

Outdoor Fun Director

Overview

The outdoor fun program is one of the most flexible and creative activities at camp. While most activities remain somewhat constant from year to year, the outdoor fun program has the ability to radically change from one year to the next depending on the Director and their skill set. As there is no set outdoor fun area, you are free to use any and all areas of camp as your program area and are also encouraged to go on day trips or even overnight trips in and around camp. The possibilities for programming your activity are endless so be creative, have fun and explore all that Tamakwa and the park have to offer.

Daily Tasks

With so many programming options at your fingertips, it is best to outline each period at the start of each day. Look at your block schedule and individual choice layout to plan the best activity for each age group and gender. JT's love to explore nature, play with insects or even explore the swamp while the oldest campers may enjoy something more physical like an outdoor hike or developing fire building skills. Whatever your preference is, remember to keep things new and exciting and encourage all campers to learn the benefits of fending for themselves in the wilderness and being in our gorgeous outdoor environment.

Programming

Before the summer officially begins and the campers arrive, take some time to explore/create different hiking trails in and around camp. It doesn't take a lot to discover that just on the boundary of camp there exist a wealth of fantastic trails that can easily be built to suit various physical levels. Similarly, look into various trails outside of camp that are maintained by the park – there are tons of day hikes or even smaller 1-2 hour hikes that are a great change of pace for kids wanting to get out of camp and provide a hands on environment for learning different aspects of nature.

Overnight trips are also a welcome addition to the program and should be planned well in advance with the program director. Please be sure to put in any food requests with the kitchen a few days in advance. While on the subject of food – remember that while kids love making anything food related such as s'mores or bannock it should not be a mainstay of your program. Use it as a treat at the end of an individual choice week or on a cool August day. Don't forget to give in food requests to the kitchen as early as possible and try to confine these food related activities to the afternoon after the kids have had a proper lunch.

Always remember that there is no limit to what you can do with your activity, use your own skills and knowledge to build your program and teach kids all the amazing things you love about nature. Some days may need to be tailored around the weather while others may tailor around the kids and what they want to do. Encourage kids to be open minded and try new things yet be open minded to changing things up at the last minute depending on what your cabin group may request.

Awards

Kids love to earn awards and are a great way for them to set personal goals each summer. While there is a lot of flexibility with Outdoor Fun, there are set awards that you should familiarize yourself with during pre-camp in order to effectively teach them to campers. Focus one or two activity periods to work on awards and leave the remaining periods to explore and have fun outdoors.

Staff

Outdoor Fun typically has 1 to 2 staff members helping out throughout the summer. Utilize your staff to motivate the campers for the days' activities and make sure to have them involved and participating along with yourself and the campers. Given the flexibility of this program, encourage your staff to help create some of the programming ideas and get them excited to help you on all aspects of your activity.

Safety

While we always encourage campers and staff to have fun at everything they do, safety is paramount. Whether you are out of camp on a hike or exploring nature within the woods, always ensure campers are wearing proper clothing and shoes. When out on a hike, make sure that the group always sticks together. Try to have one staff member leading the group and then place yourself at the back to ensure no one gets lost or falls behind. A First Aid Kit should be brought on all off-site adventures.

Some Pointers from a Previous ODF Director:

Individual Choice and Block Schedule Suggestions

- Each week you could direct the individual choice toward a weekly theme (ie. Bugs, birds, cooking, wilderness adventure)
- You could take one day of some individual choice weeks and go on an outing directed towards that specific theme (Visitors Centre, interpretive walk, etc.)
- You could have one day during the week as a specified hike day and you could even keep it the same throughout the duration of the summer (Half day or all day hikes)
- You could have a specified cooking day once a week as a reward for the end of each individual choice week
- Outdoor games or cooking or hiking are the best idea for cabin groups, but there are many options really... you can even ask the cabin groups at the meal prior to the activity period what they want to do... maybe give them 3-4 options...
- You should plan 2 or more cookouts a month and have those kids working towards their high awards do the planning and organizing
- Among many options, nature crafts work well with the younger kids (Mod Podge using leaves)

SAMPLE SCHEDULE (unofficial):

	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
Period 1	Awards	Awards	Hike	Awards	All	Cook Out	Outdoor Cooking
Period 2	Awards	Awards	Day	Awards	Day	Cook Out	Outdoor Cooking
Lunch	-----	-----	-----	LUNCH	-----	-----	-----
Period 3	Awards	Awards	Hike	Awards	Outing	Cook Out	Outdoor Cooking
Period 4	Nature Crafts	Hike	Day	Outdoor Cooking	In	Cook Out	Games
Period 5	Nature Crafts	Outdoor Cooking	Hike Day	Games	Park	Cook Out	Hike

Summary

We know this is a lot of information. We do not expect you to memorize all of it. We do expect you to read it, take notes, and ask questions! We hope you are as excited as we are to have you with us on South Tea!

OUTDOOR FUN RULES

- Be sure to wear running shoes or hiking boots
- Do not pick anything that lives
- Take great caution with a campfire
- Only Take Pictures, Leave Only Footprints