

Indoor Team Building Safety Operating Procedure (SOP)

1. Purpose

This SOP outlines the safe planning and delivery of Indoor Team Building Challenges to ensure risks are effectively managed and all participants are supported.

2. Scope

Applies to all AOEC staff, instructors, Group Leaders, supervising adults, and participants involved in Indoor Team Building Challenges.

3. Description of Activity

Indoor Team Building Challenges are a series of short, structured activities designed to develop teamwork, communication, leadership, problem-solving, planning, cooperation, and objective-focused thinking.

Challenges require participants to listen, communicate effectively, contribute to the team, and work together to achieve a defined objective.

The available challenges may include:

- Spot Maze
- Stunned Mullet Cards / Twenty Four
- Infinite Circle
- Marshmallows / Lily Pads
- Tarp Flip / Over Crowded Island
- Stacker
- Pipeline
- Get Knotted
- Blind Shapes
- Helium Stick
- Human Knot

The Group Leader may select, modify, or combine challenges according to the age, ability, confidence, objectives, and needs of the group.

Activities involving physical movement or contact must be adapted or replaced where required to ensure they are appropriate and safe for the participants.

4. Objectives

The activity aims to develop: Teamwork and cooperation - Communication and active listening - Leadership and shared decision-making - Planning and execution of a team objective - Problem-solving and initiative - Reflection on team performance and behaviour.

5. Roles & Responsibilities

AOEC Instructors or Group Leaders: Lead and manage the activity safely - Select challenges appropriate to the group - Conduct risk assessments and make go/no-go decisions - Inspect equipment and activity areas before use - Deliver safety briefings - Explain the objective and rules of each challenge - Monitor participant behaviour and wellbeing - Stop or modify an activity if safety is compromised - Ensure equipment is returned and any damage or loss is reported - Coordinate emergency response if required.

Where the activity is group-led, the Group Leader assumes responsibility for participant health and safety during the activity.

Supervising Adults: Retain duty of care for students at all times - Actively supervise participants - Follow activity leader instructions - Monitor participant behaviour, physical wellbeing, and interactions - Assist with equipment and emergency response if required - Report any concerns or incidents to the Activity Leader.

Participants: Follow all instructions and agreed rules - Listen to the safety briefing before beginning each challenge - Work cooperatively and respectfully with others - Use equipment appropriately - Respect personal space and physical boundaries - Stop immediately when instructed by the Activity Leader - Respect the activity space and equipment.

6. Group size & Ratios

- Minimum supervision requirements: One competent activity leader.
- Supervising adult: Supervising adults may help run the individual challenges or rotate with the small groups. Ideally one adult per team.
- Team challenges are generally most effective with approximately 6 participants per team. Groups may be rotated through different challenges where multiple activities are being run.
- Ratios may be increased depending on participant age, confidence, group size, environmental conditions, or additional support requirements.

7. Pre-Activity Requirements

7.1 Risk Disclosure & Medical Information

- Medical conditions, injuries, behavioural needs, and mobility considerations must be identified.
- A responsible adult must be assigned for participants requiring medication

7.2 Equipment Checks

Before the activity:

- Check all equipment is present and in suitable condition.
- Remove damaged or unsuitable equipment from use.
- Check that the activity area is clear of unnecessary hazards.
- Ensure sufficient space is available for the selected challenge.

Set up equipment according to the requirements of the activity.

Ensure equipment is stable and positioned appropriately.

Any damaged or missing equipment must be reported to the AOEC Manager or recorded in accordance with AOEC procedures

7.3 Clothing Requirements & Checks

Participants must wear: Closed-toe footwear - Clothing appropriate for weather conditions
- Hair should be tied back where appropriate.

Participants should use the bathroom before the activity.

ENSURE participants bring their personal medication with them, and that there is someone present (adult supervisor) who knows how to administer it

7.4 Other Requirements

The Group Leader must consider whether each challenge is appropriate for the participants physical and psychological. Participants should never be pressured to undertake a physical or contact-based challenge if they are uncomfortable or unable to safely participate.

8. Safety Briefing (Mandatory for all participants)

Must include:

- The purpose and objectives of the activity.
- The rules of the challenges and how equipment is to be used.
- Behaviour expectations.
- The importance of communication and listening.
- For challenges involving physical contact, participants must understand that contact should be respectful, appropriate, and limited to what is required by the activity.

Supervising adults must be present and engaged during the briefing.

9. Activity Management

During the activity:

- Participants remain within the designated activity area.
- Participants follow the agreed rules. Equipment is used only for its intended purpose.
- The Activity Leader monitors participant behaviour and wellbeing.
- The Activity Leader may modify rules or introduce scenarios to meet the objectives of the group.
- Activity must be stopped if safety is compromised.

10. Emergency Response (Summary)

In the event of an incident:

- Activity Leader takes control of situation
 - First aid is administered by trained person
 - Emergency services contacted via 111 if required and a designated person meets emergency services at access point.
 - AOEC Management contacted as soon as practical.
 - Group managed and kept safe by supervising adults
 - All participants are accounted for before leaving the activity area.
 - All incidents must be reported to AOEC management and recorded.
-

11. Environmental Care (Reinforce this to the students)

- Leave no Trace. Leave the area as it was found.
 - Report any damages to AOEC Management.
 - Respect nature and its wildlife. No harming any creatures like spiders or wetas.
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12. Debrief

A short debrief should be completed after the challenges to help participants reflect on their team performance. Possible questions include:

- What worked well for your team?
- How did you communicate?
- Who took on leadership roles?
- Did everyone have an opportunity to contribute?
- What happened when your first plan did not work?
- How did the team respond to challenges?
- What could you have done differently?
- What did you learn about working as a team?

The debrief should focus on learning, teamwork, communication, and positive reflection rather than simply which team completed a challenge fastest.

Spot Maze

Activity Instruction

Navigate the entire group one at a time through the maze of stepping stones, without making a noise or stepping off.

Resources

This challenge is a grid of blocks. A Grid Map is used by the activity leader to determine a secret path.

Briefing

This is a memory exercise. The group must cross the maze one block at a time. There is a secret path across the maze. Everyone has to remember the secret path for themselves. As the first team member steps on a square, the facilitator gives the thumbs up or thumbs down. Following the thumbs up, the team member may try a new square. If not successful, the team member goes to the back of the line and the next person attempts to cross the maze.

Ensure the team understands the exercise before they start. As it is a memory exercise, it pays for each individual member to pay attention while attempting to cross the maze. Once started, the no noise rule will be in force.

Rules

1. Every member of the team must start from the same side and cannot go to the other side without crossing the maze
2. There is to be no sound made by the group at all.
3. Using articles to mark the trail is not permitted.
4. Team Members must cross the maze one block at a time.
5. The group members must keep in strict sequence when taking turns on the path.

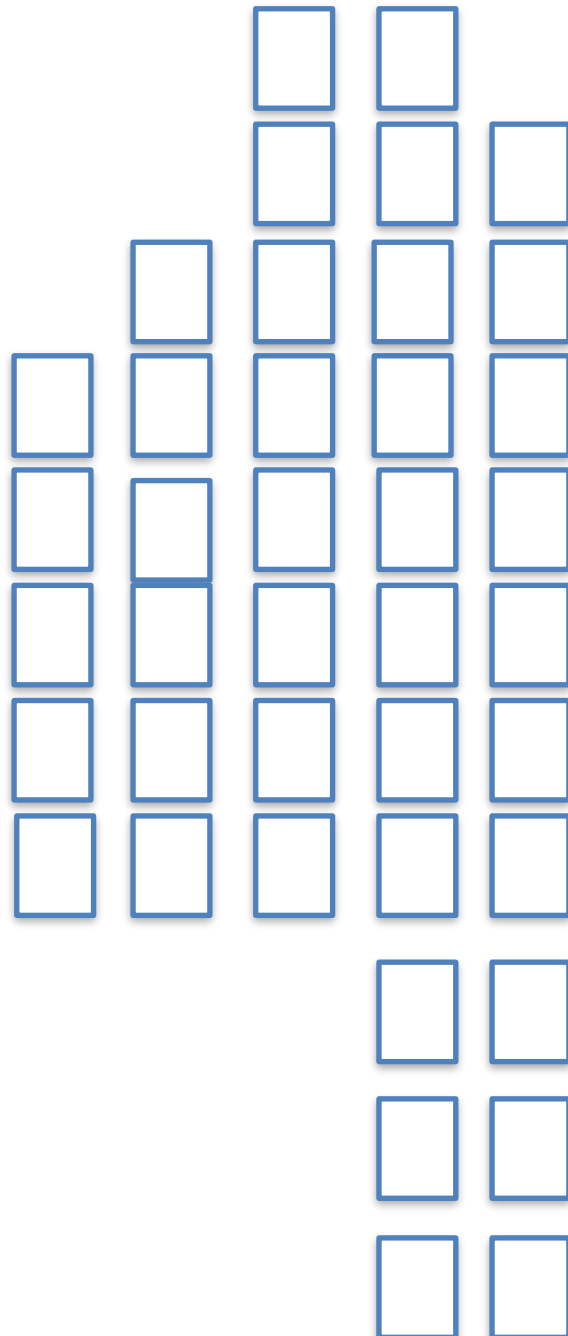
Option 1: If not successful, the team member goes to the back of the line and a new team member must attempt the maze. There can be only one person on the path at a time.

Option 2: With each successive thumbs up, the group moves through the maze with one person standing on each successful square. However, if a thumbs down is given, the whole group must go back.

Teacher/Instructor Notes

On the grid mark the squares that form the secret path. Participants see only see a blank maze. Remember you make the rules; you enforce them, but never change them.

Spot Maze Grid



Stunned Mullet (24)

Resources

Deck of 25 cards with answers (Green, Blue, Red)

Briefing

Before handing over the cards to the group, remove the answer card and explain the object and the rules. Adults don't look at the answers until the group is confident they have it right.

Object

All they have to do is get a stack of cards in a row ordered zero to 24. Sounds easy enough.

Rules

1. Group can't see the cards before starting.
2. A few clues may stump younger players — adults are welcome (and encouraged!) to help out.
3. At the end be sure to shuttle the card and leave them face down for the next group.

Cards are divided into colour groups. Each group allows for a separate play through, or players may divide into teams and compete head-to-head.

Infinite Circle

Resources

Pair of Yellow ropes with loops on each end from field shed.

Briefing

One person loops the yellow rope ends around a wrist each, the other person interlocks their yellow rope through their partners rope before putting their loops on each wrist. You should have two interlocked circles.

Object

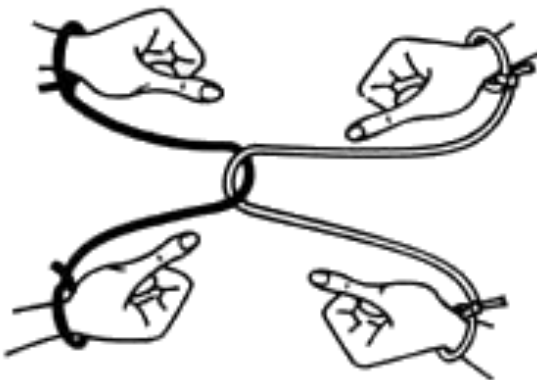
To separate their circle from their partners. While following the rules below.

Rules

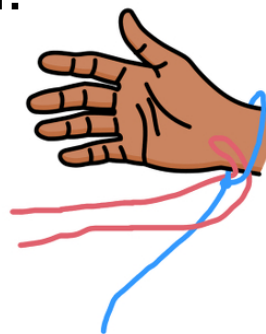
4. Can not cut the rope
5. Can not untie the loops
6. Can not take the loops off your hands

Solution

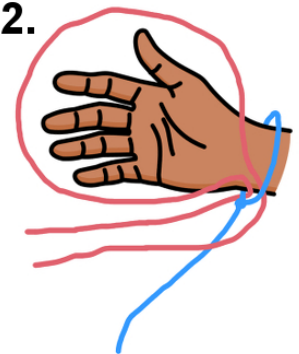
Take a bight in the centre of your partners rope, pass it under one of your wrist loops so that the bight portion is closest to your fingers. Pull the bight through with your other hand and open it to a size that will accommodate your hand. Pass the bight over your hand and pull it down through the wrist loop. You're free!



1.



2.



Lily Pads/Taniwha

Resources

Each team member gets a “Lily pad” a wooden disk. Use ropes or a allocated space a “safe zone” on either side of the “river”.

Briefing

For all team members to cross the “river” and back again, on their “Lily pads”. The Taniwha (adult) will get anyone who touches the water and will take any lily pads that are not touching anyone. Don't leave anyone below.

Rules

1. Each person has a “lily pad” to start with.
2. The only thing that can touch the river are the lily pads.
3. Any lily pad that are in the river and are not in contact with any human beings will be taken away by the taniwha (adult) and the team will be with out a lily pad for the rest of the attempt.

Tarp Flip

Activity Instruction

A seemingly simple task. While standing on top of a completely open tarp, the group must create a plan to get everyone on the opposite side of the tarp without stepping off.

Resources

1 Tarp

Rules

1. No one can step off the tarp
2. The group must work together as a team

Teacher/Instructor Notes

- The challenge can be timed and repeated
- Before each turn let them discuss what happened and how to improve their performance

Variation

- The tarp can be folded into a smaller shape to make the activity more challenging

Overcrowded Island

Activity Instruction

To get as many people as possible inside a hoop. Too easy? Grab another team to join and see how many people can fit on the “island”.

Resources

1hoop

Rules

1. No part of them may touch the ground outside the hoop.
2. Must hold there final solution for 10 seconds
3. Warning to be safe as it will hurt to fall on the hard surface.

Stacker

Activity Instruction

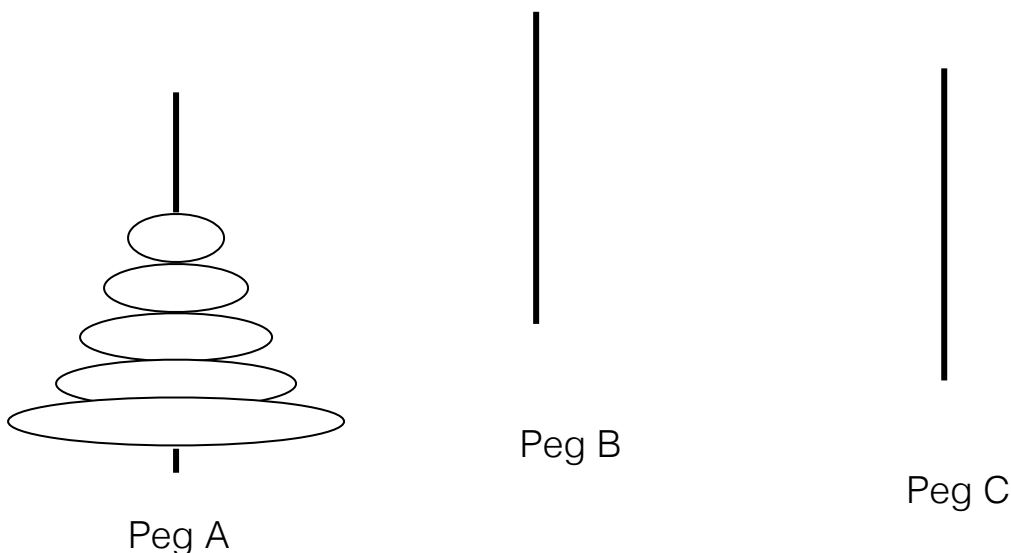
Transfer the 5 discs on peg A to peg C, within the rules, so that they are stacked as on peg A. The minimum number of moves is 31.

Resources

This activity consists of 5 coloured disks and 3 poles (stored in the resource room).

Briefing

The group has to transfer 5 discs stacked in order of size on Peg A to Peg C within the rules.



Rules

1. Only 1 disc can be moved at a time
2. The next disc can only be moved once the previous disc is stationary on a peg.
3. A larger disc cannot be stacked upon a smaller disc. Tarp Flip

Pipe Line

Activity Instruction

Participants must roll a golf ball (or water) down the pipeline along a given course

Resources

several half pipes and a golf ball

Briefing

Participants are given half pipes and must form a pipeline to roll a golf ball down the pipeline, following the give course.

Rules

1. If using a ball, Pipes cannot touch each other. If water is used Pipes must be connected
2. The person holding the rail containing the ball cannot move
3. Once the ball has left a piece of pipe that person must move to the front of the course or pass the pipe onto a person without a pipe to move to the front of the pipeline
4. The group must work together

Teacher/Instructor Notes

- The challenge can be timed and repeated
- Before each turn let them discuss what happened and how to improve their performance

Variation

- Several golf balls can be used
- Instead of a golf ball, water can be used to run down the pipeline. Use a water jug to pour and to catch and measure the water at the other end. Repeat and aim for improvements. NOT TO USED INDOORS

Get Knotted

Resources

Rope from Field Shed

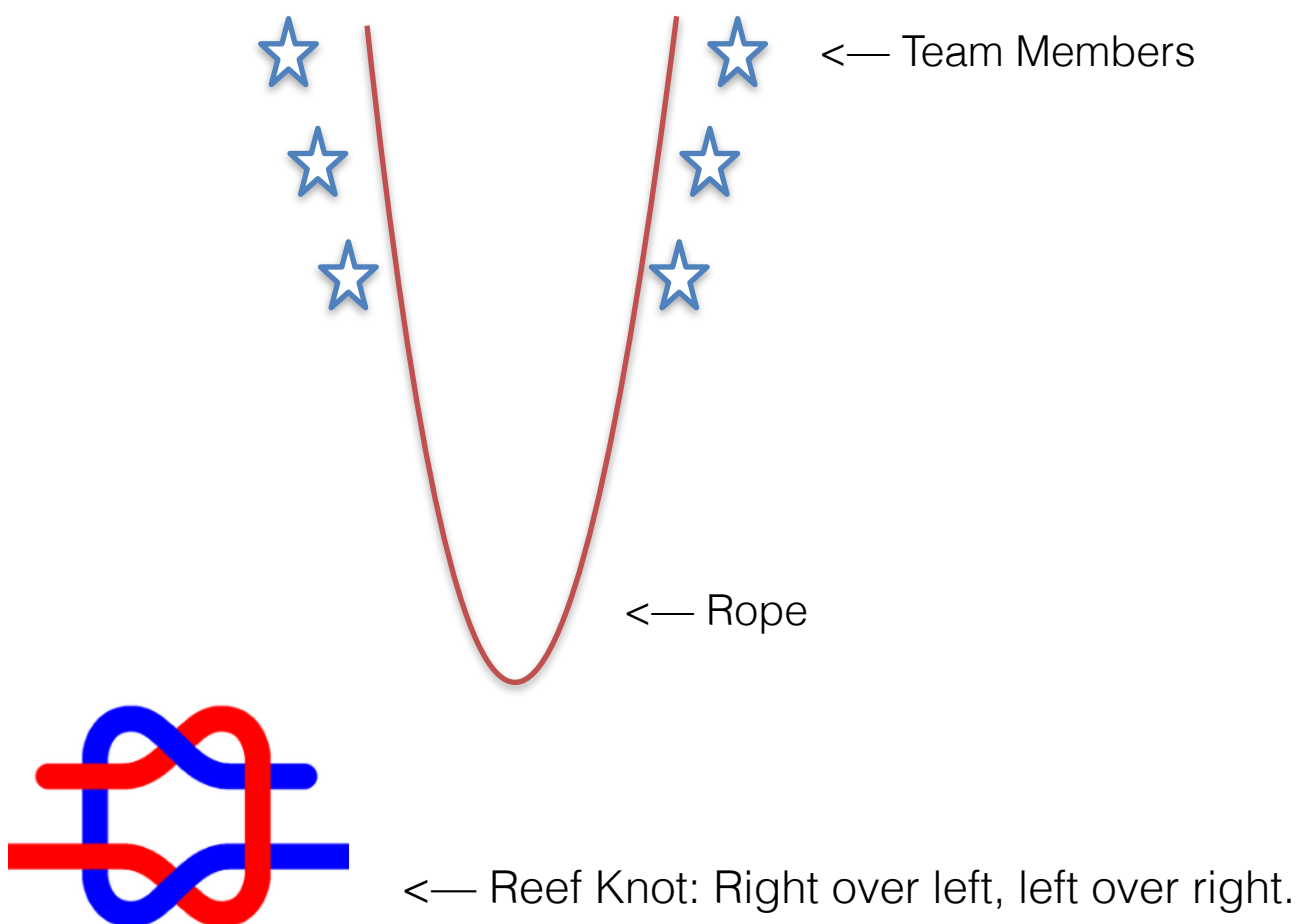
Activity Instruction

The whole group to tie a reef (square knot) in the rope but the challenge is that half the team is holding on to one end the rope and the others on the other end. Once holding on to the rope they cant not move their hands off or on again.

Briefing

On the word “Go” the team members bend down and pick up the rope. As soon as their hands touch the rope they are “super -glued” to it and cannot remove their hands or move them along the rope. From this position the team have to tie the reef knot in the rope.

Extra team teams can assist, 5min prep and use questions, eg how do I tie a reef knot?



Blind Square

Activity Instruction

Once blindfolded, participants must form a perfect square holding a rope.

Resources

Blindfolded and a knotted loop of rope

Briefing

Participants are given the rope to hold, then are blindfolded and told to form a perfect square hold the rope. Once confident that they accomplished that task they may remove their blindfolds, repeat if needed. Change the shape to make it harder.

Rules

1. Everyone must remain blindfolded
2. Everyone needs to hold the rope at all times

Teacher/Instructor Notes

- The challenge can be timed and repeated
- Change it up to a triangle, half moon or heart shape etc

Helium Stick

Activity Instruction

Goal is to lower the helium stick to the ground.

Resources

1 thin, light weight stick - tent pole

Briefing

Line up in two rows, participants are to face each other. Ask participants to point their index fingers and hold their arms out to the gap between the lines. Lay the helium stick down on their fingers. Get the group to adjust their finger heights until the stick is horizontal and everyones index fingers are touching the bottom of the stick. Explain that the goal is to lower the helium stick to the ground.

Rules

1. Each persons fingers must be touching the stick at all times, restart if someone drops their fingers.
2. The stick can only rest on peoples fingers - no one can hold the top of the stick

Human Knot

Activity Instruction

Undo their human knot

Briefing

Stand the team in a circle facing each other, reach their right hand into the circle and grab someone else's hand, repeat with their left hand. Without breaking their loop, untangle their knot.

Rules

1. Don't break the line
2. Sometimes it is impossible to completely untangle, so just restart.

Team Building- Risk Analysis & Management

	Reviewed: Karen Tobich & Emily Underwood Approved: Board of Trustee - Nisha Duncan	Date: 03/08/2026	Next Review Date: 03/08/2027		
	Risk Rating System: Likelihood (1–5) x Consequence (1–5): 1–5 Low - 6–10 Moderate - 11–15 High				
	What would cause someone to get hurt?	What could happen?	Risk Rating	Risk Management Control Measures	Risk Rating
	Hazards/Harm	Risk	Initial	What can be prevented? By Whom?	Post Control
People	Supervising Adults not familiar with activity instructions, responsibilities & risks i.e. not enforcing the safety rules	- Major Injury - Minor Injury - Damage to Equipment - Boredom/Frustration	6	Activity Leaders / Adult Supervisors familiarise themselves with Activity Instructions, Responsibilities and RAMS prior to camp/activity commencement.	2
	Not sufficient Supervision/Poor Supervision	- Major injury - Minor Injury - Damage to Equipment	6	Sufficient competent hands on adult supervision, additional support for participants with behaviour issues or disabilities.	2
	- Incorrect/unsafe use of the wall - Lack of Support (spotting) on the challenge wall - Too many people on top - Jumping down/back sliding down the wall	- Major injury - Minor Injury	6	- Group support and students spotting each other to get each person up and down the wall. - Face the wall going up and down - Two people max on the wall at once	2
	Failure to disclose risks	- Major injury - Minor Injury - Damage to equipment	6	Group must be briefed on activity instructions, responsibilities, and RAMs	2
	Improper use of equipment	- Major injury - Minor Injury - Damage to equipment	6	Group Leaders brief group extensively on safety & correct technique. Identify the main hazards of the activity with participants. Items can not be added/ taken to the wall.	2
	Participants not paying attention	- Minor Injury - Passer-by Safety	4	- Include everyone in the group so they are focus - Brief adult/group on individual activity hazards, carrying planks, watching out for others	2
	Lack of team work	- Major injury - Minor Injury - Damage to equipment	6	- Good Team work - Good/Positive Communication - Good Leadership	3
	Inappropriate clothing and footwear	Minor Injury	6	Participants are not allowed without proper covered shoes. Dress for the weather conditions.	2
	Special Needs not identified	- Major injury - Minor Injury - Frustration - Not enough support	6	Disabilities/behaviour issues to be discussed before or on arrival of camp. Ensure extra adult support is met.	2
	Group too big/too small	- Frustration/boredom - Minor Injury - Damage to equipment	4	- Ensure their are enough activities and enough supervisors for teams of 4-8 - Participants must be supervised - Keep away from an activity area while another team is working	2
	Student/Group Leader/Supervising Adult becomes incapacitated (Injury, heart attack, asthma, etc)	- Death - Major injury - Minor Injury	10	- Know medical conditions/behaviour issues of students & adults. Who is the nominated knowledgeable person to deal with known medical/behavioural issues - Other Adults in Group must know what to do in an emergency	6
Equipment	Poor clothing & footwear	Minor Injury	6	Participants are not allowed without proper covered shoes. Dress for the weather conditions.	3
	Slippery equipment & trip hazard	Minor Injury	6	Wait for equipment to dry after rain, store gear out of the weather and where it wont be tripped over	2
	Removing parts of equipment	- Major injury - Minor Injury - Damage to Equipment	9	- Only AOEC Staff are allowed to remove or add wall segments. - Do not remove gear from the team building area	3
	Damaged, worn equipment	- Major injury - Minor Injury - Damage to Equipment	6	- Team Building equipment and area is monthly inspection include wood chip. - Equipment is removed from the activity to be fixed if damaged.	3
	No first aid kit on site	- Major injury - Minor Injury	6	Ensure First Aid kit is on site	4
Environment	Weather unsuitable for session	- Major injury - Minor Injury - Physical well-being (hypothermia, hyperthermia)	6	- Cancel if necessary, the Group Leader will make this call. - Halt the activity if necessary - Dress for the weather	3
	Uneven wood chip surface and trip hazards	Minor injury	3	No need for running, hazards are pointed out eg. Lava rocks, train tracks	2
	Wasps	- Minor Injury - Major injury - Death	6	Report any sightings of wasp, carry first aid kit and Wasp Spray	3

	Reviewed: Karen Tobich & Emily Underwood Approved: Board of Trustee - Nisha Duncan		Date: 03/08/2026		Next Review Date: 03/08/2027	
	Risk Rating System: Likelihood (1–5) x Consequence (1–5): 1–5 Low - 6–10 Moderate - 11–15 High					
	What would cause someone to get hurt?	What could happen?	Risk Rating	Risk Management Control Measures		Risk Rating
	Hazards/Harm	Risk	Initial	What can be prevented? By Whom?		Post Control

Emergency Plan	First Aid	Medical Treatment	Serious Injury
	Who is the trained and nominated First Aider	Follow Emergency Action Plan Discussed at Pre Activity Safety Talk and at Safety Stations	See Emergency Action Plan discussed at Safety Talks and at Safety Stations
	First Aid Kit - Instructors have this	- Katikati Medical Centre 07 549 0411 4 - Clive Road, Katikati	Call 111 or activate PLB
	Know medical conditions/behaviour issues of students & adults and knowledgeable person to deal with it	- Tauranga Hospital, Cameron Road, Tauranga 07 579 8000	Nominate someone to meet Emergency Services at Gate
	Incident & Accident Reporting	- Report to AOEC Management - Incident & Accident Reporting on Safety Log at Kitchen Safety Station	- Report to AOEC Management - Incident & Accident Reporting on Safety Log at Kitchen Safety Station