

Snowshoeing

SECONDARY - INTRAMURAL 2023

- A teacher must be the supervisor in charge of the snowshoeing trip/activity.
- A volunteer supervisor is an individual who is 18 years of age or older who is approved by the principal and has received instructions on their duties as a supervisor on the snowshoeing trip/activity.
- Consult [Risk Management](#).
- This activity page must be presented to the activity provider prior to the activity taking place. The activity provider must meet the minimum requirements listed on this page. For more information on planning trips using outside providers, consult [Outside Activity Providers](#).
- [OSBIE/OSRA's School Board/Snow Resort Safety Guidelines for Out-of-School Trips for Winter Sports Education Program](#) is a resource that can assist in planning trips.

Equipment

- Determine that all equipment is safe for use (for example, no sharp corners, cracks, or splinters). Students must be encouraged to report equipment problems to the teacher.
- Equipment must be in good repair and appropriate size for the snowshoer.
- When equipment is provided by the school/board or rented from a commercial facility, snowshoes and poles appropriate for the size and ability of the student must be provided.

Refer to the [First Aid](#) section for first aid equipment requirements.

Clothing/Footwear/Jewellery

- Appropriate clothing and footwear for outdoor activity must be worn (for example, use layering principles, hats, mitts or gloves). (“Comfort Tips” guidelines within the [Safety and Risk Awareness section of the Ontario Snow Resorts Association](#) website can assist in determining appropriate clothing for a comfortable outdoor snow sport activity.)
- When long hair poses a safety risk it must be secured. Devices (for example, hair pins, elastics and barrettes) used to tie back long hair must not present a safety concern.
- Students must not participate when the length of fingernails poses a safety risk to themselves or others.

Facilities

- Determine that all facilities are safe for use. Students must be encouraged to report facility problems to the teacher.
- Prior to initial use of the trail, teacher(s) must do a safety check in order to identify potential hazards which must be brought to the attention of students.
- When choosing a site, the following conditions must be taken into consideration:
 - sun
 - wind
 - snow conditions
 - suitability of terrain for student age and ability
- When selecting a non-commercial site the facility must include:
 - a level practice/teaching area
 - proximity to warmth, food, waxing and other facilities
 - well-marked trails
- Where applicable, the facility provider must define specific routes to the students so they are aware of the boundaries and hazards for activity.

- Walls, stages, equipment, trees, and posts must not be used as turning points, finish lines, end zones, or boundaries. Establish a clearly delineated boundary line away from the hazards, using visual markers (for example, lines, pylons), to prevent contact/collision.

Natural Ice Locations (Lakes, Ponds, Rivers)

- Only Board/school approved natural ice locations are to be used.
- An approved natural ice location is one that is monitored and tested by a recognized organization (for example, local municipality, police, and snowmobile clubs) and/or a recognized knowledgeable individual (for example, winter camp supervisor) that measures ice thickness for activity safety.
- Prior to an activity on natural ice surface the teacher/supervisor must contact local authorities to determine with absolute certainty that the ice surface is thick enough to be safe. The ice thickness must be a minimum of 15cm (6") and must be measured in several places.
- The use of natural ice involves some risk. Here are safety criteria to minimize the risks:
 - Stay off the ice of any natural ice surface where conditions cannot be measured.
 - Stay away from unfamiliar paths or unknown ice, avoid traveling on ice at night unless necessary.
 - Obey all ice warning signs.
 - The teacher/supervisor must be in close proximity to students on the ice surface.
 - The teachers/supervisors must be knowledgeable of the procedures to follow for rescuing an individual who has fallen through the ice.
 - Students must be informed on ice safety and ice rescue procedures prior to the activity (for example, not to go on the ice surface alone).

Environmental Considerations

- When environmental conditions may pose a risk to student safety (for example, thunderstorms [lightning] or student(s) with asthma, triggered by air quality), teachers must take into consideration their school board/school's protocols and procedures related to:

- environmental conditions (consult [Weather](#)); and
- snow conditions (for example, snow/ice storms) and visibility.
- Students must receive instruction on safety procedures related to environmental conditions and be made aware of ways to protect themselves (for example, frostbite, hypothermia).
- The school board's weather procedures are the minimum standards at all times. In situations where a higher standard of care is presented (for example, outside activity providers, facility/program coordinators), the higher standard of care must be followed.

Special Rules/Instructions

- Be aware of students whose medical condition (for example, asthma, anaphylaxis, casts, previous concussion, orthopaedic device) may affect participation. Consult [Medical Conditions](#).
- Students must not participate in the activity until they receive information on concussion prevention specific to the activity, inherent risks of the activity (for example, outline possible risks and ways to minimize the risks), and procedures and rules for safe play. Students must receive instruction on the importance of reporting symptoms related to a suspected concussion.
- Refer to school board policies and procedures (i.e., transportation, excursion/field trip) for communication with parents/guardians, the location of an off-site activity, means of transportation, supervision ratios, and parent/guardian permission.
- Activities must be modified according to the age, ability level, language, and experience of students, number of participants, and the facility available.
- Previous training, fitness level, and the length of time and intensity of physical activity must be taken into consideration.
- Activities must be based on skills that are taught.
- Skills must be taught in proper progression.
- A proper warm-up and cool-down must be included.

- While moving, students must not be required to close their eyes or be blind-folded.
- Emphasize controlled movement when requiring students to walk or run backwards. Backward-running races are not permitted.
- Teach basic uphill and downhill manoeuvres with very gentle slopes.
- Instruct students to check that boots are secure in bindings.
- Communicate to students the importance of being aware of the location of other skiers, around them, to avoid interference and collisions.
- When a student displays hesitation (verbally or non-verbally) with participating, the teacher must determine the reason(s) for doubt. If the teacher believes that a potential hesitancy during the skill could put the student at risk, the student must be directed toward a more basic skill, or be permitted to select a role within the activity at their comfort level, including the choice to not participate.
- Prior to participation, the teacher must reference and apply their school board's policy on equity and inclusion as it affects student participation and makes appropriate accommodations/modifications to provide a safe learning environment. Consult the Intent subsection within the [About section](#).
- Adequate liquid replacement (personal water bottles, water fountains) must be accessible for students before, during, and after physical activity to prevent dehydration.

Supervision

- All activities must be supervised.
- On site supervision when skills are being taught.
- In-the-area supervision thereafter.
- A system must be in place to keep track of students (for example, buddy system).
- Responsibilities of all supervisors must be clearly outlined. All supervisors must be familiar with applicable elements of this activity page and be aware of risks of the activity and the ways to minimize them and participate safely

- A process must be in place by which supervisors can contact students (for example, check-in time).
- The level of supervision must be commensurate with the inherent risk of the activity. The level of risk is related to the number of participants, the skill level of the participants, the type of equipment used, and environmental conditions.
- A volunteer could assist in the supervision of physical education activities. Examples of volunteers are educational assistants, retired teachers, co-op students, parents/guardians, early childhood educators, and teacher candidates. Refer to your school board's policy regarding volunteers. These volunteers must be accompanied by a supervisor.

Supervision Ratios

- The following ratios must be in place for day snowshoeing off school sites:
 - Grades 9-10: 1 supervisor per 20 students
 - Grades 11-12: 1 supervisor per 30 students

First Aid

- A fully stocked first aid kit must be readily accessible. (Consult [Sample First Aid Kit](#))
- A working communication device (for example, cell phone) must be accessible.
- Follow the school's first aid emergency response (consult [First Aid Plan and First Aid Emergency Response](#)) and the school board's concussion protocol (consult [Concussions](#)).
- An emergency action plan and response to deal with evacuations and lock downs must be followed and communicated to students.

Information for Parents/Guardians

- Parents/guardians must be informed of the following:
 - The location of activity is off school property

- The means of transportation
- The details of the activity
- The importance of wearing suitable clothing for activity and weather of the day
- The importance of sun protection
- That when their child/ward uses their own personal equipment or borrows equipment:
 - of the importance of an annual equipment inspection prior to the activity to ensure:
 - snowshoes and poles are appropriate for the size and ability of the student
 - all bindings are in working order and set to the proper tension
 - all bindings meet current manufacturer's guidelines

Information for Students

- Review with students prior to the trip:
 - Possible risks of the activity (for example, the dangers of impact with obstacles, notably: trees, fences) and the ways to minimize them and participate safely
 - Emergency procedures
 - The importance of:
 - selecting proper clothing for the activity and weather of the day (for example, no jeans)
 - taking rest/breaks during the day and not getting overtired
 - Ways to protect themselves from environmental conditions (for example, use of hats, sunscreen, sunglasses, personal water bottles, appropriate clothing)
 - Safety procedures related to cold weather conditions (for example, temperature, wind chill) and methods for preventing frost bite and hypothermia

- An instructional component that includes the proper wearing and use of equipment, is mandatory for all students at must be provided for students in all levels of ability
- Safety precautions related to the use of sharp tip poles when in close proximity to other students

Definitions

- **In-charge Person:**

- Some activities refer to an “In-Charge” person. While the teacher is in-charge and responsible for the overall safety and well-being of students under their care, sometimes there are other personnel who must be identified as “In-Charge” related to specific situations (for example, a pool lifeguard). In activities where an “In-Charge” person is designated, that person, in consultation with the teacher, must make final decisions regarding safety of the students

- **Supervision:**

- The vigilant overseeing of an activity for regulation or direction. Activities, facilities, and equipment have inherent risks, but the more effectively they are supervised, the safer they become.
- The Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education designate three categories of supervision, Constant visual supervision, On-site supervision, and In-the-area supervision. The categories take into consideration the risk level of the activity, the participants’ skill level and the participants’ maturity. The three levels of supervision described are not hierarchical but represent the type of supervision that an activity requires and the type of supervision that is inherently possible.

- **Supervisor:**

- A supervisor is defined as a teacher, vice-principal or principal with a current certification from the Ontario College of Teachers and under contract by the school/school board. The supervisor is legally responsible for the students.

- **Types of Supervision:**

- **Constant Visual Supervision:**

- Constant visual supervision means that the teacher is physically present, watching the activity in question. Only one activity requiring “Constant visual” supervision may take place while other activities are going on.
- Curricular example: During a track and field session, some students are involved in high jump, some are practising relay passing on the track while a third group is distance running around the school. For high jump, the teacher is at the high jump area and is observing the activity.
- Intramural example: During a school outdoor special events day, some students are involved in parachute games, some in relay games, and others in a team scavenger hunt around the school. For parachute, the intramural supervisor is at the event and is observing activity.

- **In-the-area Supervision:**

- In-the-area supervision means that the teacher could be in the gymnasium while another activity is taking place in an area adjacent to the gymnasium. In-the-area supervision requires the teacher to be readily accessible.
- In-the-area supervision occurs:
 - in activities in which students may be out of sight for periods of time and the location of the teacher is not nearby (for example, alpine skiing, cross-country running). At least one of the following criteria must be in place:
 - The teacher is circulating
 - The location of teacher has been communicated to students and volunteers
 - in single activities and those that may be combined (for example, other in- the- area activities such as badminton, table tennis, handball – wall) with the following criteria in place:

- The teacher must be circulating between the activities and readily accessible
 - The teacher informs students of the location of the activities
- Curricular example: During a track and field session, some students are involved in high jump, some are practising relay passing on the track while a third group is distance running around the school. For distance running, the students are running around the school and at times may be out of sight.
- Intramural example: During a school outdoor special events day, some students are involved in parachute games, some in relay games, and others in a team scavenger hunt around the school. For a scavenger hunt, the students are running around the school grounds and at times may be out of sight.
- **On-site Supervision:**
 - On-site supervision entails teacher presence but not necessarily constantly viewing one specific activity. Momentary presence in adjoining rooms (for example, equipment room) to the gym is considered part of “on-site supervision”.
 - Curricular example: During a track and field session, some students are involved in high jump, some are practising relay passing on the track while a third group is distance running around the school. For a relay, the students are practising on the track and can be seen by the teacher who is with the high jumpers.
 - Intramural example: During a school outdoor special events day, some students are involved in parachute games, some in relay games, and others in a team scavenger hunt around the school. For relay games, the students are participating on the playground and can be seen by the intramural supervisor.

Last Published

Fri, 01/26/24 02:56 pm