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Extracts from Project Canoe Risk Management Plan re: Canoe Tripping Safety

1.3. Canoe Tripping Safety

A. Canoe Safety

- Paddling will only occur on lake water appropriate to the skill of the group and the training of the staff. This applies to youth and to staff.
- NO running rapids or swifts.
- NO lining or tracking rapids or swifts.
- NO walking or dragging through rapids or swifts.
- The only reason to walk is if the water is too shallow for a loaded canoe.
- Each canoe must have a 15m buoyant heaving line, bailer, whistle, bow painter and light. An extra paddle and PFD must be carried for each canoe.

B. At the Campsite:

- All canoes may be in the water at the same time provided that they can maintain sight and voice communication with the campsite and each other, and provided at least one staff member is in one of the canoes.
- Shoes must be worn at all times when on land, except when in tent. Both closed-toed and open-toed shoes are acceptable at the campsite.
- Solo camping is permitted only under the following conditions, and only on an LIT trip.
 - i. Youth can camp within 45m of the main campsite, with no intervening water. Cooking, swimming and fires are not permitted at the solo site. Staff will check on youth and must collect all food, toothpaste and any other fragrant substances from youth to lessen the chance of animal approaching.
- Food and any products that are fragrant or may attract animals must either be moved at least 100m away from the tent sites each night, or secured in a floating food canoe. Bear hangs and not permitted.
- All waste, including excess food and feminine hygiene products, will be carried out not burned or buried. Only cardboard and paper may be burned.
- Human waste will be deposited in a box privy or buried at least 70 m from the water and campsite, at a depth of 6 inches if no box privy is available. Used toilet paper must be put in a box privy or carried out if no box privy is available.
- Fires for cooking and enjoyment will be kept to a reasonable size, with regard for environmental impact and safety. Fires are not permitted during a fire ban.

C. Swimming:

- Staff must check for hazards (underwater obstructions, drop-offs, sharp objects and extreme temperatures) and the depth of the swimming area before youth enter the water.
- One staff must be supervising from the water's edge at all times, whenever anyone is swimming, (including staff) with a rescue aid at hand.
- Youth must inform staff before entering the water.
- Shoes must be worn at all times while swimming.
- No swimming 30 minutes before dark to 30 minutes after sunrise.
- Enter the water feet first only. No diving or entering the water head first.
- No jumping into the water, except under these conditions:
 - The staff must have checked the water prior to anyone jumping in. The water must be at least 10 feet deep.
 - Maximum height to jump from is 5 feet.
 - If jumping from over 3 feet, there must be a staff at the top and at the bottom (either in a canoe or in the water).
 - Personal Flotation Devices (“PFD”) must be worn if jumping from over 3 feet.
 - There must be an overhang.
 - Jump from a standing position only. No diving, running jumps or flips. No holding hands while jumping.

D. On Open Water:

- Youth and staff must wear PFDs, completely done up, whenever in a canoe.
- Canoes always travel together-- within comfortable talking distance of each other.
- No night paddling, (i.e. 30 minutes before dark to 30 minutes after sunrise).
- No one on the water during lightning, thunderstorms, high winds and/or fog. Seek shelter on shore immediately.
- If there is lightning, perform the lightning drill, as per Emergency Procedures.
- Resumption of paddling or water activity is permitted 30 minutes after the last incident of lightning or thunder.

1.6. Safety Training Session

All youth must partake in a safety training session before going on a trip. The training session will minimally consist of:

- Swim Assessment
- Canoe-over-canoe rescue
- Slideshow presentation, if completed in a city context
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1.7. Swim Assessment

The Swim assessment will minimally contain: A. Roll into deep water

- Swim 50m
- Tread Water for 2 min
- If youth can perform the test without a PFD, they are permitted to swim from shore without a PFD on trip.
- If performed weakly, youth will be required to wear a PFD during all recreational swim activities.
- If unable to perform without a PFD, youth required to wear PFD during all recreational swim activities.

Youth must participate in the swim assessment. If they are unable to participate for any reason, the Program Director will review their canoe trip participation on a case-by-case basis. At this point youth will either:

- - Complete the swim assessment as per 1.10 Youth Unable to Attend Water Training Session or
 - Be excluded from trip participation
- Every effort will be made for a Canoe Trip Leader with NLS qualification to
- accompany weak swimmers on trip.

1.8. Canoe-over-canoe rescues

- Youth will practice a canoe-over-canoe rescue twice, once as a rescuer and once as a rescued victim. The intention is for youth to have practiced the maneuver before heading out on a trip, so that they are better prepared in the event of an actual capsizing.

1.10. Youth Unable to attend Pool Session or Pool Sessions are not held

- If an applicant is unable to attend a pool session (e.g. due to travel distance), or a pool session is not held for youth, they must perform a swim assessment prior to trip participation either independently at a pool or on the first day of trip. The swim assessment must be supervised by a NLS lifeguard and must verify the swimming ability of the applicant. The trip leaders will also be informed whether a swim test and canoe-over-canoe rescue is needed.

