



YMCA-YWCA of the National Capital Region

BYOC School Programs

Nature Games and Activities

We offer a wide variety of nature based games and activities designed for students from grade 3 to 12. These games and activities are used to introduce students to nature principles such as animal and plant adaptation, relationships in nature, and animal senses. Some examples are, Nature Trust Walk, Predator and Prey, and camouflage.

Nature Hikes

Join one of our staff for an interpretive hike through the forest. The nature hike will focus on age appropriate nature concepts to teach to participants; plant, animal and rock identification, geological phenomenon, forest succession and animal homes and behaviours are all concepts that can be taught and adapted on a nature hike.

Pond and Soil Studies

How many animals can you find in a pond or soil sample? How do you assess the health of one of these ecosystems? If these are questions that you or your students would like to figure out the answers to, a pond or soil study will help you answer them. Students will have an opportunity to investigate a pond or soil environment, collect samples and identify what they have found. This study will help students better understand the biodiversity of these environments and its relationship to a healthy ecosystem.

Forest micro-site investigation

What is in the forest? Often people think about a forest as a large space that is home to large animals and big trees. In this investigation students will take a closer look at the forest and focus on some of the hidden gems that it has to offer. By focusing on a small micro-site students will begin to understand the forest from a different point of view and start making the links between the importance small organisms in relation to larger organisms.

Predator vs. Prey

In this action packed lesson students will learn about the food chain and relationships in nature through play. Students will assume the roles of carnivores, omnivores and herbivores in order to better understand their relationships with one another. Other concepts that can be introduced or reinforced through this game are habitat fragmentation, disease and the effects for fires and floods on forest animals.

Basic Canoe

Our basic canoe instruction is designed with first time paddlers in mind. This activity gives the participant a basic understanding of the parts of a canoe, paddle and safety equipment and provides them with instruction on basic paddle strokes and canoeing concepts. This activity ends by playing games that help to reinforce the newly acquired skills.



Advanced Canoe

Designed for more experienced paddlers the advanced program can be delivered in a single visit or over the course of multiple visits to the BYOC. The advance program builds on the basic paddle strokes and introduces participants to the “j” stroke, “c” stroke as well as how to use a throw rope and successfully perform a “T” rescue. Depending on the amount of lessons and time allotted, concepts such as portaging and tripping can also be covered.

Kayaking

The kayaking program introduces participants to the world of kayaking through basic instruction and games. Participants can choose from sit on top kayaks or the more traditional cockpit style kayaks to learn and practice strokes, wet exits, boat over boat rescues and basic manoeuvring.

Snowshoeing

Trek through the forest on a pair of snowshoes. Learn the basic history of snowshoeing and experience the difference of walking through the deep snow with and without snowshoes. Our staff will lead a hike through the forest and can even combine your snowshoe experience with an interpretive walk and games on snowshoes.

X-Country Ski Trails

The BYOC has about five kilometres of groomed x-country ski trails that we can use to help improve your skills. Basic instruction in classic style skiing will be the focus of this activity and it will allow participants to ski at a comfortable pace on terrain that varies from very flat to moderately hilly depending on the groups comfort level and skill. **Please note that BYOC does not offer ski equipment. It is up to the group to provide their own equipment.**

Basic Orienteering

Basic orienteering provides an introduction to basic map and compass skills. Students will have an opportunity to use a map and compass to orient themselves in relation to a map and find different destinations around camp. The basic course uses only cardinal directions (0, 90, 180, 360 degrees) making it appropriate for elementary students who are familiar with direction but not with compasses.

Advanced Orienteering

Building on basic orienteering skills students will now be expected to not only use cardinal directions but also incorporate additional bearings and multiple stages to locate destinations around the camp. Students will use baseplate compasses and learn the advantages to this style of compass.

Fire building

Allow our instructors to take you through the necessary steps that will ensure a perfect fire every time. Participants will learn the basic components of fire and how to apply them in a wilderness setting. Some sessions will see friendly competitions amongst the participants or maybe even the opportunity to prepare a snack for you and your classmates.



Shelter building

Learn how to prepare a wilderness shelter that will protect you from the elements as well as the knots and lashing techniques required to safely secure your shelter. Winter shelters are an essential element of outdoor living skills; learn how to build a quinzee style shelter and maybe even spend the night in it?

High Ropes

Our high ropes challenge course currently includes three dynamic and one static pod. Each is designed with a different objective in mind and can be facilitated for participants 8 years old and up. High ropes challenge elements are a great way to reinforce teamwork and cooperation as they require groups of two to four people to work together in order to successfully complete the challenge. ***Our high ropes courses and rock-climbing walls meet and exceed all OPHEA guidelines and are constructed and certified under the strict guidelines of the Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT).***

Rock Climbing

The BYOC climbing wall offers a challenge for individuals of varying skill levels. Set on a dynamic belay system the climbing wall does not require any previous rock climbing experience and proves to be an exciting, and enjoyable activity for students and adults. ***Our high ropes courses and rock-climbing walls meet all OPHEA guidelines and are constructed and certified under the strict guidelines of the Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT).***

Swimming

Join us on the beautiful Ottawa River for a leisurely swim in our designated swimming area or just relax on our rocky beach while your students or friends enjoy the water. All water activities are supervised by National Lifesaving Society Lifeguards.

Group games

A series of non-traditional group games are used to help groups “break the ice” and challenge those barriers to communication and cooperation. This is an introductory activity that will help to get the blood flowing and the laughter started.

Initiative tasks

A series of challenges designed to explore the group’s ability to communicate and work together. Through these initiative tasks facilitators are able to make suggestions and promote cooperation, communication and inclusiveness.



Low Ropes

Our low ropes challenge courses are designed to take team building to the next level. By increasing the risk and reward groups are met with greater adversity while attempting to complete challenges on one of our courses. Drawing on the communication, cooperation, support and inclusive principles that have begun to develop through other activities, participants work through a progressive set of tasks and challenges that will bring out the full potential of the group.

Theory Workshop

Groups can request a theory-based workshop that discusses principles of leadership such as: positive role modeling, effective communication through purposeful talk, teaching vs. facilitating and behaviour management. These workshops are excellent for youth leaders who are ready to start working in leadership roles with children.