



Planning residential trips with children

In addition to the factors to consider for a day trip with junior rowers, you may also like to consider the following advice and guidance for residential trips and overnight stays. It is based on the NSPCC document *Safe Sport Away (2001)*.

Information for parents

It is good practice to ensure that detailed written information is passed to parents before a residential trip. This should include contact details for the trip leader so that parents can be invited to contact them with any queries. Information to parents should cover policies on discipline, the code of conduct and other areas such as phoning home, pocket money, home-sickness and, for older, teenage children, remote supervision or 'free time'. It may be appropriate to share with parents information obtained when assessing safety issues and the steps which have been taken to reduce risk to an acceptable level.

Consent form

For all participants under 18 years of age, a parental consent form should be completed which may include acceptance of the code of conduct for the trip (see SPCG3a).

Information for children

It may also be helpful to have a separate meeting for the children attending the trip before departure to discuss and adopt a joint code of behaviour. You can discuss talking to someone about feeling homesick, bullied or frightened and introduce the name of the person who will be responsible for welfare during the trip. You may also like to set rotas for cooking, cleaning or other jobs at the venue, if appropriate, at this time.

A **code of conduct** for a residential trip should address the following areas:

- **Timing and punctuality:** meals, training times, curfews and so on
- **Contact details:** ensure all have contact numbers for accommodation as well as the team leader
- **Dress and appearance:** being appropriate for that activity
- **Respect:** for accommodation, property, people and personal space
- **Accommodation:** as directed by team leader, rules on
- **Alcohol:** consumption by under age athletes and adults whilst 'on duty'
- **Smoking:** should be forbidden by athletes and adults
- **Illegal and banned performance substances:** should be forbidden (refer to the anti-doping rules)
- **Medication:** any medication as mentioned in the parental consent form should be held by the team leader or an appointed medical person
- **Sanctions:** how breaches of code of conduct will be dealt with
- **Accommodation and sleeping arrangements:** This can vary considerably from trip to trip, eg a single hotel or several hotels, guest houses, university accommodation, boathouses, shared rooms, en-suite or shared facilities, full-board or self-catering

Points to consider

- **Dormitories:** Will you be sharing with other groups?
- **Facilities:** Are there separate washing, toilet, sleeping facilities for males, females, adults and rowers? It is not acceptable for athletes to share a bed, for male and female athletes to share a room or for an adult to share a room with a child unless they are parent and child. Where members of a crew are aged 16 and 18 years, it may be acceptable for a 16-year-old to share with an 18-year-old (or possibly older if the rowers are part of the same squad or crew) although the decision should be taken on an individual basis taking into account the maturity of both rowers. Similarly the arrangements for a young cox travelling with a senior crew would need to be taken into careful consideration.
- **Adults:** Are adult staff available in each area for children to call upon?
- **Hotels:** Have you issued instructions on the use of hotel telephones, drinks cabinets, satellite TV? Consider having these removed or barred.
- **Fire drill:** Have you explained the fire drill at the accommodation to the group and to whom the rowers should report to in the case of a fire?
- **Discipline:** It may be helpful to discuss your control and discipline policy with any staff at the accommodation. It is also advisable to check the accommodation policy on damage, lost keys and any extras ordered.

Access arrangements

Consideration should be given to any particular cultural, physical or dietary requirements. For example, Muslim rowers will require access to running water for washing; wheelchair users will require wider door openings and easy access to toilet and bathroom facilities including sink height and visually or hearing impaired athletes may also have special requirements.