



Dear Youth Worker,

Thank you for your interest in the Youth Opportunities Program (YOP) and our signature Outdoor Leadership Training (OLT)! Enclosed is a 2009 application and some important information about the training. We encourage you to send in registration materials and payment as soon as possible – space is limited and always fills quickly. This packet is also available online at [www.outdoors.org/yop/apply](http://www.outdoors.org/yop/apply).

Many people who take the OLT are amazed at the impact it has on their lives. Many participants have very little or no experience in the outdoors, while others come in with some knowledge about camping and hiking. No matter your level of experience you will learn about outdoor leadership and yourself on this training. There is truly something for everyone to learn on the OLT – whether you plan to take your kids on exciting day hikes into the woods or on multi-day backpacking trips in the wilderness.

The OLT is the first step a youth worker takes in order to become a YOP member and gain access to all the program's resources. These services include:

- Free use of outdoor equipment (tents, backpacks, sleeping bags, clothing, and more!)
- Reduced rates at AMC lodging destinations (huts, camps, lodges)
- Trip planning assistance
- Additional trainings such as Canoeing and Wilderness First Aid
- Participation in Youth Adventures (campouts, teambuilding, and more)
- Free AMC membership for a year
- Opportunities to network with other youth workers

These services are available for two years following the OLT. To renew your YOP membership after that time, simply attend any of our qualified weekend trainings.

All of YOP's services are free or highly subsidized through grants and fundraising to make leading trips affordable. To ensure that we are making the most of our resources, we ask that all training participants commit to leading two or more trips within a year of the training. We also require that all participants be at least 21 years old. Please read the enclosed information packet carefully for further information about YOP's services and policies.

We believe you will leave the training with a keen understanding of how wilderness adventures can help kids develop leadership skills, realize success, trust in others, believe in themselves, and work together. You will also have YOP to help provide the resources and support you need to plan successful trips. *Remember, the Outdoor Leadership Training is just the beginning!*

Please contact Marshall at 917-364-0056 or [mnicoloff@outdoors.org](mailto:mnicoloff@outdoors.org) if you have any questions. We hope that you'll join us on the Outdoor Leadership Training. We would like to have the opportunity to share the experience with you – and your youth!

Sincerely,

*Stefanie Brochu*

Stefanie Brochu  
YOP Director

*Marshall Nicoloff*

Marshall Nicoloff  
YOP Coordinator



## Outdoor Leadership Training 2009 – New York & New Jersey

### APPLICATION INFORMATION

In order to register for the Youth Opportunities Program (YOP) Outdoor Leadership Training (OLT) fully complete the following enclosed forms:

- OLT Application Form (4 pages, cream)
- Confidential Medical Form (2 sides, yellow)
- Participant Agreement, Release and Acknowledgment of Risk (2 sides, white)
- Photo Release (green)

*Incomplete applications will not be accepted.* After screening applications, registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. This application is also available online at [www.outdoors.org/yop/apply](http://www.outdoors.org/yop/apply)

### I. TRAINING DATE

*Please select the training you would like to attend and sign up for a pre-trip conference call. Calls last approximately one hour. Also note that trainings fill quickly. Please indicate a second choice in case your training is not available.*

Date	Type	Pre-Trip Meeting Conference Call – Pick One		
<input type="checkbox"/> April 23 – 26	Backpacking	<input type="checkbox"/> April 14 10 AM	<input type="checkbox"/> April 14 12 PM	<input type="checkbox"/> April 15, 6 PM
<input type="checkbox"/> May 28 – 31	Backpacking	<input type="checkbox"/> May 19, 10 AM	<input type="checkbox"/> May 19, 12 PM	<input type="checkbox"/> May 20, 6 PM
<input type="checkbox"/> June 18 – 21	Camping/Hiking	<input type="checkbox"/> June 9, 10 AM	<input type="checkbox"/> June 9, 12 PM	<input type="checkbox"/> June 10, 6 PM
<input type="checkbox"/> September 24 – 27	Backpacking	<input type="checkbox"/> Sept. 15, 10 AM	<input type="checkbox"/> Sept. 15, 12 PM	<input type="checkbox"/> Sept. 16, 6 PM

### II. CONTACT INFORMATION

#### WORK

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency (Work) Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone #: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Work Fax #: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Director's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency web site: \_\_\_\_\_

#### HOME

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone #: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Other Phone (cell, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

#### EMAIL

Email Address 1 (primary): \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address 2: \_\_\_\_\_

#### MAILING ADDRESS

Where would you like us to mail all YOP correspondence?  **Work Address**  **Home Address**



4. Do you have any previous outdoor experience? Please describe. (NO EXPERIENCE IS NECESSARY)

5. Do you have any medical training? (NONE IS REQUIRED)  No  Yes – complete below:  
 Wilderness First Aid (WFA)  Advanced Wilderness First Aid  
 Wilderness First Responder (WFR)  Wilderness EMT  Other (e.g. MD, Nurse, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

6. Are you currently exercising?  No  Yes – describe below

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Frequency/Week</i>	<i>Approx. Tim/Distance</i>	<i>Intensity level</i>

7. Is anyone at your agency currently YOP-trained? If so, please list their names.

8. What, if any, restrictions does your agency have with regard to field trips, overnight trips, or out-of-state trips?

9. Does your agency have a van? If not, do you have access to one for trips?

10. How did you learn about YOP and the Outdoor Leadership Training?

11. YOP expects that all OLT participants, upon completion of the OLT, conduct a minimum of two trips within a year. These trips can range from local day hikes to extended backpacking excursions, depending on your interest and skills. Can you make this commitment? Please explain.

12. Do you have the support of your agency director and/or supervisor for this training and for leading outdoor trips?

13. How would you describe the *institution* for which you work? Please check ALL that apply.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Membership Organization (YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> High School                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Service Agency  | <input type="checkbox"/> Middle/Junior High School    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Residential   | <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative School           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile Justice Setting                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Charter School               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religious Organization  | <input type="checkbox"/> Public School                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Therapeutic Treatment Center                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Private School               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Center  | <input type="checkbox"/> Government program or agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |   |

**14. How would you describe the program that you work for? Check ALL that apply.**

- After-school program       Recreation program       School classroom  
 Outdoor program       Therapeutic program       Environmental  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**15. What would you describe to be the primary purpose of the program for which you work?**

- Educational       Therapeutic Intervention       Leadership Development  
 Recreational       Physical Fitness/Health       Environmental Awareness  
 Career/Employment       Mentoring       Community Development/Outreach  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**16. Which best describes the community that your organization serves?**

- Urban       Suburban       Rural

**17. What is the predominant economic status of the youth served through your organization?**

- Lower income       Lower & middle income       Middle income       Middle & upper income       Upper income

**18. Would you describe the youth with whom you work and that will participate in YOP trips as “at-risk”?**

- Yes       No

## V. PLEASE READ AND SIGN BELOW

**Youth Worker Applicant:**

I have read and fully understand the information in this packet. The information I have provided is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and complete. I understand that completion of the OLT does not provide me with any certification. I recognize that YOP can provide trip planning suggestions, lodging reservations, and equipment but assumes no responsibility for my agency's trips. I understand that my YOP membership privileges continue for two years after the OLT and then I must take a qualifying "refresher course" in order to renew my membership. I understand that the type of equipment I may borrow and the AMC destinations I may visit with a youth group at YOP's subsidized rates depend on my Leader Profile.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Agency Director/Supervisor:**

I am aware of and supportive of our agency's involvement with the Youth Opportunities Program. I support my agency's commitment to conduct a minimum of two trips within a year of the Outdoor Leadership Training (OLT). I understand that completion of the OLT does not provide a certification. I recognize that YOP can provide trip planning suggestions, lodging reservations, and equipment but assumes no responsibility for my agency's trips. I understand that YOP membership privileges continue for two years after the OLT and that a qualifying "refresher course" is required in order to renew membership. I understand that the type of equipment my agency may borrow and the AMC destinations our OLT-trained staff may visit at YOP's subsidized rates depends on their Leader Profile.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Agency Director Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Please use the enclosed envelope to send all forms and payment to:**

Youth Opportunities Program • Appalachian Mountain Club • 50 Camp Mohican Road • Blairstown, NJ 07825

**Thank you! You'll receive notification as soon as your application is reviewed and processed.**

**THIS APPLICATION IS ALSO AVAILABLE ONLINE AT [WWW.OUTDOORS.ORG/YOP/APPLY](http://WWW.OUTDOORS.ORG/YOP/APPLY)**



**Appalachian Mountain Club – Youth Opportunities Program  
Confidential Health Questionnaire**

**Participant Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
First Middle Last

**YOP Program Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Course Start Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Birthday:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Height:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Weight:** \_\_\_\_\_  Male  Female  
Month/Day/Year

**Home Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip code

**Phone #s:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Day Evening Cell

**Emergency Contact:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Relationship

**Emergency Contact's Phone #s:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Day Evening Cell

**SEVEN-QUESTION HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE**

*Parent or legal guardian should complete form for all children under 18 years participating in AMC activity.*

	Yes	No
<b>1. Have you experienced an asthma attack at any time in your life?</b> (Asthma can potentially be affected by exercising at altitude, in dry air, extreme cold, etc.)		
<b>2. Have you ever been diagnosed with type I or type II diabetes?</b> (A diabetic can easily become dehydrated in backcountry environments. Further, long, arduous days/hikes can lead to hypoglycemia, etc.)		
<b>3. Have you ever visited a medical professional for a serious allergic reaction, or have you ever been given a shot of epinephrine for an allergy or anaphylaxis?</b> (Some people are allergic to stinging insects; nut products or other food products which a co-participant might be carrying or may be included in a meal prepared by AMC staff; iodine, which might be used to treat drinking water and/or clean wounds, etc.)		
<b>4. Have you ever received medical treatment for angina, a heart attack, or any type of heart disorder/disease?</b>		
<b>5. Have you ever been diagnosed with or are you currently being treated for high blood pressure?</b> (The environment and workload associated with AMC courses can sometimes affect BP and/or the efficiency of some BP medications.)		
<b>6. Have you ever seen a medical professional following a seizure, or are you currently being treated for any type of seizure disorder?</b> (Some seizures are triggered by fatigue and dehydration [which can occur following a long hike], significant change in diet, stress, etc.)		
<b>7. Is there anything else you think we should know about your medical background?</b> (i.e., anything that could affect your safety or ability to participate fully?)		

**If you answered YES to ANY of the seven questions above please answer the following:**

- I was diagnosed with \_\_\_\_\_ in the last year.
- I have visited the emergency room in the last year due to \_\_\_\_\_
- I have had to use epinephrine following an asthma attack/allergies or anaphylaxis in the last year?
  - Will you be bringing/carrying epinephrine on the outing? \_\_\_\_\_
  - What are you allergic to? \_\_\_\_\_
- How often do you use your inhaler to treat your asthma or wheezing? \_\_\_\_\_
- Do you have poor circulation due to your diabetes? \_\_\_\_\_
- Will you be carrying insulin or wearing an insulin pump during your outing? \_\_\_\_\_
- Are you able to exert yourself for more than 30 minutes without experiencing angina (chest) pain? \_\_\_\_\_
- Are you currently taking medication for your seizures? \_\_\_\_\_
- Have you experienced a seizure within the past year? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is your blood pressure currently under control (i.e., systolic under 140 and diastolic between 60 and 100)? \_\_\_\_\_

If there is anything else you think we should know about your medical background, please explain below. Attach a separate sheet if necessary.

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**DIETARY RESTRICTIONS:** Do you have any dietary restrictions?  Yes – list below  No

**Please be specific: (food allergies, iodine/seafood allergy, vegetarian, no red meat, vegan, lactose intolerant, strong food dislikes, etc.)** \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE READ CAREFULLY! Participants (or parents/guardians, if appropriate) must read and sign below.**

**Participant acknowledgement of accuracy and understanding.** By signing this form, I am declaring that, to the best of my knowledge, I have completed the questionnaire accurately. I also understand that by knowingly filling out the form inaccurately, or by withholding pertinent information about my health, I could potentially be increasing the risk to myself or others.

**Consent to accept aid.** By signing this form, I am giving consent and permission for AMC staff, volunteers, representatives, or contractors to provide medical care to me or to my child, to transport me or my child to a medical facility or to seek the aid of emergency medical services as deemed appropriate. I further authorize AMC staff, volunteers, representatives, or contractors to render whatever treatment they consider necessary for my or my child's health, and I agree to pay all costs associated with that care and transportation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's name (printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of parent/guardian (if applicant is under 18)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**AMC PARTICIPANT**  
**ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND ASSUMPTION OF RISKS & RELEASE AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT**

**INTRODUCTION**

**PLEASE READ THIS ENTIRE TWO-PAGE DOCUMENT** (hereafter 'Document') **CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING**. All participants must sign this Document. For participants under 18 yrs. of age (hereafter sometimes 'minor' or 'child'), one or both parent/s or guardian/s (hereafter collectively 'parent/s') must also sign. In consideration of the services of the Appalachian Mountain Club, Inc., a charitable, not-for-profit corporation, organized and existing under the laws of Massachusetts, and its chapters, including all officers, directors, employees, representatives, agents, independent contractors, volunteers (including leaders and co-leaders), members and all other persons or entities associated with it (collectively referred to in this Document as 'AMC'), I (participant and parent/s of a minor participant), **acknowledge and agree as follows:**

Appalachian Mountain Club contracts with individuals or organizations that are independent contractors (not employees or agents of Appalachian Mountain Club) to conduct some of the activities participants may engage in. Although the Appalachian Mountain Club has made efforts to locate responsible contractors, it does not supervise or control these contractors and is not responsible for their conduct. Participant (and parent/s) acknowledge that they may independently investigate and assess these organizations and activities, if they choose to do so. **Further, Appalachian Mountain Club uses volunteers to assist with, and sometimes lead activities, workshops or programs. These individuals are not paid professional guides or leaders. In all activities, all participants share in the responsibility for their own safety and the safety of the group.**

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT & ASSUMPTION OF RISKS**

AMC instructional, educational and/or adventure activities (which may be scheduled or unscheduled, supervised or unsupervised and/or occur during free time) include, but are not limited to hiking, backpacking, camping, biking, skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, high and low ropes courses, trail work, maintenance of facilities, mountaineering, rock and ice climbing, canoeing, kayaking, sailing, swimming, environmental education, wilderness emergency medical training, first aid and rescue, participation in volunteer service projects, use of AMC huts or other facilities and transportation or travel to and from activities (referred to in this Document as 'activities' or 'these activities'). **These activities include inherent and other risks, hazards and dangers** (referred to in this Document as 'risks') **that can cause or lead to injury, damage, death or other loss to participant or others. The following includes some, but not all of those risks:**

**Risks present in an outdoor, mountainous or wilderness environment on land or water, both on and off trail.** Travel can be subject to storms, strong winds, avalanches, currents, waves, whitewater, lightning, rapidly moving rivers or other water bodies, difficult stream crossings, snow or ice, extremely hot, humid or cold weather or water, steep terrain, falling rock, stinging or disease carrying animals or insects, wild animals and other natural or human-made hazards and dangers. Hazards may not be marked and weather is unpredictable year-round.

**Risks in decision making,** including, without limitation, the risk that an AMC staff member, volunteer, representative, co-participant or contractor may misjudge a participant's capabilities, health or fitness level, or misjudge some aspect of instruction, medical treatment, weather, terrain, water level, or route location.

**Personal health and participation risks.** The risk that a participant's mental, physical or emotional condition (disclosed or undisclosed, known or unknown) combined with participation in these activities could result in injury, damage, death or other loss.

**The risk that equipment used** in an activity may be misused, or may break, fail or malfunction.

**AMC activities may take place in remote places,** several hours or days from any medical facility, causing potential delays or difficulties with communication, transportation, evacuation and medical care.

**Risks connected with meals and/or cooking and camping chores.** Meals may include exposure to food allergens. Risks also include gas explosion, scalding or other burns associated with cooking over a gas stove or open fire, and water contamination from natural water sources. All water may be contaminated and should be disinfected, filtered or boiled before use.

**Risks associated with AMC facilities and premises,** including boulders, ruts, slippery walkways, ponds or other water sources, uneven ground or other conditions.

**Risks associated with transportation.** Travel can be on foot or by vehicle, bicycle, boat or other means and can be over rough and unpredictable terrain or via oceans or rivers, with wind, rain, or other adverse weather conditions.

**Volunteer community service.** Risks associated with activities such as (but not limited to) building, digging and trail maintenance, painting, construction and clean-up projects. Projects can include the use of tools and equipment (i.e. drills, saws, power tools) that can cause injury resulting from use, misuse or malfunction.

**Risks regarding conduct,** including the potential that the participant, or other participants or third parties (e.g. general public, rescue squad, medical facility) may act carelessly or recklessly.

**Participants may have limited, unsupervised time** during, before or after the start of an AMC program. This may include periods of free time, or periods of time alone while engaged in backcountry travel. **During both supervised and unsupervised activities, all participants share in the responsibility for their own safety and the safety of the group.**

**Other risks** that are generally associated with instructional, educational and/or adventure activities.

**These and other risks may result in participants falling, being struck, colliding with objects or people, experiencing vehicle or boat collision or capsizing, drowning, reacting to weather conditions or increased exertion, suffering gastro-intestinal complications or allergic reactions, becoming lost or disoriented, or experiencing other problems. These and other circumstances may cause hyperthermia, hypothermia, frostbite, dehydration, burns, heart or lung complications, broken bones, concussions, paralysis, mental or emotional trauma, or other injury, damage, death or loss.**

5/11/06 RMT

**I (participant and parent/s of a minor participant) agree:**

- To accurately complete all required forms (which may include, but is not limited to the AMC application, registration and medical forms), abide by the terms of those documents, and obey all AMC rules, regulations and policies;
- If participant has any mental, physical or emotional conditions or limitations that might affect his/her ability to participate I agree to disclose those to AMC, and represent that participant is fully capable of participating without causing harm to him/herself or others;
- AMC representatives are, and have been available, should I have further questions about these activities and the associated risks;
- AMC staff, leaders or other personnel cannot assure participant's safety or eliminate any of these risks.

**Participant is voluntarily participating with knowledge of the risks. Therefore, participant (and parent/s of minors) assume and accept full responsibility for the inherent and other risks (both known and unknown) of these activities, and for any injury, damage, death or other loss suffered by participant (and parent/s of minors), resulting from those risks and/or resulting from participant's negligence or other misconduct.**

**RELEASE AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT**

**Please read carefully. This Release and Indemnity agreement contains a surrender of certain legal rights. I (adult participant, or parent/s for themselves and for and on behalf of their participating minor child) agree as follows:**

- (1) **to release and agree not to sue AMC**, with respect to any and all claims, liabilities, suits or expenses (including attorneys' fees and costs) (hereafter collectively 'claim' or 'claim/s') for any injury, damage, death or other loss in any way connected with my/my child's enrollment or participation in these activities, or use of AMC equipment, facilities or premises. **I understand I agree here to waive all claim/s I or my child may have against AMC, and agree that neither I, my child, or anyone acting on my or my child's behalf, will make a claim against AMC, as a result of any injury, damage, death or other loss suffered by me or my child;**
- (2) **to defend and indemnify** ('indemnify' meaning protect by reimbursement or payment) **AMC** with respect to any and all claim/s brought by or on behalf of me, my child or a family member for any injury, damage, death or other loss in any way connected with my/my child's enrollment or participation in these activities or use of AMC equipment, facilities or premises.

**This Release and Indemnity Agreement includes claim/s resulting from AMC's negligence (but not its gross negligence or intentional or reckless misconduct), and includes claim/s for personal injury or wrongful death (including claim/s related to emergency or medical response, assessment or treatment), property damage, breach of contract or any other claim.**

**CONCLUSION**

I (participant and parent/s of a minor participant) agree that the substantive laws of Massachusetts govern this Document, any dispute I have with AMC and all other aspects of my relationship with AMC, and that any mediation, suit, or other proceeding must be filed or entered into only in Massachusetts.

AMC reserves the right to remove any participant from the program who staff or leaders believe, in their discretion, presents a safety concern or medical risk, is disruptive, or acts in any manner detrimental to the program. If participant is dismissed or departs for any reason, participant (and his/her family) are responsible for all costs of early departure whether for medical reasons, dismissal, personal emergencies or otherwise. These costs include, but are not limited to medical evacuation and costs, plane, train or taxi fare, accommodations, and costs and compensation for staff accompanying participant.

**This Document is intended to be interpreted and enforced to the fullest extent allowed by law. Any portion of this Document deemed unlawful or unenforceable shall not affect the remaining provisions, and those remaining provisions shall continue in full force and effect.**

**Participant and parent/s of a minor participant agree: I have carefully read, understand and voluntarily sign this two-page Document and acknowledge that it shall be effective and binding upon me, my minor children and other family members, and my heirs, executors, representatives and estate. *One or both parent/s must sign below for any participating minor (those under 18 years of age).***

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print name here

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print name here

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print name here

## PHOTO RELEASE:

Your consent is greatly appreciated as it allows photos taken during this program to be used by the AMC in the future, but it is not required.

I hereby authorize the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) and/or parties designated by the AMC (including periodicals, other printed matter, or electronic media, and their editors) to use my photograph for sale to or reproduction in any medium the AMC or its designees see fit for the purposes of advertising, display, exhibition, or editorial use.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I do not want my photo to be used.



# THE YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM

Welcome! Thanks for inquiring about the Youth Opportunities Program (YOP)! We are delighted that you are interested in attending an Outdoor Leadership Training (OLT). This packet provides specific information about YOP and the OLT, our signature training. Please read this information carefully and give us a call with any questions. This application is also available online at [www.outdoors.org/yop/apply](http://www.outdoors.org/yop/apply). Once you are ready to register, fill out the enclosed forms and send them in along with payment. Please note that the OLTs fill very quickly so we recommend registering as soon as possible. Once we have reviewed your application we will contact you to confirm your registration. Shortly before the start of the training we will provide a final information packet with directions and a few reminders.

## OVERVIEW

The AMC's Youth Opportunities Program provides training and support for youth workers to independently lead groups into the outdoors. By training and supporting youth workers, YOP ensures that young people enjoy meaningful outdoor experiences with adults who know them and their unique needs. YOP promotes youth leadership, confidence, and environmental awareness through participation in outdoor adventures such as backpacking, hiking, and canoeing. Because participation in these types of outdoor activities has traditionally been limited to those with greater financial resources, YOP targets youth agencies serving minorities and at-risk youth. YOP is committed to making the outdoors accessible to youth who would not ordinarily have these opportunities or feel comfortable in the backcountry without the support of YOP and YOP-trained youth workers. By providing scholarships, free equipment, and discounted lodging, YOP makes it possible for diverse groups of young people to access these wonderful outdoor experiences. YOP is committed to providing the support that youth workers need to make outdoor trips a reality! Each year we work with more than 200 youth agencies and serve over 6,000 youth – and we look forward to working with you.

## OUR HISTORY

The Youth Opportunities Program began in Boston in 1968 during a time when much of the country was experiencing racial conflict and rapid social change. The Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) became increasingly concerned about how these tensions were affecting inner-city teenagers. As a way of reaching out to them, AMC created the Youth Opportunities Program (YOP). The idea was simple: provide inner-city kids with hiking and camping trips in wilderness areas and give them a unique opportunity to develop leadership skills and self-confidence. The trips would not be run by AMC leaders but by youth workers. AMC would provide equipment and training so that youth workers could lead trips according to the needs of their kids.

The first outing consisted of a small group of youth from Roxbury, Massachusetts. They ventured into the White Mountains during the summer of 1968 and returned home with exciting stories and talk of going back. Two more Roxbury groups took to the mountains that summer... soon to be followed in summers to come by teens from Dorchester, Mattapan, downtown Boston and Cambridge.

**“I was surprised at how extensive, well-organized, and well thought out every aspect of the training was and how incredibly generous YOP has been.”**

- OLT participant

Since its grassroots beginning in 1968, YOP has grown and changed – all in an effort to give the youth and youth workers of Northeast a successful outdoor program. Today YOP is well-rooted in the community. Our growth can be seen in more workshops, more equipment, higher-quality training sessions for leaders, a greater pool of participating agencies and, of course, the fact that each year more and more kids discover the outdoors.

The most significant growth is evident by YOP's expansion to New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. In 1996, the Youth Opportunities Program expanded to serve youth from this region. YOP has offices in New York City and at AMC's Mohican Outdoor Center. Mohican is located in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area in New Jersey. Mohican is just an hour and a half from New York City and is an excellent base camp for youth trips into the outdoors.

YOP is in its 41st year of education, leadership and adventure. It has evolved into a year-round program with trainings in backpacking, camping, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, trip planning, map and compass, wilderness first aid, Leave No Trace, and canoeing. Our program has successfully trained more than 2,600 youth workers – professionals who have in turn brought the outdoors to more than 56,000 inner-city kids. And the numbers continue to grow. As more and more workers complete our Outdoor Leadership Training and join the ranks of active YOP leaders, we are able to reach more and more youth.

It's exciting to think about this multiplying effect, but what makes it all possible is very basic and very essential: good leaders and good leadership training. We are always on the lookout for new youth workers with a zest for life and a passion for the outdoors. Some come to us with considerable backpacking or camping experience, which is great. Many others have no outdoor experience, but a lot of interest, and that's terrific too! **All we ask is that participants be 21 years of age or older, have an open mind, are actively involved with youth, are committed to leading two or more outdoor trips within a year, and are willing to learn.**

Together with youth workers, YOP is giving the youth the opportunity to... gaze out from a summit and sense the powerful beauty of nature; to work with a group to set up camp and learn the importance of teamwork; to challenge themselves mentally and physically during a wilderness hike and to finally shed their packs, sit back and feel the pride and satisfaction of achieving a goal through hard work. YOP is an opportunity for youth to return to the city not only with a new experience but also with a new perspective, a new curiosity and appreciation for the outdoors, and most importantly, new leadership abilities and a heightened sense of self-esteem. We look forward to working with you to make this happen!

## **RESOURCES**

Leaders who have successfully completed the OLT are eligible to borrow outdoor gear from YOP's equipment room at the Mohican Outdoor Center in the Delaware Water Gap, NJ and in Boston, MA. This includes tents, sleeping bags, stoves, fuel bottles, backpacks, daypacks, hiking boots, warm clothing, rain gear, and water bottles. Once leaders complete the OLT they have the option of continuing their outdoor education. YOP offers workshops in snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, Wilderness First Aid, map and compass reading, canoeing, Leave No Trace, trip planning, and advanced backpacking. Those who have completed other specialized workshops in addition to the OLT may then borrow applicable equipment such as canoes, paddles, lifejackets, cross-country skis, ski poles, winter boots, winter sleeping bags, and snowshoes. The courses last anywhere from a day to a weekend and can be taken for a nominal fee. They are an excellent way for leaders to enhance their training or refine their skills.

<p><b>YOP RESOURCES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Training</li><li>• Equipment</li><li>• Trip planning help</li><li>• Reduced lodging rates</li><li>• Networking with other youth workers</li></ul>
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YOP helps leaders find the information they need to plan their trips. YOP staff are always available to answer questions, assist leaders in planning their trips, make equipment reservations, and make reservations at AMC's lodging facilities. YOP Leaders are eligible for highly reduced rates at AMC huts, camps, and lodges through our Kids-in-Huts initiative, making it affordable to bring youth to visit stunning locations across New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and New Jersey.

## **GETTING INVOLVED: PARTNERSHIPS & POLICIES**

YOP is always excited about working with new youth workers and organizations that are committed to bringing positive experiences to young people. Sending a youth worker on the OLT is the first step for a youth agency to get involved and to begin receiving the many support services YOP provides. We believe that by working together we can achieve our goal to provide thousands of youth with powerful outdoor experiences. Our strongest results are achieved by the partnerships we form which combine the complementary resources that youth workers and YOP have to offer. In order to provide the best possible results and make the most of our resources, we have developed the following guidelines for participation in the OLT and YOP. Please review these carefully and call with any questions.

- 1. YOP Membership:** Upon successful completion of the Outdoor Leadership Training, youth workers become YOP members for a period of two years and receive full membership benefits. After two years YOP members may renew their membership by participating in a qualifying "refresher workshop" in order continue receiving YOP benefits such as free equipment loans and reduced rates at AMC destinations.
- 2. Age:** Youth workers must be 21 years or older in order to participate.
- 3. Two Trip Minimum:** OLT participants are expected to lead a minimum of two trips within a year of taking the training, though many will go on to lead more. This can include day hikes, backpacking, camping, and other outdoor activities. These trips will naturally be based on the skills, interests, and schedules of each individual

YOP Leader. We understand that challenges occasionally arise that may make this commitment difficult to achieve but we ask that all participants attend the training with the intention to lead these two trips.

4. **Youth Agencies:** Youth agencies may send up to four youth workers to each training. This ensures that we are able to serve as many groups as possible. Colleagues and other people that know each other are typically placed in separate training groups so that everyone can make the most of the experience.
5. **YOP's Role:** The OLT teaches a wide range of skills needed to lead youth on outdoor trips but is not a certification process. YOP's role in the partnership with a youth agency is to provide the support and resources needed to make outdoor trips possible. YOP is always pleased to provide suggestions and trip ideas prior to any trip. However, YOP staff do not typically go on these trips and youth workers and their agencies assume full responsibility and ownership for all their trips
6. **Leader Profiles:** At the conclusion of the OLT, participants will take part in an evaluation process with their instructors that will determine the types of trips they may lead with YOP support services. These trips range from local day hikes to multi-day backpacking expeditions and are based on the skills and experience level of each participant. Participation in other YOP workshops and additional trip leading experience allow youth workers to lead more advanced trips, and we encourage all YOP members to continue to build their skills by attending these ongoing trainings.
7. **Equipment Loans:** The type of equipment that YOP members may borrow is based on the Leader Profile determined by YOP at the conclusion of the OLT. All YOP members are eligible to change their Leader Profile through additional YOP workshops.
8. **Trip Seasons:** The OLT allows youth workers to lead "three season" trips – outings that take place in the spring, summer, or fall. (This is typically April to November in New Jersey.) Youth workers interested in leading winter trips must attend a winter training in order to borrow winter equipment or stay at an AMC facility during this season.
9. **Youth Workers:** OLT applicants who can demonstrate that they are affiliated with a youth agency that supports their involvement with YOP will receive preference in the application process.
10. **Scholarships:** To avoid turning away youth workers and youth agencies with limited resources, YOP provides some scholarships. Be sure to request an application if needed.

# THE OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP TRAINING

## OUR SIGNATURE TRAINING

### OVERVIEW

Many people tell us that the Outdoor Leadership Training (OLT) was a life-changing experience. Whether it helped them overcome a fear, put a new perspective on life, or just meet some great new people, the reality of the OLT is like nothing you've ever experienced before.

YOP offers four Outdoor Leadership Trainings (OLT) at the Mohican Outdoor Center each year: three backpacking OLTs and one camping OLT. Youth workers are eligible to participate in any of the OLTs and are encouraged to select the training that best meets their needs. (YOP also conducts OLTs in Boston and New Hampshire – contact us for more information if this location is more convenient.)

The purpose of the OLT is to teach basic outdoor skills as well as leadership skills. These skills are all taught in the context of taking kids into the outdoors, a specialized type of trip leadership with unique challenges and rewards. The training is experiential which means that you'll learn by doing: you'll learn from your triumphs as well as from your challenges.

**“The OLT is one of the best and most helpful trainings I have ever been involved with.”**  
- OLT participant

The OLT also includes a mandatory pre-trip meeting which will give you an understanding of the training and what to expect, as well as allow us to be sure that you are well prepared. Given the widespread area that YOP covers, these meetings are conducted as conference calls. Be sure to specify which call you will be attending on your OLT application.

### WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

The OLT covers four fundamental areas of outdoor leadership: technical skills, group dynamics, methods of leadership, and environmental awareness. The **technical skills** training includes lessons on map and compass reading, equipment usage, discussions about wilderness first aid, and safety procedures. It gives leaders the basic tools to lead an outdoor trip effectively and smoothly. We teach the importance of positive **group dynamics** through role-plays, new games, and discussions. Kids who are new to the outdoors will often behave differently when they're placed in the wilderness so we try to prepare leaders for the likely tensions and interactions of their groups. We also take an in-depth look at the various methods and styles of effective **leadership**. Being a good leader means being an educator, an advisor, a motivator, a problem-solver and a decision-maker. Again, through role-playing and discussions, we help leaders balance these varying roles and find a style that works best for them. The final area, **environmental awareness**, is emphasized by lessons on ecology and low-impact camping. The best way to lead is by setting a good example: so, whether this means properly disposing of waste or starting a campfire, leaders must show concern for the environment - and teach youth how to be good stewards of the earth. Trip leaders with knowledge and skill in all four areas will be prepared to lead a variety of trips, from day hikes to camping to backpacking.

### WHAT TO EXPECT – BACKPACKING OLT

The **Backpacking OLTs** (April, May and September) begin at Mohican Outdoor Center in Blairstown, NJ at 9:00 AM Thursday morning. Participants are encouraged to spend Wednesday night. That first day will be packed full of mini-workshops such as map and compass use, tent set up, tarps, clothing, pack packing, stove usage, and backcountry nutrition. Thursday night will be spent camping near Mohican Outdoor Center.

After an early wake-up on Friday, we head to the trail, where we will be backpacking through Sunday. While you don't have to be a marathoner, you should prepare yourself mentally and physically. The hiking is tough and the skills challenging. Expect to have dirty fingernails, 6-10 hours of hiking per day, muddy feet, bug bites, and sore muscles. Start working out now - you wouldn't believe how much it can help! Walking, running, and biking are great activities to build up your leg muscles and cardiovascular system.

The days on the trail are long and strenuous. You can expect to be carrying at least 35 pounds in your backpack, hiking 4-6 miles per day over fairly rigorous terrain, getting up early and going to bed late. A typical day is

breakfast at 7:00 AM, hike until 6:00 PM (or until you get where you're going), set up camp, cook, and process the day until 11:00 PM. There are steep up hills and steep down hills. There are also amazing views, beautiful waterfalls, and interesting wildlife!

## **WHAT TO EXPECT – CAMPING OLT**

The **Camping OLT** (June) emphasizes camping and day hiking skills. We will meet at 10:00 AM on Thursday at the Mohican Outdoor Center in Blairstown, NJ. Participants are encouraged to spend Wednesday night. Mohican has rustic cabins, outhouses, and beautiful scenery. The first day will be spent in mini-workshops learning about a variety of topics such as map and compass use, tent set up, outdoor clothing, stove usage, environmental emergencies, backcountry nutrition, and Leave No Trace.

Friday, Saturday, and Sunday will be spent hiking, participating in group initiative problems, learning about the environment, and camping. The days will be long and somewhat strenuous. You can expect to be carrying a daypack on your hikes, hiking 5-7 miles per day over fairly rigorous terrain, getting up early and going to bed late. A typical day is breakfast at 7:00 AM, hike or work until 4:00 PM, cook, and process the day until 11:00 PM. There are steep uphill and steep downhill. There are also amazing views, beautiful streams, and interesting wildlife!

While you don't have to be a marathoner, you should prepare yourself mentally and physically. The hiking is tough and the skills challenging. Expect to have dirty fingernails, up to 8 hours of hiking per day, muddy feet, bug bites, and sore muscles. Start working out now - you wouldn't believe how much it can help! Walking, running and biking are great activities to build up your leg muscles and cardiovascular system.

By the end of this training you will be very familiar with the Mohican Outdoor Center area, including the trails, activities, unique places of interest, campground, and lodge. This will leave you well prepared to return to enjoy this and other outdoor destinations with your kids!

## **LEADERSHIP**

Each participant will get a chance to be the co-leader of her/his group for a time. Except for the basic itinerary and in emergency situations, decisions will be made by those leaders and the group. Leaders of the group will be responsible for reviewing the route with the rest of the group, checking to make sure all needed equipment is included, coordinating group members and dealing with issues that arise.

Along the way there will be role-play scenarios set up by the instructors to illustrate things that can (and probably will) happen when you take a group of kids into the woods. Confronting the role-play situations as real and dealing with them accordingly can be a great learning tool - both for you and the rest of the group. It is a safe time to make mistakes and learn new ways to handle challenges. At the end of each day there will be a time for processing the activities and accomplishments of that day. These sessions will provide time for reflection on decisions, leadership styles, and effectiveness.

At the end of the training you will be asked to evaluate yourself and the overall training experience through an individual meeting with your Instructors. Together you will discuss the types of trips you feel comfortable leading, along with suggestions for further improvement, and determine a Leader Profile.

## **EVALUATION & FEEDBACK**

To insure that a strong, healthy program will be there for the youth of tomorrow, we must continually look at where we've been and where we're going. Evaluations are a major part of this process. OLT participants are evaluated after the training, and then again after two years, to determine their individual strengths and competencies. YOP uses these evaluations to determine the types of trips that leaders are capable of leading and to establish needs for future training. After the OLT, participants are eligible to receive program services for two years. After this time YOP Leaders must take a "refresher" course. YOP also asks participants to evaluate the training program overall to determine their needs are being met. We encourage your feedback and suggestions. In addition, all YOP Leaders are invited to participate in regular meetings of the YOP Mohican Committee. The Committee is an excellent way for YOP staff and Leaders to share new ideas, plan, and to keep YOP aware of community developments.

## **OUR INSTRUCTORS**

In addition to the YOP staff, YOP instructors are men and women with experience both in the outdoors and with kids. They are a remarkable group of volunteers who are so committed to sharing the outdoors with youth that they give up vacation time each year to help instruct the OLT. They bring their experiences and their success working

with kids in the wilderness to the Outdoor Leadership Training to help you learn. They also bring a strong commitment to transfer their enthusiasm and expertise to you, and thus to the youth of the Northeast.

The instructor's role is to insure the overall safety of the group, to facilitate the learning scenarios, to teach new skills, and to help process the day's activities. Remember, the training is experiential. The instructors are not there to provide all the answers or make decisions but to *help you find the answers and make the decisions*.

## **WHAT WE PROVIDE**

For the OLT, YOP provides food, transportation, educational materials, tents, sleeping bags, ground pads, backpacks, stoves, cooking equipment, compasses, first aid kits, maps and guidebook, and the instructors. You are responsible for your own clothing. For the most part you shouldn't need to purchase new clothing for the OLT – please check with us if you need to borrow clothing from our equipment room. An explanation follows and an equipment list is attached. **PLEASE** call YOP at 917-364-0056 with any questions or concerns.

## **SAFETY**

As participant safety is a high priority for all AMC trainings, procedures and policies have been developed that attempt to limit participant risk. Participants are expected to work with staff to reduce risks and make the experience successful for all involved. In case an emergency does occur, AMC instructors are trained in wilderness first aid, carry first aid kits and follow a comprehensive Emergency Action Plan. AMC utilizes radios or other communication devices, although these are not reliable in all locations and conditions. Despite such steps, participants should be aware that there are risks associated with outdoor adventure activities, including but not limited to, cooking and camp chores, adverse weather and environmental conditions, transportation in vehicles and on foot, and the remote locations of our trips. Please carefully read and sign the Participant Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risks and Release and Indemnity Agreement and call if you have any questions. Your understanding of these risks and adherence to our policies and procedures can contribute to making this experience successful.

## **SCHOLARSHIPS**

Scholarships are available for agencies with limited resources. Also, we are in constant search for vans for the training. **The training is free for any participant who brings a 12 or 15 passenger agency van.** Call and we'll work out a deal! See the Application Form for more information about scholarships.

**“It's tough. It's frustrating. It's the best thing I ever did.”**  
- OLT participant

## **CHOOSING THE TRAINING THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU**

Backpacking or Camping - which training should you take? Since 1968, YOP has been offering a **Backpacking Outdoor Leadership Training (OLT)**. The OLT teaches youth workers the skills needed to lead youth on outdoor adventures. This classic wilderness training, which many participants have called life changing, is appropriate for all youth workers who want to take their youth on outdoor adventures, regardless of experience level. If you are open to learning and new experiences, in relatively good shape, and enjoy a challenge, this is your training! No experience is required and every year the training attracts youth workers with a wide variety of backgrounds; many have no previous outdoor background while some bring several years of experience. The diversity of skills and experiences adds to the learning environment and prepares youth workers to more effectively lead their own trips. The backpacking OLT offers participants an extended wilderness experience, packed with new leadership and outdoor skills, making these participants eligible to lead the most varied types of trips with their youth. The training involves one day of camping at Mohican Outdoor Center and three days of backpacking in the Delaware Water Gap in New Jersey. The route frequently includes a portion of the Appalachian Trail.

YOP also offers a **Camping Outdoor Leadership Training (OLT)**. If you are brand new to the outdoors and don't feel ready for the challenge of four days spent entirely in the woods, this training may be for you! In contrast to the Backpacking OLT in which participants spend each night at a different site along their hiking route, the Camping OLT uses a “base-camp” model, focusing on the skills necessary for leading day hikes and camping trips. The group will spend each night at the same campground and lead hikes and activities from that base. Participants will spend one night in a lodge and two nights camping in tents. No experience is required – just a willingness to learn and contribute.

	<b>BACKPACKING OLT</b>	<b>CAMPING OLT</b>
<b>SUMMARY</b>	YOP's classic leadership training. Recommended for all youth workers who are in relatively good physical shape and interested in leading outdoor trips. Each night is spent at a different site along the hiking route. Get ready for a challenging experience full of fun, learning, and adventure!	An excellent introduction for those brand new to outdoor adventure. Recommended for youth workers who plan to lead day trips, day hikes, or camping overnights. Also suggested for those who may not yet feel prepared for the challenges of backpacking for four days in the wilderness. The "base-camping" style means that each night is spent at the same location. Get started in a fun, supportive environment!
<b>PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE</b>	No experience required	No experience required
<b>LOCATION</b>	Mohican Outdoor Center, Delaware Water Gap, New Jersey	Mohican Outdoor Center, Delaware Water Gap, New Jersey
<b>LEADING TRIPS</b>	Appropriate for youth workers wanting to lead the following types of trips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Day hikes</li> <li>- Camping trips and overnights</li> <li>- Multi-day backpacking and hut trips</li> <li>- Extended wilderness experiences</li> </ul>	Appropriate for youth workers wanting to lead the following types of trips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Day hikes</li> <li>- Camping trips and overnights</li> </ul>
<b>EQUIPMENT USE BENEFITS*</b>	Access to all equipment related to leading hiking, camping, and backpacking trips in spring, summer, and fall.	Access to all equipment related to leading day hiking and camping trips in spring, summer, and fall. (No backpacking equipment.)
<b>RECOMMENDED FUTURE TRAINING</b>	YOP recommends youth workers keep skills fresh and up-to-date through our advanced training. Upon completing the OLT youth workers are eligible to participate in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wilderness First Aid</li> <li>- Winter Exploration</li> <li>- Canoeing</li> </ul>	YOP recommends youth workers keep skills fresh and up-to-date through our advanced training. Upon completing the OLT youth workers are eligible to participate in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wilderness First Aid</li> <li>- Backpacking OLT</li> <li>- Canoeing</li> </ul>
<b>COST</b>	\$110	\$110
<b>CUSTOM COURSES</b>	Custom courses can be arranged at other times of the year for groups of 5 or more. Contact YOP for more information	Custom courses can be arranged at other times of the year for groups of 5 or more. Contact YOP for more information.

\* When youth workers successfully complete the OLT, they become YOP Leaders and take part in an evaluation process with their instructors to determine the specific types of trips they are ready to lead. This designation also corresponds to the kind of equipment that YOP Leaders are eligible to borrow from the program. After this first assessment, YOP Leaders are encouraged to continue their outdoor leadership development by participating in additional YOP trainings to expand on the trips that are able to lead. Upon completion of the OLT, YOP Leaders retain their YOP privileges for two years. After that time a weekend "refresher" course is required to continue YOP membership and to receive resources including free equipment use and reduced rates at AMC facilities. Please let us know if you have any questions about our equipment benefits.

## **REGISTRATION PROCESS**

**Please return all forms and payment as soon as possible** if you intend to participate in the training. We hope you'll join us! This application is also available online at [www.outdoors.org/yop/apply](http://www.outdoors.org/yop/apply). Please contact us if you have any questions:

Marshall Nicoloff, YOP Coordinator  
Appalachian Mountain Club  
Mohican Outdoor Center  
50 Camp Road, Blairstown, NJ 07825

908-362-1221 (NJ)  
917-364-0056 (NYC)  
Fax: 908-362-5678  
mnicoloff@outdoors.org  
[www.outdoors.org/yop](http://www.outdoors.org/yop)

# CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

## OVERVIEW

In order to participate in the OLT, and to lead any outdoor trip, it is imperative to understand the importance of having the proper equipment. While YOP will provide the outdoor gear, you are responsible for most of your clothing as well as a few other items. What follows is an explanation of proper clothing and a list of what you will need. ***We cannot take participants into the woods with improper, insufficient or unsafe gear. Check with YOP if you don't have a clothing item on the list – we probably have it in our equipment room!***

In the backcountry, there is no place to warm up, no closet with dry clothes, and no efficient way to dry clothing that is wet. Therefore, while regulating your body temperature is helpful for comfort, it can be critical for safety. Because you need to rely predominately on your body's ability to re-warm itself, it is essential that you are able to retain or lose heat as necessary.

Clothing is a factor in helping to prevent heat loss but it is not the clothing itself that keeps you warm. It acts as insulation for your own body heat. Layers of clothing trap the warm air given off by your body. Certain fabrics are better insulators than others and some retain their insulating properties even when they are wet. Therefore, in order for clothing to be effective in the outdoors, it must keep the wearer warm and dry. It is also important that the clothing be roomy enough to allow space between layers to adequately trap the warm air. We will discuss these concepts in much greater detail at the pre-trip meeting and throughout the training.

## FEET

Keeping your feet comfortable and well protected will be important on this training and any hike: always wear sturdy hiking boots. Mountain terrain can be difficult to traverse and boots with good ankle support can prevent a sprained ankle. Walking with the additional weight of a backpack also requires good support. *Never wear new boots on a long trip.* Break them in gradually by walking around in them for short periods of time. Then try them out on a day hike.

It is helpful to wear two pairs of socks when hiking. The sliding action between the two layers helps to prevent blisters. The first layer can be a thin sock, made out of a synthetic fiber such as polypropylene. These are frequently called "sock liners". The second sock should be a heavier wool sock.

## WHY NOT COTTON?

Many people are surprised to learn that wearing cotton can become dangerous. This is because it absorbs moisture easily which increases heat loss. Even when dry, cotton is a poor insulator. When it is wet, either from sweat or the outside environment, it loses its insulating value quickly. It is slow to dry and heavy when wet. This is why we ask participants to leave behind jeans and sweatshirts – you'll just end up with heavy, wet clothing that won't keep you warm.

Although it's acceptable to hike in a cotton T-shirt, at the end of the day or when the weather changes, you'll want to start layering and insulating with **non-absorbent materials**. Wool, a natural fabric, and synthetics such as polypropylene and fleece, work to keep moisture away from your skin so that you don't get cold. A lowered body temperature, a condition called hypothermia, is a backpacker's nemesis and can be fatal. Therefore, non-absorbent materials are required and no cotton is allowed. The equipment list provides additional information.

**"I was surprised at how quickly the weather changes in the mountains... how much I could learn in a short period of time."**  
- OLT participant

## LAYERING

When preparing for a hike, layering is very important because it allows us to control body temperature. For example, take off a sweater when too warm or put on a rain jacket if it gets too windy. Outdoor clothing should not be tight or restrictive because there is not adequate space to trap the warm air from the body. Therefore, make the

second layer slightly looser than the first layer and the third layer slightly looser than the second layer in order to get the maximum warmth. As the saying goes, dress like an onion!

Listed below is what a good layering system looks like. It should be possible to comfortably wear all layers at the same time though you will usually mix and match depending on the conditions.

- **Under Layer:** long underwear, top and bottom, of wool or polypropylene - lycra running pants are acceptable. This is the layer next to your skin.
- **Middle Insulation Layer:** on top: two layers of wool, polyester or fleece. On bottom: wool or fleece pants. This layer also includes wool or fleece hat and mittens.
- **Waterproof Layer:** waterproof jacket and pants (rain gear). Note that it must be **waterproof** not *water resistant*, a common problem.

## **EQUIPMENT LIST**

An equipment list is included in this packet. You will need to bring everything on the list to the training. Rummage through your closet, ask friends, or look for sales at any of the outdoor retailers on the reverse of the list. If you're having trouble with anything, call YOP. More than likely, we'll be able to help.

Please call if you have any questions!

**“The opportunity to meet so many other youth workers and observe their styles and methods is something I don’t think I could have experienced any other place.”**

- OLT participant

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **1. I've never been hiking or backpacking before. Is previous experience required?**

No previous outdoor experience is necessary. If you are in reasonably good shape and have the desire and enthusiasm to learn, you'll do fine. A large percentage of the people who complete the OLT *don't* have any previous experience. In fact, even most people with outdoor experience find it more challenging than they anticipated!

## **2. What will the food be like?**

YOP provides all food from Thursday's lunch through Sunday's lunch. The food is hearty and delicious. There will be plenty; we always have leftovers at the end. We bring tasty food and encourage youth workers to do the same on their trips because kids love food! It is something familiar that provides comfort in the unfamiliar surroundings of the woods. Please be sure to note any special dietary restrictions or special considerations on your medical form. There will be many vegetarian options.

## **3. I understand that no cotton is allowed, but is cotton underwear okay?**

Yes, cotton underwear is acceptable because of the minimal body space it covers and because, if necessary, you can remove it. Also, it's likely that you'll have a dry pair in your pack. If you have underwear made out of a synthetic material, bring that instead - it's just easier.

## **4. Is smoking allowed on the training?**

Responsible smoking is allowed, but not in buildings, shelters, vehicles, or tents. Expect to discuss safety concerns and other issues with your group. The OLT is not the time to try something new – like quitting smoking or a new diet.

## **5. Can I use my own backpack and sleeping bag?**

No. For the OLT, we want you to use our equipment so that you'll learn about it. Since you'll be using YOP equipment when you take out kids, you'll need to know how to adjust or repair it should the need arise. Therefore YOP will provide your backpack, sleeping bag, and ground pad for this training.

## **6. I'm afraid it's too late to register and all the spots may be filled. What can I do?**

If all spots are taken, you will be put on a waiting list and taken in the order of sign-up. And don't despair – we frequently take several people off of the waiting list each year.

***Please call 917-364-0056 if you have other questions or concerns!***



## *Outdoor Leadership Training: Mohican Outdoor Center*

# EQUIPMENT LIST

Please keep in mind that mountain weather is very changeable and unpredictable. Conditions can be cold, wet, snowy, and windy. Because cotton loses its insulating value when wet, **it is essential to bring wool, fleece, and/or polypropylene**. Cotton is not an acceptable substitution for these materials. *We cannot take people into the mountains without proper clothing. Please follow this equipment list carefully and contact YOP if you have any questions.* Also consider that you will be carrying your own gear as well as a portion of the group's gear. All items on this list are required for the training except those that are indicated as optional. YOP can loan you any of these pre-trip necessities as well.

- 1 pair of **hiking boots**: properly fitted, waterproofed, and broken in
- at least 2 pairs of wool **socks**
- 1 set of wool or synthetic **long underwear** (polypropylene, capilene, or similar)
- 1 pair of fleece **pants** – insulating layer for your lower body
- 1 **insulating layer for your upper body**: fleece or wool (jacket, sweater, pullover)
- 1 set of waterproof **raingear** (jacket and pants)
- 1 wool or fleece **hat**
- 1 pair of wool or fleece **gloves or mittens**
- 2 **water bottles** – quart size (durable, wide-mouth)
- 1 pair of light **sneakers (closed toe)** to wear in camp
- underwear** or boxers (synthetic is preferred)
- women: **bra** (quick-drying synthetic sports bra is best)
- 1 or 2 **T-shirts** (light-weight, synthetic are preferred)
- 1 pair of **hiking shorts** (preferably quick drying nylon)
- 1 **Headlamp** (preferred) or flashlight – with extra batteries and spare bulb
- 1 **plastic mug** (for hot beverages), **bowl, spoon**
- 2 **bandannas** / handkerchiefs
- 3 large, heavy-duty **trash bags for waterproofing gear**
- travel sized **toiletries** (toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.) & any **personal items** such as medication
- 1 **watch** (not cell phone)
- YOP Outdoor Leadership Training Trip Reference Manual*
- 1 pair **sunglasses** or baseball hat
- 1 pair of light-weight, synthetic hiking pants (optional)
- small camera (optional)
- 1 small pocket/Swiss Army knife (optional)
- chapstick, lip balm (optional)

## PLEASE DO NOT BRING ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Alcohol or illegal drugs
- All electronics including: cell phone, radio, MP3 player, electronic games, etc.
- Large knives or other dangerous objects of any type
- Lanterns or large D cell sized flashlights
- Blue jeans, cotton sweaters or sweatshirts

## YOP WILL PROVIDE ALL PARTICIPANTS WITH THE FOLLOWING:

- Food
- Transportation (from Mohican to trailhead and back as needed)
- Lodging
- Educational materials
- Tents and tarps
- Sleeping bags
- Ground pads
- Backpacks
- Stoves and fuel
- Cooking equipment
- Compasses
- First aid kits
- Water carrier and water treatment equipment

## OPTIONAL ITEMS

If space and pack weight permit you may consider bringing sock liners, hiking pants, glove liners, mud gaiters, trekking poles or walking stick, bug net, or camp chair. YOP will provide sunscreen and bug spray; if you have specific needs related to these items please bring your own.

## OPTIONS FOR PURCHASING EQUIPMENT

*Listed below are some options for purchasing equipment in the New York/New Jersey area. Also check local backpacking and camping stores. Salvation Army, Goodwill, and Army Navy shops frequently have good buys. Be sure to check with friends and relatives: you never know what may be lurking in the back of someone's closet! You shouldn't have to spend much, or any, money preparing for this training. **AND REMEMBER:** Can't find or borrow it? YOP may have it – we maintain a large equipment room with clothing for adults as well as youth. Always feel free to call if you have questions.*

<b>Army/Navy</b>	721 8th Ave (between 45th & 46th)	212-765-1500
<b>Eastern Mountain Sports</b>	Spring Street at Broadway Rte 17 - Paramus, NJ	212-397-4860 201-670-6464
<b>Frank's Sport Shop</b>	430 E. Tremont St – Bronx, NY	718-299-9628
<b>Paragon</b>	Broadway at 18th St	212-255-8036
<b>Tent and Trails</b>	21 Park Place	212-227-1760
<b>Campmor</b>	810 Rte 17 - North Paramus, NJ	201-445-5000
<b>Ramsey Outdoor</b>	Rte 17 - Ramsey, NJ Rte 46 - Ledgewood, NJ	201-327-8141

[www.campmor.com](http://www.campmor.com)

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