



Best Practices for School Age Field Trips

While a field trip can provide a positive experience for the children it is important that it is a well planned event. Taking a group of school age children on a trip can provide many challenges. These challenges may be compounded if you have children who are very new to the country. Language levels, understanding safety routines, expectations of the child will all have an impact on the field trip and should be planned for.

Field trips should help to enhance the child's experience and give them an opportunity to build their skills. Planning the field trip in advance will mean that you have considered the children's needs and abilities along with their safety.

Choose Wisely

- The first step to planning a field trip is to ensure the destination is an appropriate one. There are a number of things to consider when making the decision about where to go on a field trip.
- Safety – is the location one in which you can ensure the children will be kept safe, and easy to supervise.
- Activities – do the activities at the location fit with the interests of the children and are they age appropriate
- Location – will you be able to easily transport the children to and from the location. Will the trip be an appropriate length of time?
- Cost – does it have a cost, will parents be able to afford it

Getting Ready for the Trip

Once the decision about the destination has been made you will need to begin planning for the event. The things to consider include:



Time and date of trip

- Plan the date and time of the trip so that it meets the needs of not only the school age program but also the adult classes. Be sure you leave sufficient time to be able to get to and from the location while the parents are participating in services

Transportation

- Hiring a private bus will need to be done well in advance of the trip
- Public Transit - you will need to identify who will purchase tickets, what the schedule is, what the route will be

Parent Consent

- Tell the parents as soon as possible about the trip
- Be prepared to explain details about the trip
- Gather parent permission forms and waiver statement

Plan for safety

- Ensure you have at least one additional staff member for each group
- Request volunteers if available
- Ensure staff and volunteers are trained on field trip procedures
- Develop emergency information that can be brought on the trip: children's emergency information, emergency contact information etc.
- Identify medications that may need to be brought on the trip (EpiPen)
- Plan for administering medication
- Plan for food safety of any foods to be brought on the trip
- Plan for emergency response while on the trip (if a child becomes ill etc.)
- Plan for how you will identify the children on the trip – matching T-shirts, ID tags with



contact information etc.

Other

- Decide if you will provide food or the parents should provide it and inform parents about food safety
- Remind the children to wear appropriate clothing
- Be prepared with sunscreen, hats, water etc. to keep the children safe
- Develop the written Field Trip Plan
- Ensure all staff have been assigned their roles and know the children they are responsible for monitoring
- Ensure staff and volunteers are aware of appropriate policies e.g. behaviour guidance, field trip expectations, emergency response

Day of the trip

- Identify one person to be in charge throughout the day
- Remind staff and volunteers of their roles and responsibilities
- Ensure you have:
 - bus tickets
 - admission fees
 - cell phone
 - emergency contact information
 - first aid kit
 - medication (if necessary)
 - lunches/snacks/water



- supplies such as, Kleenex, sunscreen etc

Be sure children have:

- Have identification (T-shirts, Tags etc.)
- Understand the rules of the field trip
- Know which adult they must stay with
- Provide information
- Post field trip plan – or let someone in charge know where the information is
- Remind parents what time you depart and will return
- Leave contact information at site (cell phone number, contact name)

During the trip

- Take a head count every time you move from one area to another
- Use safety techniques at all times (cross at lights and corners; wait for traffic to stop etc.)
- Identify a common meeting place
- Identify facilities such as washroom
- Ensure children retain identification
- Provide safety information as needed when at destination
- Travel as a group
- Keep the administrator informed of any issues as they arise
- Ensure the person in charge confirms all participants have returned to the program