# Introductory Half Day Bushwalk

**LOCATION:**

This activity is undertaken in the 35 hectare forested area immediately to the east, southeast and south of the buildings at Nayook.

**DESCRIPTION:**

The area consists of reasonably steep gullies with tall messmate and peppermint eucalypts with an under-storey of thick vegetation in many areas. There is a network of walking tracks throughout the area. Some are well cleared and easy to follow and others less obvious so some care needs to be taken when walking with groups in the area. It is not recommended to allow groups to “bush bash” due to the steep nature and thick vegetation in many areas. The area is bounded by a fence to the north, 4WD track to the east, 4WD track and fence to the south and 4WD track to the west.

**AIMS;**

1. To enable staff to interact with students with an introductory walk, initiative activities and area familiarization
2. To introduce students to the skills and safety procedures required to operate in a bush environment.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

1. Enable students to become familiar with the bush area for a rogaining activity later in the program.
2. To introduce to students the basic skills required to navigate in challenging conditions.
3. Introduce the safety and emergency procedures to students operating in relatively remote areas
4. Introduce the group management skills and responsibilities required for both a large and small groups of students walking in forested areas.

**AGE SUITABILITY:**

This activity is suitable for students from Year 7 upwards. For younger students or Special School students consider increased staff ratios.

**STAFF/STUDENT RATIO:**

This session is conducted with one Nayook staff and one trainee with up to 13 students.

## Ratios: 1:10 (School Reference Guide 2007)

**INSTRUCTOR EXPERIENCE:**

The instructor needs to have good map interpretation skills and be very familiar with the area.

The instructor needs to have a clear understanding of the safety protocols and emergency procedures

**ASSISTANT EXPERIENCE:**

The assistant/s needs understand the safety and emergency procedures, have sound navigation skills and be able to competently assist the instructor in running the session.

**PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCE:**

* No previous experience is required however overweight, very unfit or students with coordination issues may struggle on some sections of the track
* Participants need to responsibly follow safety procedures at all times.

**INSTRUCTOR RESPONSIBILITY:**

* For all staff and students generally, need to monitor both at all times.
* Brief assistants/visiting staff on their role and the safety procedures.
* Organize emergency equipment and maps for the groups
* Brief participants on suitable footwear, clothing, required skills and safety procedures.

**ASSISTANT/VISITING TEACHER RESPONSIBILITY:**

* Assist the instructor where possible
* Monitor groups on the course
* Assist groups with any navigation or other issues
* Take over if the instructor becomes incapacitated

**PARTICIPANT RESPONSIBILITY:**

* To follow instruction as outlined in the safety brief and lesson outline
* To be responsible for the rogaining and safety equipment

**SAFETY, FIRST AID & ACTIVITY EQUIPMENT:**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| First Aid Equipment (staff) | Safety Equipment (staff) | Activity Equipment |
| * First Aid kit * Student medication | * Hand radio | * Maps * Compass * Watch board? |

**PARTICIPANT CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT:**

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| --- | --- |
| Winter/Cold weather requirements | Summer/hot weather requirement |
| * WW Jackets * Over-pants (if required) * Daypack * Suitable footwear * Suitable clothing for the weather conditions * Water bottle * Snacks * Personal Medication * Sun Hat | * Suitable footwear * Suitable clothing for the weather conditions * Daypack * Water bottle * Snacks * Sun hat * Sunscreen * Personal Medication |

**SAFETY BRIEFING:**

* The group must at all times stay together.
* Students must stay on a track at all times
* If someone in the group is injured make sure a staff member is notified immediately.
* If one or more students become separated from the group: lost members STOP immediately, call out and listen but do not move from the current position.
* No-one is to climb through any fences, cross 4WD tracks or bitumen roads
* No running; there are too many tripping/falling hazards.
* Do not interfere with any wildlife.
* In the warmer months be aware of snakes.

- Snake bite prevention: Stay on tracks as much as possible, watch where you are stepping, do not step over logs, rocks, etc without looking on the other side first. If you see a snake, leave it alone.

- Snake bite action – Victim stop, lie down and apply a firm roller bandage over the entire limb. Do not move from position and use emergency whistle to summons assistance

**EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:**

* If a student or group of students are lost, move back to the last known position of the students
* Call and listen for a response
* Use the handset to call for extra assistance from the main centre
* Contact the Director or the nominated emergency contact person (Note emergency call list in appendix).
* Call 000 (Police and/or ambulance as required)

**NB** – Mobile telephone in this area is not reliable, possible reception on the high points, none low down.

**ACTIVITY NOTES:**

The following is the suggested plan for the half day introductory bushwalk. If deviating from this then staff must notify the Director.

PRIOR TO SESSION:

Brief assistants and/or visiting staff as outlined in the “Assistant/visiting staff responsibilities”, “Safety Briefing” and “Emergency Procedures”

BRIEFING

Staff can choose how and when to cover the topics below, however the safety briefing and emergency procedures must be outlined before taking the group into the forest area.

Topics to be covered:

1. Discuss the objectives and challenges of the session.
2. Discuss the safety issues and emergency procedures (as outlined above under “Safety Briefing”).
3. Outline group management (group leader, whip, map interpreter & general group member responsibilities)
4. Map orientation by using natural features and the sun.
5. Interpreting; legend, scale (including pacing) and contours.
6. The importance of hydrating adequately
7. Walking efficiently and safely in steep terrain
8. Use a series of initiative activities to learn names and improve group trust, teamwork, communication and leadership skills.

**END OF SESSION:**

DEBRIEFING:

Discussion Points may include the following:

* Discussion on success or otherwise of the walk.
* Emphasize responsible behaviour, problem solving and working in small groups for other activities especially the rogaine as the last activity.
* Could address the objectives and can easily relate both to other activities on the program and experiences they may have later in life.

CLEANUP:

Attend to the following items:

* Equipment – Collect maps and check all students have the issued gear with them
* Information - relay any appropriate information to; Director, visiting staff school or parents if necessary.

**RISK MANAGEMENT**

Staff must review the risk management document prior to each session

Bushwalk – Half day Risk Assessment

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| Risk Assessment |

This page is used to be more specific about each of the hazards identified and to review the existing safety controls and to assess the risks they pose.

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| **Haz No** | **Hazard** | **Hazard Details** | **C** | **L** | **RR** | **Planned Controls** |
| 1 | People | Lost students | M | H | MH | Ensure students have a thorough understanding on group management and lost procedure.  Ensure good communication between staff members at the front and back of the group  Ensure staff are on the walk monitor numbers and assist students at all times  All staff must carry a device to call for assistance. |
| 2 | Radiation | Exposure to the sun, melanoma, sunburn | VH | M | H | Participants should be advised to apply sunscreen before setting out in the morning and again in the middle of the day.  Ensure that all participants are wearing hats and if possible shirts with collars and long sleeves. |
| 3 | Emergency Plans | Evacuation in case of bush fire, injury etc | VH | M | H | Check Weather Forecast for the week on the Bureau of Meteorology website ([www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au))  Review and implement plan for high fire risk days  Modify program if conditions warrant it.  Ensure evacuation vehicles are available at short notice |
| 4 | Heat / Cold Stress | Dehydration, hypothermia | H | H | H | Ensure that all participants have a warm woollen jumper, thermals and a waterproof jacket in the colder months.  On hot days students must have a hat.  Possibly shorten the activity if heat warrants it.  Ensure adequate hydration students to carry full water bottles |

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| **Haz No** | **Hazard** | **Hazard Details** | **C** | **L** | **RR** | **Planned Controls** |
| 5 | Sensitised Response | Bee sting, allergic reaction to food | H | L | M | Staff to check student medical forms to identify students with known risks  Carry anti- histamine, Epipen if student has a known allergy |
| 6 | Animal | Snake Bite | H | L | M | Instruct students on appropriate behaviour on sighting snake  Ensure students understand emergency procedures if a bite occurs  Instruct students on basic first aid if a bite occurs  If a snake inhabits areas close to buildings a snake removalist should be contacted |
| 7 | Area where slips, trips & falls occur | Ankle injuries, abrasions etc | M | H | M | Explain to students some tracks are narrow and steep, there are tree roots and other trip hazards.  Allow space between students so there are not multiple accidents  Good sturdy shoes are essential. Acceptable shoes include runners and hiking boots. Shoes not acceptable include volleys, sandals etc.  Instruct students not to run, walk carefully in steep terrain watching the ground for hazards |
| 8 | Medical | Medical Emergency | H | H | H | Ensure that all students have provided parent permission forms.  Staff review medical forms to identify students at risk. |
| 9 | Trees | Falling Branches | VH | L | M | In high wind conditions do not allow students in the forested area  Staff to undertake regular checks of dangerous trees or limbs, report to the relevant person for action |

C – Consequences L – Likelihood RR Risk Rank=C x L

L = Low M =Medium H = High VH = Very High E = Extreme

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| **Risk Rank** | **Action** |
| Low | An incident or injury highly unlikely to occur |
| Medium | An accident or injury is possible staff need to supervise and be aware of safety and emergency procedures |
| High | Constant and careful supervision is required at all times.  Staff must be well trained for the activity and have a thorough knowledge of all safety and emergency procedures |
| Very High | Consider making changes to this activity as likelihood and consequences of an accident or injury are serious. |
| Extreme | The consequences and likelihood of accident or injury with an identified hazard or hazards ensure that this activity should not run in its present form |