

Nights Away for Scouts with Special Needs



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0845 300 1818

It will be helpful to begin by reading Chapter 8: Health, Happiness and Safety, p139, in the *Night's Away* file, particularly the section on including young people with special needs in Nights Away activities, on page 160.

The proposed camp, holiday, expedition or sleepover should be discussed fully with the young people, and where appropriate their parents, early in the planning stage. This will identify any concerns and will enable the Leader to resolve them before they become problems.

Typically these may be due to the venue, the cost, or arise because it is the first time the young person has been away from their parents. Where a young person is dependent upon their parents or carers for support for their particular needs, this will require additional understanding from the Leaders.

To assist in the preparation it will be helpful to draw up a checklist to make sure all the jobs are done. Included in this factsheet are some points you may wish to add to your checklist.

Five key elements of the event will be the venue, how to get there, what to do while there, what to eat, and how much will it cost. Some issues for consideration are:

Where to stay?

- Is the venue suitable for all the young people attending?
- Are the toilet facilities adequate and accessible? For more information read the Washing and toilet facilities section on p154 of *Nights Away* and the factsheet *FS250036 Toilets*.

- Are first aid facilities available?
- If needed, is a refrigerator available for the storage of medicines?

How to get there?

- Are you using your own transport?
- Are you hiring transport?
- Do you need special transport, for example a minibus with a tail lift?

What to do when you're there?

- Are the facilities suitable for all the young people?
- Have you special programmes for extremes of condition, i.e. not just wet and dry, but very wet and very hot.

What to eat?

It is essential not only to have a balanced menu for the event, but also to ensure that any special diets whether for medical reasons, religious reasons, or because of particular likes or dislikes are allowed for.

What will it cost?

Will the cost of the event place a particular burden on the young people? If so should special support be given by additional fund raising - such special support needs to be handled sensitively so that

The Scout Information Centre

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those receiving support do not feel they are accepting a charity hand out.

There are some grant funds available from Headquarters that might be able to cover some of the costs of the camp. Contact the Fundraising Department at Gilwell Park for more information.

Who's coming?

To these five elements there is a sixth and equally important part - the Leader should know the young people who will be attending, to recognise and accept the special support that each may need - whether this be emotional, physical or in other areas.

Points to consider

Do any of the young people require special support or help? For instance, with medication, care support (dressing or feeding or with toileting etc.).

General information on the welfare of young people and adults in Scouting may be found in Chapter 4 of *Scouting Essentials*, p45.

Detailed advice on personal care issues may be found in the factsheet *FS322101: Appropriate Medical Care*. In addition to the standard health form, supplementary information may be necessary so that the Leader in charge is fully aware of the degree of help needed, and can brief other helpers as appropriate.

Where medication is required it is essential to be aware of what is taken, why, and in some cases what to do if the young person becomes ill - for example a severe asthma attack, or illness in a diabetic. There are factsheets covering many impairments that provide more detailed information about the things that you will have to consider.

If a wheelchair is used, it is likely to get a puncture over rough ground - a bicycle puncture repair kit will solve this! If it is an electric chair, have

arrangements been made for recharging the battery?

The more frequently used buildings should have wide doorways, no tight corners and level flooring.

If a young person has a Blue Disabled Parking Badge they should take it to camp, it may be useful for trips out from camp.

It is useful to have a supply of spare clothes such as socks, track suits, pullovers etc. which can be used by those who come with insufficient kit, or who feel the cold badly, or those who have an accident and run out of their own kit.

Illness at camp

Some of the common problems and issues that crop up at any residential event, including homesickness and Bedwetting, are covered on p159 of *Nights Away*.

There are also separate factsheets covering more specific needs:

- FS250010: Bedwetting and Incontinence
- FS250036 Toilets
- FS322101: Appropriate Medical Care
- FS250044: Eating Disorders

A frequent type of illness that can strike when young people are away from home is that of an upset stomach. At the worst it can sometimes result in cases of diarrhoea and sickness spreading to all in camp. You will need to be prepared for this eventuality.

Such illnesses may arise from poor hygiene, failure to store food properly, or not thawing out food. If blood or mucous is present in the diarrhoea seek medical advice. It is important to maintain a good fluid intake, as large quantities of fluid are lost in sickness and diarrhoea. If any young people suffer from such illness while away, the camp Leader should inform the parents on return in case the illness re-occurs.

Any sudden illness should be treated seriously, and if the symptoms persist for more than 12 hours, medical advice should be sought.

Sleepwalking or night terrors can be distressing and frightening to others as well as the sufferer. Here are some practical hints for dealing with these situations

- Try to find out if anything in particular is a trigger, e.g. bright clothing.
- Find out what happens at home to manage the situation.
- Provide all Leaders with background information.
- Provide a safe sleeping environment. e.g. ensure Leaders' accommodation is at a distance where they can hear and can deal with the problem.

If those attending the event are taking part in water activities, particularly in stagnant or slow moving water, it is advisable to shower or wash thoroughly afterwards. Some water including streams, pools ponds and rivers may be contaminated by Weil's disease. Should anyone who has taken part in water activities become ill, the GP involved should be informed of the activity to aid diagnosis.

Most young people will have had tetanus injections, but will often not remember when they last had a "booster". It is probably best to receive a "booster" if a penetrating injury takes place, even if immunisation is up to date.

Checklist

- One or more spare sleeping bags are useful in case of bedwetting, accidents, or a leaky tent.
- Spare clothes such as tracksuits, warm socks or jumpers can be useful.
- Materials to construct a shelter in case of extreme heat.
- Do any of the young people need to use an airbed or camp bed?

- If taking a wheelchair take a puncture kit and some tools to carry out simple maintenance.
- If taking electric wheelchairs - is there somewhere to change the battery? Will it cope with the expected conditions at the activity? - If not, take a manual chair as well.
- Do any of the young people take medication if so what is it for? Must it be taken at set times? - If so who will make sure it is taken?
- How secure is the storage facility for medication. Remember it should be kept in a locked storage container.
- Is a fridge needed to store medication?
- If a young person has a tendency for bedwetting reduce the fluid intake at bedtime.
- If any particular medical requirements are identified make sure that at least two Leaders or helpers are capable of supporting them.
- Are any there special diets that need to be catered for?
- If a young person needs attention during the night for example to take medication - make sure a rota is drawn up to deal with it - and provide an alarm clock for the person on duty!
- Ensure that the Home Contact details are easily accessible and the whereabouts known to all Leaders, in case of the need to make contact.

Further Information and Resources

The Scout Association Resources

- The Special Needs pages on **ScoutBase** contain a range of useful information, including: up to date advice on the Disability Discrimination Act and how it affects Scout activities and facilities; more advice on including people with special needs in Scouting activities; and links to factsheets, magazine articles, and other useful resources:
<http://www.scoutbase.org.uk/ps/sneeds/>

- The following recourses are available from the **Scout Information Centre** on 0845 300 1818, email info.centre@scout.org.uk or online from: <http://www.scoutbase.org.uk/hq/infocentre/>

- *P1011000: Scouting Essentials*
- *P1011011: Nights Away*
- *FS250010: Bedwetting and Incontinence*
- *FS250036 Toilets*
- *FS322101: Appropriate Medical Care*
- *FS250044: Eating Disorders*

- For information about Headquarters funds, contact **The Fundraising Department** at Gilwell Park or visit the web page: <http://www.scoutbase.org.uk/hq/fundraising/funds/>

Other Resources

- For rules about the use of a blue badge, contact the Department for Transport:

Department for Transport

Zone 4/23

Great Minster House

76 Marsham Street

London

SW1P 4DR

Telephone: 020 7944 2914

Minicom: 020 7944 3277

Fax: 020 7944 6102

Email: blue.badge@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Website: www.dft.gov.uk/bluebadge

- **Contact a Family** provide advice, resources and signposting to further information on all disabilities and medical conditions:

209-211 City Road,

London

EC1V 1JN

Helpline 0808 808 3555

Fax: 020 7608 8701

Email: info@cafamily.org.uk

Website: <http://www.cafamily.org.uk>

- The **Scout Holiday Homes Trust** has a network of accessible holiday accommodation throughout Great Britain.

The Scout Holiday Homes Trust

Gilwell Park,

Chingford,

LONDON E4 7QW

United Kingdom

Telephone: 0208 433 7290 or 0208 433 7291

Website:

<http://www.scoutbase.org.uk/hq/holhomes/>