

New Zealand Government

MSD Specialist Accreditation Standard: Outdoor Pursuits and Camp Programmes for Children and Young People

Level 1, 2 and 3

The Ministry of Social Development has an additional specialist accreditation standard for social service providers delivering outdoor pursuit and camp programmes for children and young people. This accreditation standard is to ensure outdoor pursuits and camp providers are capable of delivering quality and safe programmes for children and young people.

Outdoor pursuits and camp programmes for children and young people

The organisation safely plans and delivers wilderness-based, adventure-based, and other such programmes and camps in line with industry standards.

1. The organisation ensures the safety and wellbeing of children and young people on the programme.

1.1 The physical location of the programme is appropriate and safe for the age, background and capabilities of those participating.

Guidance

The organisation will have written records of health and safety policies and procedures, and meet applicable health and safety standards, including:

- hazard identification and management processes
- emergency management
- risk assessment and management plans for all programmes or activities
- maintenance and availability of equipment, including all appropriate safety gear
- maintenance and availability of first-aid and safety equipment
- clean and appropriate toilet facilities
- clean and appropriate beds, mattresses, bedding (sheets/duvets/pillows)
- appropriate storage for clothes
- sleeping facilities for young people and staff
- adequate health and hygiene approvals and facilities to serve food, where required
- site compliance with local body code of compliance requirements.

The organisation will have written records that demonstrate the age, background and capabilities of those participating:

- an individual assessment of all participants is undertaken
- all children and young people's medical/health issues are outlined to all staff
- consents/clearances must be obtained for any child or young person participating in outdoor/adventure activities where health/medical issues or problems have been identified
- written behaviour management strategies are in place.

The organisation will demonstrate that appropriate staff ratios are in place, including:

- ratios are appropriate to the dynamics of the group, the risk assessment of the activity being undertaken, and the skill level of the group
- staff records (eg rosters) confirm staffing ratios are maintained, and that supervision is gender appropriate at all times
- overnight supervision is managed, recorded, monitored and gender appropriate.

1.2 Appropriate staff members know where the participants are at all times during the programme.

Processes are in place to ensure that the whereabouts of staff and participants are known at all times including:

- maintaining attendance records
- ensuring that an appropriate, responsible person is aware of the group's plans, including the estimated time of returning to the facility
- registering of planned itineraries for outdoor pursuit activities
- ensuring staff carry emergency equipment, such as cell phones, radios and emergency beacons.

1.3 Activities are managed by suitably qualified and experienced staff.

Staff records are maintained and staff are licensed or certified to engage children and young people in any high-risk activity.

For example:

- lead instructors/facilitators have a New Zealand Outdoor Instructors Association (NZOIA) qualification (Level 2) or equivalent documented experience
- support instructors/facilitators have NZOIA Level 1 or equivalent documented experience
- copies of NZOIA or NZQA qualifications for all staff and leaders
- documented relevant experience
- certificates relating to appropriate, activity-specific qualifications.

The programme uses the services of qualified and professional instructors for activities requiring specific experience, qualifications and skills.

Where external contracted experts are involved in the delivery of outdoor/adventure activities for at-risk young people, the organisation must also support this with staff to ensure the risks associated with working with at-risk young people are mitigated.