

**COME LEARN  
OUTSIDE**



## **YMCA Camp Erdman**



**Outdoor Education Program  
Teacher Planning Guide**

## **From The Camp Director...**

Aloha and thank you for choosing YMCA Camp Erdman. We are blessed to live in Ka'ena Point State Park and it is our pleasure to welcome you as part of our 'Ohana. Our team at YMCA Camp Erdman is stoked that you and your students will be joining us for a safe and fun outdoor education experience on the beautiful North Shore!

At Camp Erdman, we are committed to creating a progressive cycle of service to impact every youth on O'ahu, connecting participants to Ike Hawaii and embracing Aloha Āina through innovative and educational programs. Our outdoor education program reflects this mission in both our daily practices and our scheduled activities.

This Teacher Planning Guide contains everything you need to know and everything to plan for in preparing for your time out here. As always though, please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions regarding your trip.

**Drew Markey**

*Director of Outdoor Education*

[Amarkey@ymcahonolulu.org](mailto:Amarkey@ymcahonolulu.org)

# The Checklist

**Thank you for choosing to organize your school's next adventure at Camp Erdman! We look forward to working with you to make this an enriching outdoor experience for both you and your students.**

As headteacher, there is a lot to remember and plan for before the fun-filled trip, but we're here to help you along the way! Below is a checklist we suggest utilizing to ensure you've covered all the bases before arrival.

## Within 30 days of reserving trip

All items are required in order to secure your booking. Please submit these documents together.

- Signed Short Term Agreement/Confirmation
- Deposit Payment OR Purchase Order (for DOEs Schools)
- [User Agreement](#)
- Recruit qualified chaperones. There must be at least one adult per activity group and cabin. Cabin delegation will be made so that 2 chaperones can be in each cabin.
- Reserve Buses
- Set a due date for student permission slips and payment collections. This will help you gain a more accurate count of participation.

## 60 days prior to arrival

- [Allergies & Dietary Restrictions](#)
- Submit Certificate of Insurance for charter schools, or SOSI for DoE schools.
- Start to think of or prepare a school time activity schedule (ex. Showers, rec time, journal time, talent show, etc...). Let us know if you'd like an indoor space for any of these activities.
- Have a teacher orientation with all the teachers who will be attending. Be sure those who are not on the planning team are informed, especially if they will be running events.

## One month before coming to camp

- Full Payment
- Send the final number of students and chaperones to the Camp Director and Office Staff.
- Organize students and chaperones into activity groups and cabins based on the graphs later in this packet.
- Arrange for Emergency transportation. Your school will be responsible for providing emergency transportation if necessary.
- Designate who will be your CPR/First Aid personnel while at Camp.

- ❑ Assemble First-Aid kits for your teachers/chaperones while at Camp (we have extra first aid supplies available as well).
- ❑ Collect Permission Forms from students.
- ❑ Review with students the Packing List. Remind them to label their belongings.
- ❑ Make Name Tags for every student, chaperone, and teacher. Camp will provide lanyards for teachers and chaperones if you do not have them already.
- ❑ Ensure that all camp forms are completed.

### Have with you before leaving School \*due upon arrival\*

- ❑ [General Waivers](#) for each participant (students, adults, staff, chaperone, etc.)
- ❑ Group Roster and Cabin Assignments for emergency purposes. Please bring an extra copy to give to camp staff. (please note any students who may require any additional support or attention from our staff, and which group they are in).
- ❑ Collect Medicine.
- ❑ Make sure each student has a sack lunch packed with them.
- ❑ Make copies of schedules for all adults.
- ❑ Get ready to have SO MUCH FUN!! :)

**Please send all completed documents to our Camp Office Team at  
[camperdman@ymcahonolulu.org](mailto:camperdman@ymcahonolulu.org)  
 FAX – (808) 664-8827  
 MAIL – 69-385 Farrington Hwy., Waialua HI 96791**

If you are unable to meet the deadlines or have any questions, please feel free to contact camp. Should you have any program or scheduling questions, please contact the Camp Director or reach out to the Office Staff at [camperdman@ymcahonolulu.org](mailto:camperdman@ymcahonolulu.org) or at [\(808\)-637-4615](tel:808-637-4615).

## Outdoor Education Program Overview

The YMCA of Honolulu is one of the largest non-profit organizations in the state. Our organization was founded in 1869 and incorporated under the laws of the Kingdom of Hawaii in 1882. Every year, we serve more than 100,000 individuals in a variety of programs. Our branch, YMCA Camp H.R. Erdman is located within Ka’ena Point State Park, nestled between the Waianae mountains and the blue waters of



Mokuleia. Our rural, and in many ways rustic, campground makes Camp Erdman the perfect outdoor classroom for keiki.

Every year, thousands of keiki of all ages get to experience YMCA Camp Erdman’s Outdoor Education Program. Current research indicates direct correlations between the level of natural world engagement and the increase in a child’s ability to learn and improve their health and social behavior<sup>1</sup>. Meaningful outdoor experiences are powerful tools for lifelong impact and learning. Between exploring our tide pools during Marine Biology and experiencing the thrill of our Ropes course, our unique program allows all keiki to have a true hands-on learning experience. It’s our kuleana to provide a safe, nurturing, and inclusive environment to youth of all ages, backgrounds, and walks of life. Here at Camp Erdman we want keiki to dare to learn new things and empower them to learn.



Our Outdoor Education Program is designed to keep your students active by keeping both body and mind in motion. We focus on being outdoors and immersed in the natural world! Our activities are geared towards the concept of laulima rather than solitary pursuits. In all of our programs, we promote the YMCA’s core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. Our fully trained professional Camp Erdman staff demonstrates the values of these character traits and strive to recognize keiki engaged in behaviors that promote said core values.

## Our Staff

Our Outdoor Education Program is supervised by our full-time Senior Program Director. Keiki work directly with our full-time Program Instructors, who are young adults with extensive experience in education or recreation and a strong desire to work with children. Prior to employment all Program Instructors must pass a national criminal background check and character reference check. Program Instructors undergo one to two weeks of training that focuses on Hawaiian history, culture, and programming.



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<sup>1</sup> “Children & Nature Worldwide: An Exploration of Children’s Experiences of the Outdoors and Nature with Associated Risks and Benefits,” (2012) Children & Nature Network and IUCN’s Commission on Education and Communication. Retrieved from [http:// www.childrenandnature.org/documents/C118/](http://www.childrenandnature.org/documents/C118/)

## Health Care

All YMCA Camp Erdman staff are trained in Basic First Aid and Basic Life Support. However, school staff members and chaperones are primarily responsible for providing healthcare to students including first aid and dispensing medication. Each school must bring a designated and certified CPR/First Aid personnel while at Camp.

## Facilities & Food

**Cabins:** We have sixteen bunk cabins available for our Outdoor Education Program. All cabins have electricity, a full bathroom, and access to a centrally located shower house.

**Camper Meeting Spaces:** We have both indoor and outdoor meeting spaces available for all schools. These meeting spaces are where students will gather throughout the day in between their various activities.



**Teachers Lounge:** We have teachers lounges available for all schools. These potentially private, but sometimes shared, areas have A/C, a refrigerator, and storage space. Teachers and chaperones often store snacks or other food in this area.

**Food:** Meals are served buffet style in our dining facility. All meals YMCA Camp Erdman serves meet or exceed USDA nutrition standards with lots of healthy

options to choose from. Vegetarian, Vegan, Lactose-Intolerant, and Gluten Free options are available upon request. Just as a friendly reminder, Camp Erdman is a nut free facility. Please inform us of any dietary restrictions your group may have at least 60 days to prior arrival. We ask that food is not brought inside of your cabins, as it can attract animals and insects. Schools are more than welcome to bring nut-free snacks for their students and store them in their designated lounge.

## **Outdoor Education Experience Information**

### **“Three Day/Two Night Experience”**

This our bread and butter so to speak. This program will give students the full overnight YMCA Camp Erdman experience. This program includes a 1.5 hour Student Orientation, 6 Meals, 2 Evening Programs, 6 Daytime Activities, our Ropes course, 1 All Camp Activity, and 1 Last Day Program. The purpose of this program is to provide our campers with the opportunity to experience nature through a variety of hands-on activities. We want campers to leave YMCA Camp Erdman with a new appreciation for Hawaii's beautiful surroundings and an increased awareness of how to protect our environment. Most importantly, our program promotes a sense of community and cooperation among the students through safe, fun, educational, and challenging. These activities will help them build self-confidence and a stronger sense of community. They will leave YMCA Camp Erdman with a multitude of new experiences and skills that can be applied in their everyday lives.

### **“Two Day/One Night Experience”**

The purpose of this program is to give students a taste of the overnight YMCA Camp Erdman experience. This trip option includes a 1.5 hour Student Orientation, 3 Meals, 1 Evening Program, and 4 Daytime Activities. Activities and dates may be limited depending on the size of your group. Daytime activities are: Marine Biology, Coastal Ecology, Ropes (two activity blocks) and a choice last program.

### **“One Day Experience”**

The purpose of this program is to give students a taste of the YMCA Camp Erdman experience. This trip option includes a brief Student Orientation and 3 Daytime Activities. Activities and dates may be limited depending on the size of your group. Daytime activities are: Marine Biology, Coastal Ecology, and a choice third program.

## **Breakdown of the Schedule**

A full example schedule is below. You will be assigned your groups at the time of booking. Based on the schedule, a two day trip would follow the schedule from Monday/Wednesday Arrival and Orientation through Tuesday/Thursday at 11:35am, but can be any days of the week that work for you.

A one day schedule would be slightly different as it would be from arrival - 4:10, with orientation and one activity in the morning and two activities after lunch.

**Day 1 (Monday/Wednesday):**

- 9:30 Arrival and Orientation!  
- Lead Teacher check-in at the front office with waivers and any remaining paperwork.
- 11:00 Meet to eat sack lunches (SCHOOL/HOME PROVIDED)
- 12:00 Move into cabins
- 1:20 Meet in Meeting Place (to be assigned)

**Afternoon Activities**

	Honu	Humu	Moli	Io	Naia	Mano	Nene	Monk Seals	Pueo	Kohola
1:30 - 2:45	Ropes		Youth Mental Health	Team Building	Hike	Marine Biology	Coastal Ecology	Youth Mental Health	CHOICE	Team Building
2:55 - 4:10			Ropes		Team Building	Hike	Marine Biology	Coastal Ecology	Youth Mental Health	CHOICE
4:20 - 5:35	Coastal Ecology	CHOICE				CHOICE	Team Building	Hike	Marine Biology	Coastal Ecology
5:45	Dinner									

- 5:45 Dinner
- 6:45 Evening Program - Minute to Win It, Scavenger Hunt, Night Swim (6th grade and up), Night Odyssey (11th Grade and up), Campfire
- 8:00 School facilitated free time
- 10:00 Quiet Time

**Day 2 (Tuesday/Thursday):**

- 8:00 Breakfast
- 8:55 Meet in Meeting Place (to be assigned)

**Morning Activities**

Time	Honu	Humu	Moli	Io	Naia	Mano	Nene	Monk Seals	Pueo	Kohola
9:00 - 10:15	Marine Biology	Coastal Ecology	CHOICE	Youth Mental Health	Ropes		Team Building	Hike	Marine Biology	Coastal Ecology
10:20 - 11:35	Hike	Marine Biology	Coastal Ecology	CHOICE			CHOICE	Team Building	Hike	Marine Biology
11:40 - 12:30	Teacher Break (camp staff to take kids, break for teachers and chaperones)									

- 12:30 Lunch
- 1:25 Meet in Meeting Place (to be assigned)

**Afternoon Activities**

Time	Honu	Humu	Moli	Io	Naia	Mano	Nene	Monk Seals	Pueo	Kohola
1:30 - 2:45	Team Building	Hike	Marine Biology	Coastal Ecology	Youth Mental Health	CHOICE	Ropes		Team Building	Hike
2:55 - 4:10	Youth Mental Health	Team Building	Hike	Marine Biology	Coastal Ecology	Youth Mental Health			Ropes	
4:20 - 5:35	CHOICE	Youth Mental Health	Team Building	Hike	Marine Biology	Coastal Ecology	Youth Mental Health	CHOICE		
5:45	Dinner									

- 5:45 Dinner
- 6:45 Minute to Win It, Scavenger Hunt, Night Swim (6th grade and up), Night Odyssey (11th Grade and up)
- 8:00 School Free Time
- 10:00 Quiet Time

**Day 3 (Wednesday/Friday):**

\*\*Before Breakfast, please remove all personal belongings, sweep, and empty trash cans. Take luggage to your assigned building.

8:00 Breakfast

8:55 Meet in Meeting Place (to be assigned)

**Morning Activities**

Time	All Groups
9:00-10:30*	Last Day Program - KOA Challenge

10:45\* Sack Lunch (CAMP PROVIDED)

11:45\* Departure

\*times can adjusted to meet bus or school needs

Picking your "choice" programs: the choice block will be filled in by the activity of your choosing!

**CHOICE Programs (please choose 1)**

Archery

Swimming

Water Games

Wilderness Survival

Egg Drop

**Group Sizing and Cabin Numbers**

Number of Students	Number of Activity Groups		Number of Students	Number of Cabins
1-20	1		1-12	1
21-40	2		13 - 24	2
41-60	3		25-36	3
61-80	4		37-48	4
81-100	5		49 - 60	5
101-120	6		61 - 72	6
121-140	7		73 - 84	7
141-160	8		85 - 96	8
161-180	9		97 - 108	9
181-200	10		109 - 120	10
			121 - 132	11
			133 - 144	12
			145 - 156	13
			157 - 169	14
			170+	15

## Activity Explanations

Please note, all campers will need to have closed toe, closed heel shoes for their trip out here. Crocs do not count for this.

**Alpine Tower:** Students will utilize Challenge By Choice and reach new heights while climbing our 50 foot tower. Students are given a safety orientation, fit into a full body harness and helmet, and belayed by a Certified Challenge Course Facilitator. This is a great way for students to build their self esteem and encourage their classmates!

**Archery:** Students will learn the basics of Archery safety, techniques, and dynamics. Students will learn parts of the bow and arrow, how to knock an arrow, aim and fire, and safely retrieve arrows when finished.



**Campfire:** Students will engage with camp staff through fun campfire songs and skits. Schools are encouraged and welcome to bring their own s'mores supplies to use at campfires.

**Coastal Ecology:** Students will learn about native and non native plant species and their relationship within our coastal environment. Students will learn what mālama 'āina means, the importance of it, and how to practice it. Students will sharpen and practice observation skills. Students will record their observations, questions, and connections through field journaling. Students will learn how to identify trees and other plants, using a key or field guide.

**Giant Swing:** Students can soar through the air in our up to 50-foot giant swing. Students utilize a team pull system that gets everyone involved throughout the activity. Students are given a safety orientation, fit into a full body harness and helmet, and the activity is facilitated by our Certified Challenge Course Facilitator.

**Team Building:** Students will learn the basics of team building through various exercises with a strong emphasis on communication and leadership. Students will work together and practice communication and cooperation skills. Students will be challenged physically and mentally to complete various tasks.

**Koa Challenge:** Students will compete in games that mirror summer camp's battle challenge. Students will encourage and cheer each other on and to have fun!

**Marine Biology:** Students will learn about underwater and coastal life, through fun activities, with an emphasis on the human impact on this ecosystem. Students will learn the definition of marine biology and the varying species of marine life that can be found here at camp and all-around Hawaii. Students will learn about ocean pollution and microplastic. Students will play and explore on the beach and in the tide pools if conditions allow. Students will observe and explore beach artifacts that are interesting to them and practice making explanations based on evidence.

**Nihoa Gulch Hike:** On this interactive hike, students will learn about the Waianae Mountain Range, have access to traditional Hawaiian recreational games, learn about various Native and Invasive Species of dryland forests, help restore our dryland forest back to it's original form, and hear stories about the relationship between the Kukui Tree and Kamapua'a.

**Minute to Win It:** Based on the once popular TV show, students will be given a series of games and challenges to compete against each other while getting to practice communication and cooperation skills. Students will use their creativity to accomplish tasks given to them.

**Odyssey:** Students will utilize Challenge By Choice and choose to complete our traverse high ropes course with eight group initiatives on our two level Odyssey Challenge Course. Students are given a safety orientation, fit into a full body harness and helmet, and led by a Certified Challenge Course Facilitator.

**Scavenger Hunt:** Students will explore camp by walking around and trying to answer a series of questions and complete goal-oriented tasks.

**Swimming:** Students will get to splash and play in our large swimming pool.



**Water Games:** Students will get to cool down through a series of games and activities that utilize various water toys such as sponges, buckets, balls, hoses, and sprinklers. This option is meant to be for groups who want their kids to have a cool down activity block, but are hesitant about our 12 foot deep swimming pool.

**Wilderness Survival:** In this hands-on outdoor survival class, students will learn about the Rule of 3's when it comes to survival and then get to compete in either shelter building, fire building, or an SOS sign creating competition.

**Youth Mental Health:** Mental Health has become a main focus and mission of the YMCA and Camp Erdman strives to be a major part of that. Being outdoors has been proven to help mental health and in this class, students, will learn about the importance of mental health and potentially different coping methods that contribute to better mental health as a whole.

## Outdoor Education Mission and Curriculum Connections

The Marine Biology, Coastal Ecology, and the Nihoa Gulch Hike activities have been created with support from BEETLES (Better Environmental Education, Teaching, Learning, & Expertise Sharing.) BEETLES is one of many programs at the Lawrence Hall of Science (the Hall), a public science center created in 1968 as part of the University of California at Berkeley. YMCA Camp Erdman's Environmental Education activities are further developed with information and research provided by the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

# Chaperone Information!

## Dear Chaperone,

Thank you so much for volunteering your time to be one of our chaperones! Your commitment to YMCA Camp Erdman's Outdoor Education Program will make a positive impact on our campers' experience. Below you will find information regarding your role while at camp.



## Cabin Assignments and Activity Groups

Your head teacher will be in charge of creating your school's cabin assignments and activity groups, placing both campers and chaperones in their assigned cabins and groups. Chaperones will be required to sleep in cabins with campers. **Each cabin and activity group must have at least one adult chaperone, but no more than two.** Additionally, use of name tags will help out tremendously, please see example below!

Waianae Elementary School

Jane Doe

Cabin 13-Activity Group A

## Your Role

You and your headteacher are responsible for providing direct and active supervision for both your cabin and activities group throughout your entire stay at YMCA Camp Erdman. We need at least one adult in each activity and cabin group. Our fantastic Program Instructors will be leading

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our activities, but we ask that our chaperones facilitate all behavior management. During shower time, please make your presence known in the bathrooms, but always respect student privacy. Unsupervised shower times can cause problems...please be present to make sure the students are respectful of others and safe. To ensure the safety of our campers AND chaperones, please make sure campers are always properly supervised. Chaperones should NEVER be alone with a camper. Students must always be with an adult and at least one buddy during all activities, meals, free time, etc. NO CAMPERS SHOULD EVER BE LEFT UNSUPERVISED.

## **Last, but not least, - the packing list!**

### **Packing List**

Below is a list of items for all students and adults to bring for their stay at YMCA Camp Erdman.

- Sleeping Bag or Bedding
- Pillow
- T-shirts and/or tank tops
- Shorts
- Bathing Suit
- Toiletries and Towels
- Socks
- Water Bottle**
- Sunscreen**
- Backpack
- Rain jacket just in case!

