

# YMCA Camp Orkila Outdoor Environmental Education Teacher Packet

## Start Planning Your Trip!

### Working With the Camp Orkila OEE Director...

To insure that your schedule is planned correctly, Camp Orkila has an OEE Director that works with your school. In addition to the logistics, the director will provide a smooth transition from the indoor classroom to the outdoors. In order for the OEE Director to do an effective job, *they will need your assistance*. Please complete and return the Pre-Camp planner as well as any other requested forms as soon as possible, perhaps most importantly, please include the phone number and times you are best reached during the school day (or perhaps a home phone).

Some schools choose to visit Camp Orkila to have a planning meeting and discuss plans for their trip in person. Camp Orkila staff are also available to come to your school to meet with students, teachers and parents and provide a presentation. Please contact the OEE Director if you are interested in this.

Please begin to gather the following information together for your Pre-Camp Planner:

- ✓ Approximate number of students and adults attending
- ✓ The goals you hope to accomplish during the trip
- ✓ Ideas or requests for your classes
- ✓ Ideas or requests for evening programs
- ✓ Special requests or needs your group might have
- ✓ Transportation requests and needs

**Returning schools please take note** – we take copious notes of your school's experience, but sometimes we forget each small detail. **Please remember to share with us:** the ways you have always done things, the rooms you have always had and the flow of events you have come to expect. Please remember that we are continually upgrading and improving our program- **so try something new!**

The OEE Director will create a tentative schedule after reviewing your Pre-Camp Planner. When this schedule is completed the Director will forward a copy to you via email. Please carefully review this schedule and contact the OEE Director with any questions that you may have. Since we organize our teaching schedule at least one week in advance to your arrival, last minute changes can be difficult. For that reason, we hope to work out all scheduling details before you arrive.

## Preparing Your Students & Staff...

**E**ducationally: The Camp Orkila Outdoor Environmental Education Program is a school in the outdoors, all our experiences (including eating in the Dining Room) have an educational foundation. In preparation you may want to perform special units of study, discuss current events, or work on journals back at school. For additional ideas, review the Pre-Trip Activity Ideas in this planning pack.

**L**ogistically : *Please make sure that all participants are prepared for an outdoor classroom experience- raincoats and warmer clothing in the colder months are a must!* Share the purpose of the trip and the selected activities with your students and teachers. Make sure that all necessary forms have been sent home and that parents have the Camp Orkila phone number in the event of an emergency.

**E**motionally : Our 300 acre setting located on Orcas Island is unique and apt to be different from what your students are used to at home. We sleep in open air cabins, walk great distances sometimes, have no television, daily newspaper or soda to drink. Because the experience at Camp Orkila is so short and intense, we ask you to address student's behavior before you arrive. Many schools have found that a behavior contract signed by students and parents is a great idea!

**E**nvironmentally: We ask that you and your students respect the Camp Orkila environment inside and out. Collecting plants or animals is not permitted without permission. Furthermore, we try to integrate our philosophies into every part of our program, including the Dining Room. Activities such as weighing food waste can be a dramatic lesson about wasteful lifestyles and energy cycles. We feel a trip to Camp Orkila can help to instill positive environmental attitudes in our students. So, we will strive to practice what we preach, and we ask you to help us in this effort by preparing your students for our alternative living/learning environment.

## Calendar for planning your trip...

### Three Months Before Your Trip:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Camp Orkila Pre-Camp Planner returned (including class and night program selections).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bus transportation arranged.

### Two Months Before Your Trip: (Contact Director)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Communicate any changes in numbers of people attending from original planner
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make sure all necessary forms are returned to OEE Director
- \_\_\_\_\_ Meet with participating teachers, students and parents about the Camp Orkila program. We are happy to present at this meeting.

### One Month ~ One Week before trip:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Give —Bring Along! list to students (1 month)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Discuss trip goals and behavior with students (1 month)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make sure all necessary health information is acquired (1 month)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make arrangements for an Emergency Vehicle (2 weeks)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Finalize number of students and staff attending (2 weeks)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Organize students into class groups of 12-15 per group
- \_\_\_\_\_ Organize students into cabin groups (check cabin list for capacities)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Assign dining hall duties
- \_\_\_\_\_ Schedules to students including Dining Hall set up (1 week)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Let students know they must bring a sack lunch on first day
- \_\_\_\_\_ Finalize all transportation arrangements. Check ferry times

### Before you leave school:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Check bus schedule for return trip
- \_\_\_\_\_ Count students, staff and parents

### Bring the following papers along:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Copies of your schedule for ALL adults
- \_\_\_\_\_ List of students organized by study group and dining tables

## Ferrying Through the San Juans

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**Save Money** -- As of February 2001, it costs \$2 for a group of students to walk on – that's \$2 for the entire group whether you have 3 students or 300! To receive this great deal, send a letter to Washington State Ferries on school letterhead telling them what days you will be riding the ferry and how many students and chaperones you will have with you. Keep a copy and bring it with you to show the Ferry Terminal personnel.

**Share the Ferry** – Sometimes 2 or more schools may arrive or depart on the same ferry. It often works well to have each school 'take over' a particular space on the boat to call their meeting place. Set firm boundaries for your students, keeping in mind that students from other schools may be older or younger or may have different behavior expectations than your students.

**Get Organized Before Getting Off** – **Before** the ferry arrives at Orcas Island, have students line up by classroom or cabin group and take them downstairs to the front of the car deck. School groups going to Orkila are always the first people to be let off the ferry – everyone else has to wait until students are loaded onto the buses (so please be sure students are ready to move quickly in order not to keep other passengers waiting!). If you have your students organized and ready, this should only take a few minutes. A bus driver will meet you as you get off the ferry and give you directions about which bus to get on.

**Supervision & Student Health** – Just like at camp, please remember to have an adult-camper ratio of 1:10 on the ferry and bus. We also strongly recommend keeping students' health information & permission-to-treat forms, as well as first aid supplies, in an accessible location while traveling from school to camp.

## Housing and Cabin Leadership

**Rustic Living** – At YMCA Camp Orkila, students are given the opportunity to experience sleeping close to nature without actually being in a tent or sleeping on the ground. Most Orkila cabins are open-air wooden structures that may have canvas or wooden window coverings, open doorframes and no electricity. School teachers should ensure that students are mentally and physically prepared for a rustic experience. Let them know they will have a chance to sleep in the open, while being protected from rain and wind. As long as food is not left out in the cabins, raccoons will not disturb them. Our rustic cabins and philosophy of 'roughing it' have been a tradition at Orkila since 1906, and have proven to be among most participant's fondest memories.

**Student Cabin Assignments** – Most cabins hold a maximum of 12-14 people however a few cabins hold only 10 people. Please be aware of these numbers and use the housing chart to plan accurately.

**Cabin Leadership and Training** – It is the school's responsibility to find one adult leader for each cabin. This adult may be a teacher from the school, a parent chaperone, or a high school student acting in a cabin counselor capacity. Orkila recommends a ratio of at least 1:10 to ensure adequate supervision. Quality cabin leadership is crucial to the success of a student's stay at Camp Orkila. Cabin leaders should possess maturity, sound judgment, enthusiasm, and a commitment to creating the best possible experience for the students. Schools must provide a thorough training workshop for cabin leaders prior to arriving at camp.

## Health and Wellness

All school groups must provide their own trained medical attendant, first aid supplies, and emergency transportation vehicle. At minimum, the medical attendant must have a current First Aid & CPR certificate from a nationally recognized provider such as the Red Cross, American Heart Association, or Wilderness Medicine Institute.

Camp Orkila strongly urges school staff to gather health information for ALL participants in their care. This information, at minimum, should include: name and address, emergency contact names and phone numbers, a listing of allergies and health conditions requiring treatment and a signed permission to seek emergency treatment. We also strongly urge school staff to collect and administer all medications to students while at camp.

## Accident & Emergency Procedures

*School groups are required to explain the following accident and emergency procedures to their chaperones and students prior to arriving at camp. In addition, information regarding emergency meeting areas will be reviewed during the initial orientation.*

### Injury & Medical Emergency Procedures

- ✓ Orkila staff are trained in First Aid/CPR and are available to administer initial assistance to participants. However, each school's trained medical attendant must be available to take over all medical situations as soon as feasible and appropriate.
- ✓ In the event of a medical emergency (or any medical situation), the student may be taken to the school's teacher housing, preferably by one of the school's staff or volunteers. If the student cannot be moved, a messenger will be dispatched immediately to the school's teacher housing to call for the assistance of the school's medical attendant.
- ✓ If the student requires an appointment with a doctor at the medical center and it is during office hours, please contact the OEE Director to help arrange an appointment time prior to bringing the student to the medical center. If it is outside of regular business hours, please contact the OEE Director (or member of the leadership team) to discuss the best course of action.
- ✓ If there is an emergency that the school's medical attendant cannot handle, please call 911 from a land phone (dialing 9 to get an outside line) or dial 360-378-4141 from a cell phone (both calls reach the same location). If 911 is called, school staff must notify the OEE Director as quickly as possible.
- ✓ A YMCA Accident/Incident report must be filed in the event of any accident that requires a participant to have medical treatment and/or to return home.

### Fire & Disaster Procedures

- ✓ There are two sirens located in camp—one at the Dispensary and one at the camp director's house. The signal for fire or disaster is a continuous sound of the siren. In addition, depending upon the location in camp, an air horn may be blasted repeatedly to signify an emergency.
- ✓ When the alarm sounds, all staff and all participants report to the emergency meeting area established for their group. If the passage is blocked, an alternative meeting area will be established.
- ✓ Students should line up by cabin group so that their teachers may verify attendance. The camp director will meet with teachers to explain evacuation or other special instructions necessary.

# Fund Raising Ideas

With school budgets tightening, fund-raising is an essential part of the Camp Orkila experience. It is also an important way to get your students involved in the preparation for a trip. Many of the schools that visit Camp Orkila run fund raising programs throughout the school year. The following are a few examples we have heard about:

**Spaghetti Dinners, Pancake Breakfasts:** Encourage your local grocery stores to donate the ingredients and hold a dinner or breakfast in your community for a small fee.

**Poster sales, T-shirt sales, Wrapping paper sales:** This is your typical fund raiser. Find a good vendor and send your students out in the field. Try to find some good environmental products to sell. Human-i-Tees is a vendor that donates some of their profits to groups protecting the environment. Their address is: [www.humanitees.com](http://www.humanitees.com) and a phone number is 914-741-2424.

**Hold a Carnival:** Let your students be creative! Have them come up with some fun games and activities and hold a fun day for families. Charge a small entrance fee or fees for each activity.

**Car Wash:** All you need for this is an available water source. Look into using environmentally friendly soaps and other supplies. A local store may be able to donate supplies.

**Bake Sale or Craft Sale:** Here's another typical fund raiser, but always a good way to bring in some extra money.

**Yard Sale:** Here's a good one that will provide a service for those looking to do some spring or fall cleaning. Have people around the area donate items then have a big yard sale or an auction.

**Litter-a-thon:** This is a great idea that will get your students involved in a hands-on environmental cleanup. Have your students get pledges for a little pick up. This could be done by the hour or by the bag full. Perhaps you can find an area of concern in your community and bring about some positive change through your efforts.

**Partnering with PTSA:** Often times PTSA serves as an excellent source for funding. An Orkila representative can meet with you or present to the PTSA to help with this effort.

**Krispy Kreme and Wal-Mart:** Krispy Kreme will sell you boxes of a dozen doughnuts at a reduced price. You can then sell these in front of a Wal-Mart store. Wal-Mart will match the profits you make from selling the doughnuts. Contact your local Krispy Kreme and Wal-Mart for more information.

Please help us improve this list for next year by passing on other ideas you have.

# Pre-Trip Activity Ideas

Preparing your students for their trip to Camp Orkila is an important part of the entire experience. We strongly suggest that you do pre-activities to help your students prepare for their resident experience- as well as post-activities to help them follow up and build upon the experiences that happened during their trip. Expanding the experience in this way will make their trip much more meaningful than an intense, but isolated 3-5 days. Below are some suggestions for pre-activities. Please let us know how these suggestions work out for your group and any additional ideas you may have.

**Letter to Myself:** Have the students write a letter to themselves and their expectations of the upcoming trip. What are they looking forward to the most? The least? What fears do they have? What do they hope to get out of the experience? Seal the letters, hold them and then give them back after the trip.

**Journal Writing:** Journals are a very effective way for students to process and evaluate their experience before, during and after their residence experience. The students can make and decorate their journals before the trip and complete a few entries about their expectations, hopes and fears. You may want to include worksheets or questions that they will work on during their trip in the journal; include a page or two for each activity they will be doing plus a place for them to react to meal times, cabin time and free time. A scavenger hunt that goes on throughout the entire trip is also a fun addition (collecting information, not wildlife).

**Photo Board or Collage:** Set up a bulletin board or large sheet of paper where the students can display images of their trip. Plan to include pictures or photos of all aspects of the experience, from planning what to take, meetings with teachers about expectations and pre-activities to the trip itself and follow-up activities. Also include schedules, rules and bring along lists for the students to refer to as they prepare for the trip.

**Scrap Books:** One book can be made for the whole group or each student can make their own. Photos or drawings that describe planning and expectations can be the first entries. During the trip they can add more images, plus natural objects such as pressed flowers or leaves, poems from a creative writing exercise, schedules etc. Students can make captions to explain the sequence of events that tells the story of their trip.

**News Reporting:** Give each student an aspect of the trip to report on for the whole group.

Information they collect can be compiled into a school newspaper or video news show. Some examples of topics to report on could be classes, meals, the ferry ride, their teachers or the Camp Orkila staff.

**Vocabulary:** Study some of the key vocabulary words that will come up during your classes visit to Camp Orkila. For vocabulary lists that match your class selections, please talk with the OEE Director.

**Skits:** Divide the students into groups and have them create skits showing what they think the trip will be like. If possible put them in the groups they will be in for activities during the trip so they can work on cooperating and getting to know one another better before they arrive.

**Environmental Club:** Organize a club in your school where students can work together to help the environment and solve problems in their community.

Please help us improve this list for next year by passing on other ideas you have.

## Important Details...

- ✓ Remember to bring a vehicle for use in case of an emergency.
- ✓ Use the Program Planning Checklist to ensure nothing is —left behind.
- ✓ To ensure a smooth first day, please make sure that every child knows what Study Group they are in, what cabin they are staying in and which table they will sit at in the Dining Room – before arrival.
- ✓ A confirmation phone call from the OEE Director will be made two weeks before your arrival to assure a smooth and successful experience. At this time please be aware of all special dietary needs or participants with special needs.

## Contact Us!

*Please feel free to contact us at any point with questions or concerns about your trip.  
It is important to us that each of you have a successful experience at Camp Orkila!*

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✓ Emergency Cell Phone: For urgent or after-hours emergencies only, call 360-317-6852