

CAMPOUT TREAT: ENJOY MAKING S'MORES SAFELY

By Jay Cash

Whatever the season, making S'mores during a campout is a great evening activity with Scouts of all ages. However, there are a few safety tips that can make your evening cracker barrel of S'mores a fun, exciting, and enjoyable event.

Fire

The best S'mores have roasted marshmallows that are heated by a campfire. Here are a few safety tips:

- Small campfires are the best. There is no need to have a huge bonfire just to make S'mores. The best campfires are made using hardwoods or charcoal. Hardwood fires should be burned down to the embers/coals stage.
- Use good fire safety sense, such as clearing all combustible materials (such as leaves and branches) away from the fire ring. Always use a fire ring.
- Do not build a campfire if your county, town, or state has a burn ban in effect.
- Have at least one fire extinguisher easily available.
- Have a trained Scout leader, senior patrol leader and/or Venturing crew officer monitor for fire safety. Use the BSA's Unit Fireguard Chart.
- Keep any clothing, such as long sleeves and jackets, away from the fire. Clothing could ignite, causing severe burns.
- Have a properly stocked first-aid kit available (and have trained first-aid Scouts and adults on hand).

Hot Marshmallows

Roasting marshmallows can be fun, but care should be taken so that participants do not become injured by burns or punctures. Here are a few safety tips:

- Never use green or dead limbs or branches from trees or bushes. (Remember Leave No Trace principles.) Tree limbs or branches may seep wood or plant toxins into the marshmallow that you plan on eating. As much as this may have been a "tradition," many medical



publications recommend against the use of tree or bush limbs from being used for roasting marshmallows.

- Rusty coat hangers or rods are not recommended. Rust may be absorbed into the marshmallows that you plan on eating.
- Metal coat hangers are also not recommended as they may have plastic or lacquer coatings. Once again, these materials may become absorbed by the marshmallows as you roast them. Metal can also transmit heat from the fire.

- Use stainless steel, hot dog roasting spits (available through ScoutStuff.org) with wood handles. These are easier to use, and you can generally roast at least two marshmallows at once. Metal "spit" skewers that are at least 30 inches long may be suitable, if proper gloves are worn to keep the heat from transmitting to your hands.

- When roasting your marshmallows, a light brown skin is sufficient. Having the marshmallow engulfed in flames may cause panic and flinging of hot marshmallow onto someone.
- Have an older Scout or adult assist with adding the hot marshmallow to the chocolate and graham cracker. Give this delicious sandwich a few seconds to cool down before eating it. You don't want to burn your mouth.

One More Safety Tip

If you are on a campout, thoroughly clean your hands and face before hitting the sleeping bag. The smell of marshmallows and chocolate are known to attract various animals. Use soap and water to clean up and put all foods away in a secure box or trailer. Never put any food in any tent.

S'mores are great for an evening snack or cracker barrel, just before bedtime. On campouts, the sugar rush is just enough so that the youth will sleep soundly through the night.

Remember to modify your menu if any of the participants have food allergies, sensitivities, or medical issues that are affected by food.



WINTER SPORTS INJURY PREVENTION

By Jay Cash

Winter is near, and Scouts will have a desire to go outside and participate in many winter sports. These activities can be great fun and offer learning experiences for a troop, pack, crew, team, or ship. Nonetheless, a bit of preparedness and planning will go a long way toward injury prevention.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, 440,000 people were treated at hospitals, doctor's offices, and emergency rooms in 2010 for winter sports-related injuries that included sprains, strains, dislocations, and fractures. These injuries were categorized as:

- 144,000 injuries from snow skiing (both downhill and cross country)
- 148,000 injuries from snow boarding
- 58,500 injuries from ice skating or hockey
- 91,000 injuries from sledding and tobogganing

Many injuries occurred toward the end of the day due to overexertion or feeling tired, and the majority of them were preventable. Prepare for winter sports by keeping in good physical condition, staying alert, and stopping when tired or in pain. Since many Scouting activities during the cold, winter months involve physical activity, consider the following tips when planning a winter sports activity:

- Never participate alone in a winter sport (have a buddy).
- Keep in shape and condition your muscles before participating in winter sports.
- Warm up thoroughly before playing and participating. Cold muscles and tendons are vulnerable to injury.
- Wear appropriate protective gear, including a **helmet, goggles, gloves, and padding**. Dress warmly. See the BSA's *Fieldbook* for more information about cold weather gear.
- Check that equipment is working properly prior to use. This applies to skis, sleds, etc.
- Know and abide by all rules of the sport in which you are participating.
- Take lessons from qualified instructors, especially in sports such as skiing and snowboarding. Learning how to fall correctly and safely can reduce the risk of injury.
- Pay attention to warnings about upcoming storms and severe drops in temperature. Know what to do if these events occur suddenly.
- Seek shelter and medical attention immediately if you or anyone with you is experiencing hypothermia or frostbite. Ensure everyone is



- aware of proper procedures for getting help if injuries occur.
- Drink plenty of water before, during, and after activities.
- Avoid participating in sports or continuing in a sport when you are in pain or exhausted.

Sledding or tobogganing can be safe and fun activities if conducted in designated areas and in a proper manner. Designated areas will not have trees, posts, fences or other obstacles in the sledding path. Here are some guidelines to follow:

- Never sled on public streets or highways. These areas are too vulnerable to collision with cars, trucks, or other vehicles (parked or moving), not including curbs, fences and other obstacles.
- ALWAYS WEAR A PROPERLY FITTED HELMET (a ski helmet or an ANSI designated helmet for sledding/skiing is appropriate). Bicycle helmets are usually not appropriate.
- Sit in a forward-facing position. This affords better control. Steering should be done by the feet or a rope.
- **Do not sled on plastic sheets, flat boards, or discs.** They cannot be steered, and in some cases, could be pierced by fallen tree branches or rocks just below the surface.
- Sleds should have runners and a steering mechanism, which is safer than toboggans, snow disks, or inner tubes. Although it may look like fun, inner tubes for sleds are not safe.
- Sledding should be done with minimal interference from others who may be sledding. Avoid collisions as much as possible.

For more information on winter sports activities and injury prevention, consult the BSA's [Guide to Safe Scouting](#) and the [Health and Safety website](#).



HOW TO DEAL WITH CHANGE SUCCESSFULLY

By Dr. Larry Kubiak

Change is an inevitable part of life whether we welcome it or not. Change may cause some level of discomfort because it takes us out of our comfort zone, and the end result of the change is unknown. There is often a fear of change because it involves replacing what is familiar and comfortable. Change is inevitable, and good leaders are able to not only address change in a positive way themselves, but are also able to assist others in adjusting.

Change is endless and constant. To thrive in life, we must be able to deal effectively with change and develop resilience. While we cannot always control the circumstances that lead to the change, we can control our perspective about the change. Henry David Thoreau once said that “things do not change; we change.”

A study on productive people over 100 years of age found that there are four common characteristics that influence resilience in the face of change:

- **Optimism:** having a positive view
- **Engagement:** being actively involved in life
- **Mobility:** being physically active
- **Adaptability:** adapting to and accepting change and loss.

New, Simplified Annual Health and Medical Record Available Online

The Health and Safety team rolled out a new, simplified [Annual Health and Medical Record \(AHMR\)](#) earlier this year. It was launched on March 1 after listening to constructive feedback from many sources, including volunteers and participants.

You will notice quite a few changes. The new information page is a great place to start. We recommend using the information page as a handout for roundtables and parents, to name a few. A new benefit of the introduction page is there is no need to hand out copies of the AHMR at meetings since it includes easy -to-find links.

The Health and Safety team has a webinar regarding the new AHMR. Watch the video to find out more at this link: <http://livestre.am/4OVJ7>.

The AHMR website also includes information about risk factors and has an FAQ section.

Other tips for dealing with change include the following:

- Don't act on impulse. Realistically consider the impact of the change.
- View change as an opportunity to improve.
- Consider different perspectives.
- Keep sight of the long-term goal.
- Be open and learn from this opportunity.
- Determine what you can control and what you must accept.
- Trust yourself. You have successfully adapted to change before.
- Alter your routine daily so unexpected change will be less disruptive.
- Keep a journal to help sort through your feelings.
- Find ways to relax when immediately stressed by change.
- Communicate with others who are supportive.

Change can provoke anxiety. Maintaining a positive attitude and utilizing the recommendations above can provide the opportunity to grow and make positive changes for ourselves and those around us.



2015 BSA ENTERPRISE RISK MANAGEMENT SUMMIT February 5-8, 2015

The 2015 BSA National Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Summit will be held at the Florida Sea Base. The ERM Summit is designed to share ideas and information on providing for the physical and mental well-being of participants in Scouting. The conference is open to everyone and is designed for national, council, and regional health and safety and/or risk management committee members; members of camp visitation teams; program, camping, training, or other key volunteers; unit leaders; and professionals who have health and safety or risk management responsibilities.

Additional activities will include a paddleboard session provided by the staff of the Florida Sea Base on the first day, a lunch excursion to one of the islands on day two, as well as a luau to end day two. For this event, there is not a spousal program being offered, but spouses are welcome to attend. Please contact Kelly Price at 972-580-2155 or Kelly.Price@scouting.org for more details. Housing is on a first-registered, first-served basis.

Browse to the following website to make reservations:
<http://2015ERMSummit.kintera.org/>.

BSA SAFETY CHECKLISTS ARE ESSENTIAL TOOLS

By Mike Narvaez, CSP
Safety Team Chair, National Health and Safety Committee

Every campout begins the same way for me. I print out an equipment checklist that contains all of my essentials, e.g., tent, clothes, and toiletries. Over the years, my checklist has grown to cover different campouts and activities. Without it, I simply cannot remember everything and I risk forgetting a creature comfort, or worse yet, a necessity. I've shared this checklist with others so they may benefit from my years of Scouting and avoid harsh lessons that I have experienced.

Wouldn't it be great to have a similar checklist for units to use when they organize their campouts? A checklist that covers all the necessities or that causes Scouts and adult leaders to think of what they *may* need. Likewise, wouldn't it be beneficial to have a checklist that could guide Scouting entities, i.e., units, districts, and councils, in organizing events safely? There are few event organizers who are experts in logistics, safety, training, and Scouting program requirements.

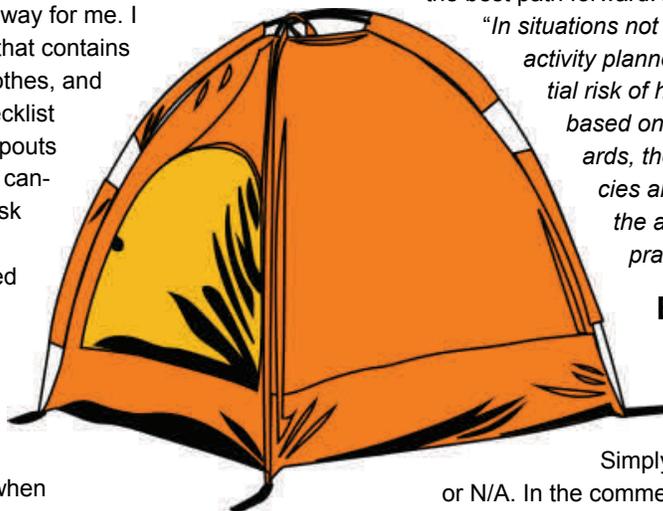
The BSA's national Health and Safety team saw an opportunity to help Scouters in these areas, which is why they developed new [Campout](#) and [Event Safety](#) checklists. These new checklists can be found on the [Scouting Safely website](#) and in the [Guide to Safe Scouting](#). Here is some insight on how to best utilize these tools:

Philosophy

These checklists are risk assessment tools. In other words, they help Scouters identify potential issues that could negatively impact a campout or event. The intent of the checklists is not to eliminate all risks, as that is impossible. They also don't serve as mandates, although the checklists do point to some mandatory requirements such as Youth Protection training. Rather, they are tools to open the conversation about Scouting risks and help Scouting entities decide if the risks are something they can accept or need to lessen or eliminate. The aim is for units, districts, and councils to "know" risks, not "no" risks.

Strategy

These tools are best utilized by a group of people. Gather the experts and go over these checklists as needed. Remember that risk assessment and risk acceptance is a subjective exercise.



Unless there is clear guidance from the BSA's national office on your particular activity, it is up to the Scouting entities to decide the best path forward. As the *Guide to Safe Scouting* states, *"In situations not specifically covered in this guide, activity planners should evaluate the risk or potential risk of harm, and respond with action plans based on common sense, community standards, the Boy Scout motto, and safety policies and practices commonly prescribed for the activity by experienced providers and practitioners."*

Basic Structure

These documents are purposely written as checklists to help simplify the risk assessment exercise.

Simply go down the list and answer yes, no or N/A. In the comments/mitigation section, write down any potential challenges or fixes. Some items will be clear as to what is needed, such as, "Have weather conditions been checked and communicated?" Some items will be open-ended such as, "Is specialized safety equipment needed and available?" Planning or unit committees will have to determine exactly what is needed.

Going Forward

At the end of each checklist is a designed section for freeform writing. Like my camping checklist that has evolved over time, Scouting entities should build on these checklists. This section works perfectly for campouts or program areas that have a higher degree of risk such as shooting sports areas. You can also use the Scouting field safety tool called the [Safety PAUSE](#). It requires no paperwork and is intended to be a last-minute mental risk assessment before you proceed in the field.

Parting Thought

Scouting leaders from all over the country provided feedback into these checklists. Remember to not get bogged down in trying to create the correct or right checklist. The power of these tools lies primarily in the discussions and actions they create.

Other Resources

[Annual Motor Vehicle Checklist](#)
[Meeting Place Checklist](#)
[The Sweet 16 of Safety](#)
[Program Hazard Analysis](#)
[Service Project Planning Guides](#)
[Age-Appropriate Guidelines for Scouting Activities](#)

DISCOVER THE PADDLE READY MOBILE APP

By Christopher Stec
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Paddle Ready—a free, user-friendly, iPhone/Android mobile app designed just for paddlers—was launched on September 18, 2014. The American Canoe Association has created Paddle Ready to empower individuals to take responsibility for their safety on the water, build their paddling knowledge, and have more fun. The app is the newest addition to the ACA's ongoing campaign to develop, produce, and disseminate a wide range of safety and instruction programs.

Please take a few minutes to download Paddle Ready today, and experience it for yourself. We think you will find that it offers many benefits for new and experienced paddlers alike.

[Click here for Google Play.](#)

[Click here for the Apple Store.](#)

Paddle Ready allows you to:

- Get real-time environmental coverage plus weather conditions for river, tidal, ocean, and flatwater paddling environments, and save your favourite paddling routes for quick reference.
- Complete a float plan and easily email it to your friends.
- Search for an ACA instructor or course near you.
- Search for boating organizations and offices by state.
- Use the safety and rescue how-to videos to keep your knowledge current.
- Have paddle safety checklists for various paddling environments at your fingertips.

