



## Hector Spring School Participant Manual

Camp Chief Hector YMCA  
Outdoor Schools  
Spring 2018

CCHY Phone: 1 (403) 673-3858  
CCHY Fax: 1 (403) 673-2179  
CCHY Calgary Office Phone: (403) 269-6156

[www.ymcacalgary.org](http://www.ymcacalgary.org)

Site address:  
Camp Chief Hector YMCA  
PO Box 250  
Exshaw, Alberta T0L 2C0

City office address:  
Camp Chief Hector YMCA  
101 3<sup>rd</sup> Street SW  
Calgary, Alberta T2P 4G6



YMCA

We build strong kids,  
strong families, strong communities.



## Welcome to Camp Chief Hector YMCA

For over thirty years, Camp Chief Hector YMCA has been running residential outdoor school experiences that provide unique opportunities for enhancing curriculum objectives, building communication and cooperative group skills, and providing a shared experience for students of different backgrounds. All of our programs are centered on the four core values of the YMCA: Caring, Honesty, Responsibility, and Respect.

I have worked with many school groups over the years, and I am aware of how difficult it can be for students to spend time away from home. However, I am also reminded daily of the long-term benefits that result from getting kids back into nature and building close connections with their classmates and teachers. Please let me help you with your questions, planning and packing for Outdoor School – do not hesitate to be in touch. I look forward to working with you and your child.

Cheers,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Schmid'.

Christopher Schmid

## Important Contacts

Christopher Schmid  
Outdoor Schools Manager  
Ph: 1-403-673-3858 ext. 201  
Email: [chris.schmid@calgary.ymca.ca](mailto:chris.schmid@calgary.ymca.ca)  
(403) 650-4559

Kelly Kiza  
Executive Chef  
Ph: 1-403-673-3858 ext. 208  
Email: [kelly.kizan@calgary.ymca.ca](mailto:kelly.kizan@calgary.ymca.ca)

Hector Spring School coordinator  
Ph: 403-609-1722

## Directions

Camp Chief Hector YMCA is located approximately one hour west of Calgary. Travel west on the Trans-Canada Highway towards Canmore and Banff. Exit to the right at the sign for the "Rocky Mountain YMCA" (**Exit 114A – after the bridge**) about 8 minutes after the turn-off to Kananaskis Highway 40. At the stop sign, turn right and follow the road for four kilometres to the first parking lot on your right. Park in this lot and cross the street into Bowfort Lodge.

## Accommodation & Dining



Students live in tipis for their stay at Outdoor School. Tipis are gender-specific, are supervised by counsellors and a central firepit provides light and warmth. Shower facilities are provided for all clients. Students eat three meals a day, and will have a snack in the afternoon and evening. Our food services department is able to accommodate for a wide variety of dietary needs as long as we have this information in advance. Please contact our Food Services Director if your child has a severe allergy to wheat, dairy or eggs. Outdoor School is a nut-safe environment. Camp Chief Hector is not able to serve halal or kosher foods, but we are able to provide vegetarian or vegan meal options.

### **Fees & Refunds**

The per-student cost for is \$\_\_\_\_\_plus GST for a total of \$\_\_\_\_\_. This includes accommodation, meals and snacks, program supplies, staffing, and transportation for Calgary-area students. Schools may choose to add an additional fee for craft supplies or other items. Due to food and staffing costs, we cannot offer refunds or reduced fees for students who must arrive late or leave early during a week of program. Fees are to be paid directly to your child's school.

### **Financial Assistance**

YMCA Calgary will assist students from families who need financial support to attend Outdoor Schools programs at the Camp Chief Hector YMCA. YMCA Calgary does not provide 100% subsidy. Parent or guardians are asked to contribute what they can towards their child's Outdoor School experience. Please see your child's teacher if you would like to access this funding for your child. They will provide you with a one-page form that should be filled out and handed back in prior to your child's Outdoor School experience. Some families may also wish to contribute funds to families in need. Prospective donors should contact their child's teacher or the Outdoor Schools Manager.

### **Transportation**

Southland Transportation buses will depart from the school at 9:15 am. Please ensure that your student is on time and that they have been checked in with their teacher. Buses will return your student to their school at 2:00 pm. Please try and make arrangements to pick up your child at this time as they will be very tired and excited to see you as soon as possible.

### **Health and Safety**

#### **Student Care**

The first priority of our staff is ensuring the physical and emotional safety of our young clients. Student care is a collaborative effort between YMCA staff, teachers, parent/guardians, and the students themselves. Like at school, teachers act in loco parentis (in the place of a parent) and are ultimately responsible for their students while they are attending Outdoor School. YMCA staff, who have a duty to care for clients at the Outdoor School, will consult with your child's teacher about any concerns. Similarly, you should keep the YMCA informed of any changing circumstances in regards to your child.

#### **YMCA Staff Requirements**

All YMCA staff are required to have current Standard First Aid and CPR certification. Canoeing is supervised by a Paddle Alberta Waterfront Instructor. At our Higher Ground area, there is always a certified Challenge Course Instructor. There is a week of staff training at the beginning of every Outdoor School season and we continue to work on staff and program development throughout the season. In order to be employed by YMCA Calgary, all staff also need a clean and current criminal record check including a vulnerable sector search.

#### **First Aid**



Communication with you is very important should your son/daughter become ill or injured. YMCA staff are trained in emergency procedures and will act alongside your child's teacher in the case of a first-aid situation or other incident. If required, a teacher will call you to talk about transportation options. In most non-emergencies, if it is decided that your child should see a doctor they will be taken to the Canmore Hospital in a vehicle provided by one of your child's teachers. In the event that your student needs immediate medical support, an ambulance will be dispatched from the Kananaskis Emergency Centre a few minutes away.

Our goal is for students to either return quickly to program, or access the support they need to feel safe and be comfortable. We do not have a nurse or doctor employed on site, but we do have some staff members with Advanced First Aid Training. YMCA Staff members carry first aid kits, and we have an automatic external defibrillator, spinal board, thermometers, splints, crutches and ice packs on site.

We try our best to accommodate the physical needs of students who are feeling unwell or who have limited mobility. The best decisions and plans are made between parents, physicians, teachers and YMCA staff members. In many cases, students who are ill can only recover at home.

## **Medication**

The dispensing of any medication is the sole responsibility of the teachers who visit our site. Students who carry asthma inhalers or Epi-pens may still do so at Outdoor School, but all other medications should be labeled placed in a zip lock bag, labeled with your child's name and handed in to their teacher on the first day of Outdoor School. Medications must be in their original packaging to avoid confusion. If possible, provide duplicates of all prescriptions so a back-up is always available. For policy reasons, Outdoor School does not provide any medications including Tylenol, so if your child is prone to the occasional ache, pain or sore throat please send an appropriate over-the-counter medication with them to Outdoor School

## **Contact**

If you need to reach your child at Outdoor School, please call your child's school or their teacher's cell phone first. If you do not have a cell phone number for your child's teacher, we encourage you to call or email the Outdoor Schools Coordinator or Manager at their office landline numbers listed on the first page of this manual. If called, will take down all the information and pass the message on to your child's teacher and you will get a call back. Please note that this may be the following morning. In an emergency, the emergency/after-hours cell phone number is (403) 650-4559. If homesickness or religious beliefs are a concern, it can be arranged for students to call home before bed to check-in or say good-night.

## **Supervision**

Students are supervised by YMCA staff members and their classroom teachers and parent volunteers. If students need to move from one area to another, for example, from an activity area to the washroom, they travel in partners. YMCA staff carry cell phones and/or radios to maintain contact with the Outdoor Schools Manager as needed.

## **Activity Risks**



In general, injuries at the Camp Chief Hector YMCA are similar to the types of injuries that occur in gym class, during organized sports or playing out in the backyard. Because our activities take place outside, there is a risk of falls, joint injury, and scrapes as students move from area to area or as they run during wide-games. Every year we have a few students who visit the hospital in Canmore for a few stitches or to assess an injured arm or leg. Some areas, such as the low-ropes, have potential for short falls, so students are trained as spotters to support their peers under staff supervision. Staff carry first aid kits at all times when they are working with a group of students.

## **Environmental Risks**

The Bow Valley is an area prone to rapid and drastic weather changes. All students should be prepared for wind, snow, rain, and scorching sun all in the same week. The packing list should be followed as closely as possible so students have the warm layers, extra socks, and sunscreen that are required for a comfortable stay. It is better to come over-prepared than to have a wet/cold or hot/burnt student. Our outdoor activities continue in most weather conditions.

We share our Bow Valley home with a number of wild creatures and there is the possibility that students could cross paths with a bear, cougar, elk or coyote during their stay at Outdoor School. Students travel in groups when moving around our site and participating in activities and counsellors carry bear spray. We are very mindful of our waste management system and work closely with the local conservation officers to monitor animal activity on our site.

## **The Outdoor School Program**

The goal of the students' week is to enhance multiple objectives from various Alberta Education Programs of Study in environmental education, outdoor education and physical education. Our approach to teaching these objectives has proven to successfully reach our students, including those with learning and behavioural exceptionalities that may experience difficulties in traditional classroom settings. Activities that may be run by YMCA staff in the program are:

**Initiatives and Team-building Activities** - Students will spend time getting to know each other in their groups while participating in various initiative and team-building activities.

**Challenge Course** - This activity focuses on the development of communication and leadership styles by using obstacle-course challenge elements and facilitation to develop group goals.

**High Ropes and Climbing Tower** - Students will push the limits of their comfort zones while making use of climbing technology to complete group and individual tasks on our aerial challenge courses. A Challenges Unlimited trained staff member supervises our Higher Ground area and staff are trained and monitored in our policies and procedures. Our equipment is inspected regularly and high quality helmets, harnesses, ropes and hardware are used on our course. This area is challenge-by-choice and students are able to provide support for their class-mates from the ground if they are not keen climbers.

**Canoeing** - Students may get the opportunity to visit our lake and explore the area by boat in tandem or Voyageur canoes. A certified Waterfront Instructor supervises groups on our pond and all students, staff members and teachers are required to wear PFDs at all times.

**Archery** - Students will get a chance to try for a Bull's-eye at our archery range.



**Hiking** – Students will explore the area around our site and learn about local flora and fauna.

**Campfire** - A campfire concludes every day at Outdoor School and gives students, teachers and staff members a chance to share songs, skits and stories.

The safety of each individual is of the utmost importance to us. In order to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants, the Camp Chief Hector YMCA reserves the right to alter the program at any time without compensation to participants, parents or guardians.

**Special Needs**

If your child may need some extra support and reassurance in order to attend Outdoor School, please contact your child's classroom teacher and/or the Outdoor Schools Manager. Tours of our site are available for students who are feeling nervous about attending camp (and for parents who are nervous about having their child attend!)

**Lost and Found**

We do our best to send Lost and Found back to your child's school and to have students take a look before they depart. If your child is missing an item that they think they might have forgotten at Outdoor School, please have them take a look through their school's lost and found. If they do not find the item, the Outdoor School Coordinator should be contacted and will take a look through what we have. If the item is found, it can be picked up at our site or we will have it brought in to Calgary the next time someone is heading in and it can be picked up at one of our YMCA branches or at another specified location. After items have been at camp for five days, we donate them in to a local shelter.



## **Outdoor School Student Packing List**

Your child will be outside immediately upon their arrival at Outdoor School. Please ensure they have the appropriate items with them in their backpack on the bus as they will not be able to access their suitcases and duffels right away as luggage is being unloaded. It is ideal if your child is able to carry all their own gear, however there are friends and adults available to help if needed. The dorms are a short hike from the parking lot where the students are dropped off. It is recommended to pack your child's item in 1-2 suitcases, hiking backpacks, duffel bags or a hockey bag. **Please do not pack items in garbage bags.**

### Outdoor Gear

- Raincoat/Rain pants
- Mittens
- 2 pairs of runners/hiking shoes/boots
- Thermal underwear bottoms and top
- Warm layer (ie. fleece)
- Warm socks (ie. wool)
- Toque
- Back pack/day pack
- Water bottle
- Boots/Hiking Shoes (stable footwear)

### Clothing

- 1 pair of Pajamas
- 2-3 sweaters/shirts
- 2-3 pairs of pants/shorts
- 2-3 t-shirts
- 6-8 pairs of socks
- 4-6 undies
- Extra socks

### Fun Stuff (optional)

- Musical instrument
- Books/Journal
- Camera
- Pencil case
- Playing cards

### Personal Articles

- Towel(s)
- Toothbrush & Toothpaste
- Lip Balm
- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses
- Soap/Shampoo
- Deodorant
- Comb or Brush
- Sleeping bag/Blanket
- Sheets
- Pillow and pillow case
- Blanket
- Flashlight/Headlamp
- Personal Medications
- Tylenol, Advil, etc.

**Please leave the following items at home. These items will be confiscated if they are seen at Outdoor School and then returned to your child back at school.**

- Money
- Knives, hatchets, matches and lighters
- All electronics including cell phones, Ipods, DSs, Gameboys and laptops (exceptions are cameras, wristwatches, alarm clocks and flashlights)
- Food and snacks
- Make-up, curling irons/straighteners
- Aerosol perfumes and body sprays (ie. Axe)