group.

- Drivers and staff are trained to manage campers if and when they are at an event with the general public.

## HEALTH CARE / FIRST AID

All our sites provide Health Care staff and other staff trained in first aid procedures. The level and focus of this training varies by site in providing the necessary level to support specific programs; Wilderness Canoe Base receives Wilderness First Aid training which has a focus on the emergency response necessary where you may need to make do with what you have and when professional care is some distance away. Camp Wapo and Ox Lake are required by state law to have a minimum of American Red Cross – Emergency Response or equal certification.

Solid health care practices and protocols help manage risks at camp. Our sites have detailed plans (Standing Orders) that have been created and evaluated by a local physician and meet or exceed state regulations. Our healthcare staff are diligent in the way they collect, document and record medication throughout the week. It is very important that parents keep camp updated on the latest health information prior to their camper's arrival at camp. It is also very important for parents/guardians to ONLY send along the correct amount of prescription medicine their child will need while at camp.

### **What risks can be reasonably anticipated with Health Care / First Aid?**

- Medication dispensed improperly
- No First Aid coverage during camp activities
- Lack of necessary training
- Poor or incorrect diagnostic decisions

### **What have we done to manage these risks?**

#### **Medication dispensed improperly:**

- Administration of Over-the-Counter Medications is covered in our Standing Orders developed by local Doctor. This document is reviewed annually.
- Prescription medications are collected from Campers and Staff and kept under lock in the First Aid facility of each camp and administered by First Aid staff only.
- Prescription medications must come to camp in the original container with Dr. name, name of medication and administration instructions. Because every single pill/vitamin needs to be counted in and out, it is imperative for parents to only send the dosage that may be needed.
- Medications must be listed on the Camper or staff Health History form with parent/guardian signature.
- Policies and procedures for proper collection and administration of medications is covered in health care training sessions, prior to campers arriving.

#### **No First Aid coverage during camp activities:**

- All camp activities, especially those involving an elevated level of risk, are always supported by a staff person(s) with First Aid certification. This coverage ranges from American Red Cross Basic First Aid and CPR to higher level of American Red Cross Emergency Response or at Wilderness Canoe Base, Wilderness First Aid.
- In the event of an emergency each site is supported by local professional First Responders and Ambulance & Fire/ Rescue services.

**Lack of necessary training:**

- First Aid staff, special program staff and many general staff have varying levels of First Aid or Emergency Response certification provided by professional trainers.
- Site specific training for the camp First Aid staff is provided during the two weeks of staff training prior to each summer season. This training includes record keeping, medication collection, management and distribution, diagnostic options, calls to parents and general responsibilities of Health Care and First Aid staff.

**Poor or incorrect diagnostic decisions:**

- Camp's Health Care staff are expected to perform diagnostic decisions only to the level their training permits. In more serious situations, each site has communication options with local hospital or other emergency agencies to be used when diagnostic advice is necessary for dealing with the needs of a specific camper or staff person.
- Parent or Guardian will also be involved when the diagnostic decision warrants.
- First Aid staff is always encouraged to err on the side of caution and make calls to the parent or hospital/clinic for aid in making a decision for a specific situation.

## **AQUATIC ACTIVITIES**

Recreational swimming and canoeing are available at all three sites. Camp Wapo utilizes Bear Trap Lake for all waterfront activities; swimming, paddle boarding, canoeing, kayaking and pontoon boat trips. Our high school program takes a day trip to canoe on the St. Croix River. Our Ox Lake site utilizes the Ox Lake waterfront for swimming, paddle boarding, canoeing, and kayaking. Wilderness Canoe Base utilizes waterfronts on Seagull Lake and offers canoe excursions into the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. Pontoons are occasionally used for small group short trips out on the water.

**What risks can reasonably be anticipated with Aquatic Activities?**

Death from drowning is the ultimate risk  
Near drowning  
Injury from overturned canoe or other swimming incident  
Unaccounted for swimmer or camper

**What have we done to manage these risks?**

In this aquatic section we will simply state what our camp does to manage the water activities rather than addressing each of the individual risks. State codes for operation of Recreation/Education camps of Minnesota or Wisconsin and American Camp Association (ACA) standards dictate many of the aquatic policies for our sites.

- The ACA and State Codes require us to control the access to aquatic events, this prevents campers from simply choosing to enter or exit the beach at their desire, and rather they must enter and exit through a monitored entrance.
- Lifeguards at Camp Wapo and Ox Lake are certified by American Red Cross. At Wilderness Canoe Base the lifeguards receive "Wilderness Water Safety" training which, as the name implies, is more attuned to the risks that may present themselves in the wilderness.
- Lifeguards are monitored by an Aquatic Manager to make sure they perform their duties as directed by their training and by camp standards.
- Lifeguards at the swimming beach are assigned at the ratio of 1 guard to 25 swimmers with a minimum of two guards on duty. There are additional staff at the beach who manage beach access, so that we are aware of who and how many swimmers are participating.

- Staff and campers are required to perform a swim-ability test prior to any aquatic activity. The result of this test will determine where the participant can swim (shallow or deep end) and who must be in canoe with them. Any camper or staff who chooses not to do the swim test will be restricted to shallow water when swimming and must be accompanied by a lifeguard when in canoe.
- Life jackets are mandatory for all watercraft activities regardless of swimming ability.
- The Buddy System is incorporated at each of our camps so we can quickly account for all participants when a Buddy Check is called by the Head Lifeguard. The campers are assigned a “Buddy” when they enter the beach and must present themselves with their buddy when the Buddy Check is called.
- A state representative makes an annual inspection of aquatic facilities and policies, and ACA does an accreditation visit every five years.
- Wilderness Canoe Base staff go through intense pre-camper training so that they are familiar with tripping routes, and cover responses to the normally foreseeable emergency situations.
- Lifeguards and other aquatic staff perform mock drills on emergency response and beach control to be more prepared in the event of an emergency.
- Each camp provides rescue equipment and first aid equipment for base camp and off-site aquatic activities.

## **ROCK CLIMBING** (Wilderness Canoe Base)

Our rock-climbing experience is outdoors on naturally formed rocks. There are three levels of climbs so campers can go at their own pace and can gain some confidence before they try more challenging climbs. We use a dynamic belay system that helps prevent jolting injuries.

### **What risks can reasonably be anticipated with the Rock-Climbing program?**

Accidents or Injuries near or in the climbing areas  
 Equipment breakdown  
 Leader error  
 Un-safe conduct by climbers

### **What have we done to manage these risks?**

#### **Accidents or Injuries near or in the climbing areas:**

- Areas used for rock climbing are inspected for safety prior to use with hazards removed or accounted for in some way.
- All belaying activities are done by trained staff.
- Communication between the Belay and the Climber is instructed and practiced prior to climbing.
- Climbers all go through a preparatory session on how to climb safely and how to properly wear all safety equipment.
- We consistently use the same places so we are familiar with the specific climbing area and surrounding area.
- Areas are set aside for simply observing and other areas more involved with climbing are designated for helmet use and other safety rules.
- Helmets are mandatory for climbers and others in climbing areas.

#### **Equipment breakdown:**

- As with the High Ropes course, equipment is subjected to frequent before, during and after inspections.

- The number of uses of equipment is charted and replaced when the number reaches a pre-determined maximum.

**Leader error:**

- The rock-climbing leader (Rock Technician) has extensive rock-climbing experience and must successfully complete a training program through the University of Minnesota-Duluth or equal. In addition, trained staff is the only ones who perform Belay functions.
- Leaders are monitored and supervised until Site Directors are assured of their ability as Leader and that they will consistently carry out the established rules and procedures necessary to promote safety.

**Un-safe conduct by climbers:**

- Climbers receive detailed instructions regarding the safety of themselves and others involved and regarding the different functions of climbing. If the climber displays unsafe actions which may cause harm to themselves or others they will be corrected, if the climber is not willing to make immediate corrections they will be removed from the element.

**Slips or Falls:**

- All climbers are required to wear safety harness and helmet.
- All participants, whether climbing or on the ground, wear helmets.
- Both the climber and the belayer are trained in proper communication techniques so that they both know what the other is doing.
- Trained First Aid staff are required to be on site during participation in ropes elements.
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