



Information Package for Program Volunteers

Welcome! Whether you're interested in making the transition from student to volunteer staff member or you're interested in jumping into Educo for the first time to participate in meaningful courses for youth, here's the scoop.

We've laid out the details of volunteering in this document and hope we've answered many of your questions and met your logistical planning considerations (the length of a course with prep days, etc) while you're applying.

Please email or call with any further questions but keep in mind, we'll keep a few elements of volunteering for you to discover experientially!

Table of Contents

SECTION 1 – WHAT TO EXPECT AND HOW IT WORKS: ALL PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS.....	1
WHEN TO ARRIVE & WHEN TO DEPART	2
HOW TO GET TO THE EDUCO SITE.....	2
DAYS OFF AND TIME-OFF	3
FLOW OF A TYPICAL ON-SITE DAY	4
ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS.....	6
WHAT TO BRING	6
SECTION 2 – REQUIREMENTS & OUR EXPECTATIONS	7
LOOKING FOR IN ALL VOLUNTEERS	7
REQUIREMENTS FOR HOMETEAM VOLUNTEERS.....	7
REQUIREMENTS FOR ON-COURSE VOLUNTEERS.....	7
OUR VALUES AND OUR EXPECTATIONS FOR OUR VOLUNTEERS	7
SECTION 3 – HOW AND WHEN TO APPLY.....	8
SECTION 4 - LETTERS OF REFERENCE AND VOLUNTEER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT LETTERS	9
SECTION 5 - LOOKING AHEAD: WORKING AT EDUCO	9

Section 1 – What to Expect and How it Works: All Program Volunteers

Our volunteer placements run parallel to our course end and start dates: placements last the entirety of a summer program or a whole week(s) of school courses.

We ask for your commitment for an entirety of a summer program or week of school courses. Given the remoteness of our site, arranging and implementing many coming's and going's through-out the program distracts from the focus on students and the course. Also, we have found that our volunteers enjoy their experience more if they are present for the full cycle of a course/course set.

If you'd like to pre-arrange an alternative date set for your placement, please email or call us. We're willing to chat about the options but do not guarantee we can make an alternative placement arrangement possible.

For School and Community Group Programs (May, June & September)

- School and Community Groups arrive on the first day between 1 and 1:30pm and depart on the last day between 12 and 12:30pm, unless exceptionally scheduled.

For Summer Programs (July, August):

- Please see our Summer Program calendar on our website to view course dates
- Students arrive on the first day of the program between 2 and 4pm and depart on the last day between 11:30am and 2:30pm.
- When choosing your preferred dates on your application, add one day extra (prep day – see below) to the beginning of the program dates you found on the website
- If your preferred dates are for multiple courses, please list your preferred dates as the prep day of the first program to the last day of the last program (or simply write as much as possible)

For Adult programs (September):

- Please see our Adult & Family Events calendar on our website for course dates
- Students arrive on the first day of the program between 6:30 and 7:30pm and depart on the last day between 1:30 and 2pm.

When to Arrive & When to Depart

Program	When to Arrive	Orientation	Prep Time	Debrief Time	When to Depart
School & Community Group Programs	By 7:30pm on evening before course start date	First evening or Morning of First Program (we will confirm with you if your application is approved)	Morning on first day of course	Afternoon on last day of course	Possible: after staff debrief (around 5pm) on last day of program. Recommended: anytime on day after last day of program.
Summer Programs	By 7:30pm on evening before prep day	First evening & on Prep Day	Prep Day and morning on first day of course	Afternoon/early evening on last day of course	Possible after staff debrief (around 7pm) on last day of program. Recommended: anytime on day after last day of program.
Adult Programs	By 7:30pm on evening before course start date	First evening & on Prep Day	Prep day is on first day of course (course starts in evening)	Afternoon on last day of course	Possible: after staff debrief (around 5pm) on last day of program. Recommended: anytime on day after last day of program.

Please keep in mind: if you are trying to depart on the last day of the program after the staff debrief, we cannot commit to a specific end time for the debrief. Debrief lengths vary based on the program, the occurrence of any emergencies during program, team morale, etc.

How to get to the Educo Site

Please see our Contact Us page for detailed directions and a pdf that you can print off.

It takes approximately half an hour to get to our program site. If you are unable to travel directly to our site, please email us with your bus arrival time and noting that you require a carpool/pick-up to get out to site.

Remember, you'll lose cell service a few kilometres after leaving the pavement so it's helpful to have the directions on paper!

Days off and Time-off

During your days off, the following resources are available to you:

Laundry – Coin washing machines and dryers are available at 2 laundromats in 100 Mile House: one on Birch Ave between First and Second St, the other on Birch Ave between Fourth and Fifth Street.

Internet – As there is no internet signal at our programming site, check your email and phone messages before you leave and on your days off at the following places:

- The Chartreuse Moose Café – next door to the Laundromat between First and Second Ave.
- Rise and Grind Café – up in the mall by Bargain Shop and Safeway between Fifth Street and Horse Lake Road (visible from the highway).
- The Educo Office & House – our director shares a house with the Educo office and there is a basement suite for staff and volunteers where you can check your email with your own laptop/phone. You can ask the staff for directions to the house when you arrive. Internet password is usually on a paper on the fridge

Please let family and friends know that you will be out of reach during your placement at Educo. You can assure them however, that we do have communications devices for emergencies. Should they need to reach you in a family **emergency**, they can call our office at 250-395-3388 and our office staff will get the message to you at site.

Showers – Bring travel shampoos/soap/conditioner. Showers are available at the following places in 100 Mile House:

- Red Coach Inn (170 97 Hwy N) – also has a hot tub and swimming pool. User Fee is \$7 (approx.).
- Laundromat on Birch Ave between Fourth and Fifth Street (user fee).
- The Educo Office and House – ask us when you arrive and we'll show you the way; no fee other than some basic clean up after showering.

Mail - Mail can be sent to you during your placement c/o Educo School, Box 1978, 100 Mile House, BC, V0K 2E0.

To book time-off, please let us know at least a month in advance of your placement and preferably, as soon as possible. We work hard to make the schedule flow with so many volunteers, staff and students coming and going. Please read the note above (paragraph 3 of this section) regarding alternative date sets that aren't inclusive of the entirety of programs. Of course, in the event of a family emergency, we will be flexible and supportive.

Flow of a Typical On-site Day

Please be aware that all times are approximate and may be changed as needed in the schedule (i.e. sometimes dinner is earlier on first day). First day and last day of program schedules are obviously different as students arrive and leave around mid-day.

For on-course volunteers: the schedule of an out-trip day schedule varies from group to group. Generally, out-trip days include wake-up, pack-up, meals, hiking/climbing/canoeing /solos for the duration of the day, evening games/check-in's with your group, early bedtimes.

The jobs noted under the HomeTeam Volunteers and On-course Volunteers columns are examples of work happening during that time – other work may be included.

Time of Day	HomeTeam Volunteers	On-course Volunteers
6:30am -7am	Staff Meeting	Staff Meeting
7am – 8am	Participate in wake-up of students, set up dining hall, help with food prep, pack out-trip lunches, set up rock wall, help with morning warm-up and games on field	Participate in wake-up of students, do morning warm-up and games on field, get ready for day's activities (i.e. pack your personal bag for out-trip, etc).
8am – 9am	Serve firsts, eat breakfast, HomeTeam meeting (usually around 8:30/8:45am)	Ask meal question and listen to answers, serve seconds, eat breakfast with kids
9am – 9:30am	Free time supervision and participation, clean up Dining Hall set up Dish Party, break	Get yourself ready for next activity, connect one-on-one with students as needed, break
9:30am – 1pm	Work on HomeTeam projects (painting, basic construction, cleaning, creative planning, etc), assist with student activities as needed, help in kitchen	Co-facilitate morning activity with students (high ropes, team-building activities, rock-climbing, eco-activities, solo, etc).
1pm – 2pm	Serve firsts, eat lunch	Ask meal question and listen to answers, serve seconds, eat lunch with kids

Time of Day	HomeTeam Volunteers	On-course Volunteers
2pm – 6pm	Work on HomeTeam projects (painting, basic construction, cleaning, creative planning, etc), assist with student activities as needed, help in kitchen, free time supervision after lunch if needed by on-course staff, break	Co-facilitate afternoon activity with students (high ropes, team-building activities, rock-climbing, eco-activities, solo, etc).
6pm – 7pm	Serve firsts, eat dinner	Ask meal question and listen to answers, serve seconds, eat dinner with kids
7pm – 7:30pm	Free time supervision and participation, clean up Dining Hall set up Dish Party, break	Get yourself ready for next activity, connect one-on-one with students as needed, break
7:30pm – 9:30pm/10pm	Help with after dinner activity as needed/desired (i.e. play wide game, enact skit, etc), finish any time-sensitive projects, tidy up kitchen and back-room, mop, early end to day if no large projects need attention	Co-facilitate evening activity with students (campfire, wide games, eco-challenge, survival skills activities swamp run, weather report, sauna time, ridge walk, gravel pit games, etc).
9:30 – 10:30pm (doesn't take this long but happens usually sometime in hour)	Help as needed/desired	Guide/supervise bed time transition: toothbrush party, ensuring everyone has warm enough clothes, read story to group, help settle energy
10 – 11pm (doesn't take this long but happens usually sometime in hour)	Help as needed/desired	Mini staff teams do daily check-out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the day went • Dynamics to note in group • Dynamics to note in individual students – any needs to address • Plans for next day for small group • Personal check-out

Accommodations & Meals

To offer wilderness experiences to youth, our 160-acre programming site is off-the grid: there is no running water (instead, a hand pump for a natural spring) and only a small amount of electricity is provided by solar panels.

During your placement, you will be hosted in a room in one of our rustic staff cabins. Please bring bedding (a set of single sheets, a sleeping bag/quilt/duvet and extra blanket, and a pillow). If you do not have a sleeping bag, we can set you up with one upon arrival.

All meals are provided by our cook during your placement on program and prep days. If you have any dietary restrictions, please note them on the medical form at the end of the package. We will do our best to accommodate them. You are also welcome to bring some snacks that can be stored in our staff room.

You are responsible for your own meals on your arrival day (most people arrive after dinner but in case you arrive before) and on your last day if you stay until the day after program ends. In between that, all your meals are covered. There is a Save-On grocery store in 100 Mile House where you can purchase a few groceries.

What to bring

There are two equipment lists at the end of the package:

- Spring and Fall Programs Equipment List
- Summer Programs Equipment List

If you do not have an item on the Equipment List at the end of this package, please do not buy anything new. Borrow what you can from family and friends. If you have tried to borrow and still cannot find an item, we can lend you warm clothing or some equipment. We do not have enough for warm clothing and equipment for all our staff, volunteers and students – we appreciate your efforts to ask family and friends to borrow.

If you are wondering why you need to bring a backpack and hiking boots as a HomeTeam volunteer, the answer is: **be ready for any adventure!** You never know what might happen. Sometimes, we need our HomeTeam volunteers to help out on out-trips (if a staff member/on-course volunteer gets sick) or help on a rescue/assistance mission to the mountains at the last minute.

For School & Community Group volunteers: if you do not have a backpack or sleeping pad, do not worry about it! If you end up needing these items, we will lend them to you.

Section 2 – Requirements & Our Expectations

Looking for in all volunteers

- Positive attitude
- Strong work ethic and initiative (asking where you can help when you're done something, figuring problems out to the best of your ability in instances where someone senior is not available, following through on projects until they are finished)
- Strong commitment to learning
- Courage to contribute your voice to the team
- Initiative and courage to manage your relationships in a community living environment (with mentorship)
- Desire to deepen self-awareness and develop community skills
- A light-heartedness, playfulness and an openness to be creativity

Requirements for HomeTeam Volunteers

Basic first aid is helpful and allows you to feel more confident if assisting staff in an emergency but it is not required to volunteer.

HomeTeam volunteers must provide satisfactory completion of a criminal record check.

Requirements for On-Course Volunteers

There are no requirements to be an on-course volunteer but the following certifications or experience are considered an asset and could be helpful to you: wilderness first aid (any level), bronze cross, NLS, Class 4 Driver's License and experience working with children and youth (preferably outdoors).

On-course Volunteers must provide satisfactory completion of a criminal record check.

Our Values and Our Expectations for Our Volunteers

If your application to volunteer is successful, we will send you your volunteer agreement, information on where to fill out your medical and waiver forms and a copy of our Employee Handbook and Policy Manual.

We expect you to complete ALL your paperwork and sign and return the volunteer agreement.

We expect you to review the Employee Handbook and Policy Manual prior to arrival. We will go over important policies and procedures upon your arrival. We expect you to work with us within the framework of our policies and operating procedures.

We expect you to work collaboratively with the Educo staff team and leadership to fulfill our mission in the spirit of our values:

Fortitude: We seek opportunities to choose courage in adversity and we value the growth achieved by doing so. We believe taking calculated risks, being in nature and living as part of a group provides ample opportunity.

Curiosity: We are young at heart! We aim to find a new perspective. Through exploration, play and journeys we embrace the meaning of re-spect; we “take a second look” and discover!

Humility: Human shares the same root as humility: humus or “of the Earth”. We explore what it means to be human and to be grounded. We appreciate our connection to the Earth, ourselves and others.

Integrity: We train in honesty, appreciation and vulnerability. We value these skills of a community which provide a circle of support for the voices of people. To become whole and complete requires practice.

Spirit: We can’t predict what new insights will emerge from a situation but we can be ready to embrace them- that’s the spirit of Educo! We trust that we have everything that we need with and within us and we allow each other’s defining character - or spirit - to shine through!

Section 3 – How and When to Apply

Step 1: Print & fill out the volunteer application listed on our “Volunteer at Educo” webpage.

Step 2: Send the following to info@educo.ca or to fax #: 1-888-769-0054

- A completed application form (see above)
- An up-to-date copy of your resume which notes your work experience, volunteer experience and any relevant certifications (first aid, wilderness first aid, rock-climbing, hiking, lifeguarding, etc) or trainings (facilitation, leadership, etc).

Step 3: Receive notification by mid-March to end of March (at the latest) regarding any volunteer placement opportunities for you.

Step 4: If you receive a volunteer placement agreement in step 3, submit any paperwork by the end of April.

Specific dates for Step 3 and Step 4 will be provided to you as you go through the application process. A rough guideline only is provided. Any applications received after the end of March will be responded to on a rolling basis.

You can send in your application at any point in time, the earlier the better. We will confirm volunteer placements between January and March (we will aim to be in touch as early as possible)

Section 4 - Letters of Reference and Volunteer Acknowledgement Letters

If we had a positive volunteer experience together, we will happily complete letters of reference or volunteer acknowledgement letters.

We like to put care and time into creating a clear, well-written and valuable reference or acknowledgment of your hours. Please help us to do this by:

- Provide a list of the courses, clean-up weekends and school weeks for which you volunteered
- Provide us the purpose of the letter/acknowledgement:
 - i.e. the scholarship name, a brief description of the scholarship and the requirements and your resume/central application piece (essay, question answers, etc).
 - OR what the acknowledgement is for (graduation volunteer requirements, etc).
- The date by which you need to have the reference letter/acknowledgement letter
- If we are to send the letter to a third party directly (i.e. scholarship office), the address to whom we should send the letter and the contact/department to whom we should address the letter

Section 5 - Looking ahead: Working at Educo

Please check out our Working at Educo web page to learn more about the positions available, the required certifications and experience and how to apply for positions.

There are usually many previous Educo students and volunteers interested in employment and only so many paid staff positions available.

There are many factors we consider when hiring:

- balancing certifications and experience within our staff team,
- balancing gender ratios to address gender-specific needs of students,
- balancing new and returning staff,
- hiring in relation to our enrolment patterns for the upcoming seasons (more students means we need more staff; less students, less staff),
- balancing the availability of applicants with our program schedule and
- lastly balancing our staff salaries with our budget.

We consider all of these factors when posting jobs and hiring in addition to your suitability, skills and experience as a candidate.

Educo appreciates all your passion, your determination to attain certs and the care that you put into your application. Given the large number of volunteers and graduating students that aim to be staff, a well-prepared, clear application will help you in the competition.



Personal Equipment List – Spring and Fall Programs

THE ACTIVITES INVOLVED IN THIS PROGRAM REQUIRE THE FOLLOWING CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT. IT IS NOT NECESSARY THAT YOU PURCHASE ANY OF THE ITEMS ON THIS LIST. DO YOUR BEST TO BORROW FROM FRIENDS.

- Day Pack:** Small backpack 30-40L capacity
- Sleeping Bag:** Good to -5 celcius. It's important to have a sleeping bag and not just blankets...
- Extra blankets:** 1 or 2 extra blankets
- *Rain Jacket with hood:** Durable: Gore-tex or equivalent, or coated nylon.
- *Rain Pants:** Durable (full-zip legs are nice): Gore-tex or equivalent, or coated nylon
- Running Shoes:** One good pair and one pair old & ugly.
- Hiking Pants:** "quick dry": lightweight wool or synthetic (Schoeller etc) or uncoated thin nylon (track pants)
- T-shirt shirt:** thin, synthetic; preferably NOT cotton but cotton is ok if you don't have another kind
- Long underwear - top & bottom:** polypropylene, fleece or wool - NOT COTTON
- 2 warm tops:** Wool, fleece or synthetic - 1 light & 1 heavy - NOT COTTON
- Gloves: 1 pair** – wool, fleece or synthetic
- Toque:** Wool or fleece

- 3 pairs wool (or wool blend) socks**
- Casual/street clothes** for wearing around site: i.e. cotton clothes: Underwear, T-shirts, sweatshirts, jeans, sport socks
- Swimsuit** (even if it's cold...we might sauna!)
- 1 Towel** (beach size).
- Water Bottle: capacity of 1 litre** (durable, such as Lexan plastic or stainless steel)
- Plastic whistle** – 'pealess' (works when frozen)
- Mini Flashlight or Headlamp** with new batteries.
- 2 extra large garbage bags.**
- Toiletries:** toothbrush & paste, floss, sanitary supplies for girls, etc.
- Sunblock and lip block:** minimum 15 SPF
- Sunglasses** with 100% UVA protection
- Sun Hat:** with sun visor or full brim (e.g. baseball cap).
- OPTIONAL:**
 - 1 pair of quick dry shorts
 - 1 pair sport sandals
 - Camera (not part of a phone)
 - Writing material

LEAVE YOUR WATCH, WALLET, JEWELLERY & OTHER VALUABLES AT HOME

NOTE: Please make every effort to bring as much wool, polypropylene, fleece or thinsulite clothing as possible. Although it is summer it can get very cold in the mountains and these fabrics will provide warmth even when wet. Suitable woolen clothing can often be found in second hand stores quite cheaply. Polypropylene, fleece and thinsulite can be found in backpacking and other sports stores.

***RAIN GEAR:** Cheap plastic raingear is NOT suitable. It gets caught in trees and shrubs and is usually in shreds after the first two hours of rain! Heavy rubberized or coated nylon is great and will stand up for years. NO PONCHOS.

ENTERTAINMENT: Musical instruments are most welcome. Walkmans, iPods, radios and video games are NOT allowed.

POCKET MONEY: Students do not need any spending money during the course. \$30.00 to \$55.00 is sufficient for buying Educo outerwear and purchasing photos at the Open House. Your money will be held in security for you during the course.

NAME TAGS: All clothing & equipment must be identified with a tag or indelible pen.

RENTAL EQUIPMENT: WE LEND WARM LAYERS, TUQUES, ETC AT NO COST. FOR SLEEPING BAGS, THERE IS A RENTAL FEE FOR SLEEPING BAGS - \$



Personal Equipment List for Summer Courses

THE ACTIVITIES INVOLVED IN THIS PROGRAM REQUIRE THE FOLLOWING CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT. IT IS NOT NECESSARY THAT YOU PURCHASE ANY OF THE ITEMS ON THIS LIST. DO YOUR BEST TO BORROW OR, IF POSSIBLE, RENT THE ITEMS. EDUCO HAS A LIMITED NUMBER OF SUPPLIES TO LEND OR RENT SO PLEASE CONTACT US IF YOU ARE HAVING TROUBLE FINDING ANY OF THESE ITEMS!!

- Boots:** Sturdy leather hiking boots with ankle support, broken in and waterproofed.
- Back Pack:** With waist belt, minimum 60L capacity but 70 – 80L is preferred
- Sleeping Bag:** Good to -5 celcius. Do not bring a bulky bag that cannot be packed small!
- Sleeping Pad:** Ensolite or Thermarest Type or blue or yellow foam
- *Rain Jacket with hood:** Durable: Gore-tex or equivalent, or coated nylon.
- *Rain Pants:** Durable (full-zip legs are nice): Gore-tex or equivalent, or coated nylon
- 2 pairs of Running Shoes:** One good pair and one pair old & ugly.
- Hiking Pants:** "quick dry": lightweight wool or synthetic (Schoeller etc) or uncoated thin nylon
- Hiking shirt:** thin, synthetic – **NOT COTTON**
- Long underwear - top & bottom:** synthetic, fleece or wool – **NOT COTTON**
- 2 warm tops:** Wool, fleece or synthetic - 1 light & 1 heavy – **NOT COTTON**
- Gloves:** wool, fleece or synthetic
- Toque:** Wool or fleece
- 4 pairs wool (or wool blend) socks** – 2 thick and 2 mid-weight

- 2 pairs Liner Socks.**
- Casual/street clothes** for wearing around site or traveling to and from Educo: i.e. cotton clothes: Underwear, T-shirts, sweatshirts, jeans, sport socks
- Swimsuit**
- 1 Towel** (beach size).
- Sun Hat:** with sun visor or full brim (e.g. baseball cap).
- Water Bottle: capacity of 1 litre** (durable, such as Lexan plastic or stainless steel)
- Plastic whistle** – 'pealess' (works when frozen)
- Plastic Cup, Bowl & Spoon.**
- Mini Flashlight or Headlamp** with new batteries.
- 4 extra large garbage bags.**
- 4 large ziplock bags.** (NOT SLIDE LOCK)
- Toiletries:** toothbrush & paste, floss, sanitary supplies for girls, etc.
- Sunblock and lip block:** minimum 15 SPF
- Sunglasses** with 100% UVA protection
- OPTIONAL:** 1 pair of quick dry shorts for hiking sandals, camera, writing material, rock climbing shoes, gaiters

LEAVE YOUR WATCH, WALLET, JEWELLERY & OTHER VALUABLES AT HOME

NOTE: Please make every effort to bring as much wool, polypropylene, fleece or thinsulate clothing as possible. Although it is summer it can get very cold in the mountains and these fabrics will provide warmth even when wet. Suitable woolen clothing can often be found in second hand stores quite cheaply. Polypropylene, fleece and thinsulate can be found in backpacking and other sports stores.

***RAIN GEAR:** Cheap plastic raingear is NOT suitable. It gets caught in trees and shrubs and is usually in shreds after the first two hours of rain! Heavy rubberized or coated nylon is great and will stand up for years. NO PONCHOS.

+BOOTS AND SOCKS: Expensive hiking boots are NOT necessary. Light weight hiking boots with lots of ankle support are ideal. Leather or synthetics are suitable. It is very important to break in the boots and water proof them. Blisters from new boots are our biggest first aid problem. New wool socks are springy and provide cushion when walking long distances; old socks lose their springiness. Liner socks under heavy wool socks help prevent blisters.

ENTERTAINMENT: Musical instruments are most welcome. Walkmans, iPods, radios and video games are NOT allowed.

POCKET MONEY: Students do not need any spending money during the course. \$30.00 to \$55.00 is sufficient for buying Educo outerwear and purchasing photos at the Open House. Your money will be held in security for you during the course.

NAME TAGS: All clothing & equipment must be identified with a tag or indelible pen.

RENTAL EQUIPMENT: A LIMITED NUMBER OF PACKS, SLEEPING BAGS AND SLEEPING PADS ARE AVAILABLE ON A FIRST COME, FIRST SERVE BASIS. PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE WELL IN ADVANCE.

Rental Fees (per course): \$25 for a sleeping bag, \$25 for a backpack, \$10 for a sleeping pad. Fees can be paid in advance online or by cheque. Alternatively, rental fees can be paid on the first day of your course by cheque or cash.