



EXPLORER / PIONEER FAMILY 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! We hope that this package will help you, and we encourage you to read it through carefully.

Information in this package 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 child(ren) 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. Doing this will ensure your child makes the most of the opportunity to grow and make new friends.

If you or your child have any questions about their upcoming experience, we encourage you to give us a call at 418-1840, or come out and meet us at our Open House.

We look forward to having your child join us at Thunderbird this summer. Thank you for entrusting us with your child's care. See you at Camp!

Luke Ferris
Camp Manager
Charitable Registration No. 10822 5566 RP0001

CONTACTING YOUR CAMPER

E-mail

Emails are downloaded from the server, printed and handed out to campers at meals. Please consider the following guidelines to help us keep this service manageable:

- include camper's first and last name and their cabin (ask on drop-off day) and program name in the subject of the e-mail
- please refrain from sending emails while your camper is away on outtrip (ask on drop-off day)
- please don't send more than one e-mail per camper per day

tbirdcampers@victoriay.com

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 ensures that they receive a letter during their stay. 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 Manager (extension 225) or Summer Camp Coordinator (extension 100) for any reason, please feel free to phone the camp. 250-642-3136

COME AND MEET US

Our staff have a vested interest in helping prepare your child for camp. Well-prepared young people tend to prosper in any camp environment. Our information sessions and open house provide excellent opportunities for campers and parents to meet our staff and discuss programs, care and values inherent in each Thunderbird program. We are sure that both new and returning camp families will find these events informative and enjoyable. The Open House will offer tours of camp and a chance to try many of the activities. Please plan to attend!

Open House

May 30th, 2010 10am-4pm

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 encourages the development of close friendships 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.

On the first day of camp the group will sit down with their counsellors and discuss which activities they would like to try during the session. The counsellors then modify their program, ensuring it is safe, active, age appropriate and skill appropriate. There are times when it is impossible to fulfill all of the individual camper objectives in a group. Counsellors will do their best.

OUTTRIPS

Out-trips are an integral part of a Thunderbird Experience. All Pioneer and Explorer campers will participate in an outtrip on Thunderbird property.

- 6 day campers will have a single night trip close to the main camp. Explorers will be out from 6:30pm until 8:00am. Pioneers will be out from 2:00pm until 10:00am.
- 13 day campers will have two trips. The first will be a single night close to camp and the second will be a two night trip where they will venture out a little farther and explore some of the higher hilltops of the T-Bird property. During their trip, campers rely and depend upon each other for their success and will develop stronger friendships as a result. Campers will help with the planning and packing for their trips. They will be introduced to maps and low impact camping techniques.

WHAT TO BRING

The checklist on the following pages is a good guideline for packing for camp. Please encourage campers to wear old clothes you won't mind coming home dirty or getting lost.

We recommend that campers do not bring expensive clothing to camp.

Cotton vs. Synthetic Fabrics

Cotton does not insulate the wearer when it becomes wet and takes a very long time to dry. Try to avoid cotton for the outtrip. Synthetic fabrics such as polyester, polypropylene, nylon, spandex and fleece are better suited to a wilderness outtrip. 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.

Sleeping Bags

Sleeping bags should be warm and compactable, rated to -5 degrees or colder. Down sleeping bags are warm but are difficult to dry once wet and should be avoided if possible. Hollofil, Qualofil, Polar Guard or other synthetic fills are best.

Rain Gear

Good rain gear (coat and pants) is important, since camp programs continue despite the occasional rainy day. Windbreakers are not rain gear. When purchasing rain gear look for coated nylon with “sealed” seams.

Packs & Footwear

A pack that is easy to pack and comfortable to wear and sturdy hiking boots can make a long day hike much more enjoyable. Hiking boots should be broken in before coming to camp. Breaking in new hiking boots on the trail can be very painful.

CHECKLIST

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 him/her.

In Camp and Outtrip

All out-tripping equipment listed is required, please contact us if you cannot make arrangements for this gear. We can assist you in making arrangements. Please see page for detailed information.

- ☞ sleeping bag (Hollofil, Qualofil or Polar guard quality, -5 degree Celsius)
- ☞ sleeping pad (to insulate against the cold ground, ensolites or other closed cell foam pads are best, small enough to keep on the exterior of a back-pack)
- ☞ backpack (large enough to pack belongings, including sleeping bag, clothes and group gear)
- ☞ water bottle
- ☞ utensils (bowl and spoon)

Clothing (Reduce amount if 6 Day Camper)

- ☞ 12 day supply of underwear
- ☞ 12 day supply of socks (wool socks are best)
- ☞ 4 pairs of shorts
- ☞ 4 pairs of pants (sweatpants are warmer than jeans)
- ☞ 5 to 6 t-shirts
- ☞ 3 long-sleeved t-shirts
- ☞ 1 to 2 warm pullovers (wool or fleece)
- ☞ 1 to 2 sweatshirts
- ☞ warm jacket
- ☞ hat (for those rainy or sunny days)
- ☞ raingear (needs to be waterproof, jacket and pants)
- ☞ toque and mitts (for cool nights on outtrip)
- ☞ pajamas
- ☞ 2 pairs of shoes (1 for daily wear, athletic shoes or sport sandals & 1 sturdy pair of hiking shoes or boots for outtrip)
- ☞ 2 bathing suits

Personal Items

- ☞ biodegradable soap and shampoo
- ☞ toiletries, comb, toothbrush, etc.
- ☞ sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher)

Other

- ☞ pillow
- ☞ Towel
- ☞ day pack
- ☞ stationery and pens (stamped envelopes)
- ☞ flashlight (extra batteries)
- ☞ breathable laundry bag
- ☞ camera and film (optional)
- ☞ book (optional)
- ☞ slippers for the dining hall

PLEASE DO NOT BRING

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Cell Phones | Hatchets |
| Portable music devices | Money |
| Matches | Tobacco |
| Hair Dryers | Food |
| Firearms/Knives | Video games |
| Expensive clothes | Other valuables |

CAMPER WELLNESS

CAMPER HEALTH

You have provided all necessary medical information on the registration form. Please feel free to provide us with more information by mail, fax or e-mail 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 with the Wellness Coordinator or Section Director 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 Wellness Coordinator on the first day to discuss the medications necessary for your child. All campers have a “Wellness Check” on the first and last day of camp. This is a great opportunity for your campers to meet with senior staff and the Wellness Coordinator.

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 get permission before administering medications, however if we are unable

to make contact we may decide to administer the medication under the advice of our medical staff.

IN CASE OF INJURY 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 Wellness Coordinator 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 Manager or designate will arrange what he/she 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 the amount after camp.

HOMESICKNESS

It is reasonable to assume that until they become adjusted to camp life, your child might go through a period of homesickness. Homesickness is a natural response for children and adults when they come to camp. Camp staff are trained to detect early symptoms of homesickness help children feel comfortable at camp. The first thing the counselors will do is empathize with the camper and share their own experiences with homesickness. Our counsellors are people who enjoy being with kids and will take the time to listen. Our Section Directors, who oversee the counsellors, have many years of camping experience and excellent counseling skills. This support system watches over all of the campers and an attitude of caring is reflected in all of our staff. 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 Section Director will become involved
- Staff **may** contact the parent(s) 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

It is our goal to provide a safe, comfortable and supportive environment. Staff are trained in providing high quality care for our campers and ensuring that the needs of each individual are met. Camp Thunderbird provides 24 hour supervision of campers. This means that a cabin group will always have at least one counsellor present to ensure a positive experience. 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.

CAMP BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Our high level of supervision helps to prevent the occurrence of bullying. 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

A TYPICAL DAY AT THUNDERBIRD

7:00 am Wake –up

7:30-8:00 am Flag raising and thought for the day, morning walk 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 cabins 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 Activity (usually in cabin groups)

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 First activity (usually in cabin groups)

3:30 pm Second activity (or first continued)

4:30 pm Disco Hour/Swimming—campers get the opportunity to choose an activity

5:15 pm Table setters

5:30 pm Dinner

7:00 pm Evening Program (cabin group or camp wide)

8:15-9:15 pm snack/bedtime prep/check-in/lights out

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 what it's like living in a cabin with seven other kids and ways campers go about making new friends
- Talk about ways to solve problems at camp—talking with a counsellor or other camp staff
- Campers can prepare for camp by having a sleep-over and sleeping in sleeping bags at home and at a friends house
- Attend the open house so you can see the camp and meet the staff as a family
- Sign up for Family Camp to get a taste. You'll meet some of the staff, taste the food, test out the bunks and try some of the activities.
- 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

LAUNDRY

A breathable laundry bag is helpful to keep dirty clothes separate from clean clothes. **Campers do not have the opportunity to wash clothes when they are at camp.**

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found items are displayed outside the dining hall during the session and at a lost and found table on pick-up days. Lost and found items are kept at camp for 14 days after which they are donated to charity. You can check our lost in found in person at camp or call us with specific item descriptions and we'll look for you.

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 Greater Victoria (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. For more information please visit our website: www.victoriay.com

CAMP THUNDERBIRD

Victoria Office

YMCA-YWCA of Greater Victoria
 851 Broughton Street
 Victoria BC V8W 1E5
 Summer Camp Program Coordinator (250) 418-1840
 Manager (250) 418-1846
 E-mail: tbirdmanager@victoriay.com
 General: (250) 386-7511 Fax: (250) 380-1933

Camp Office

Camp Thunderbird
 5040 Glinz Lake Road
 Sooke BC V9Z 0E3
 Phone: (250) 642-3136 Fax: (250) 642-3980
www.victoriay.com/campthunderbird