

First Communications

Community groups who experience mental illness

Questions to ask:

1. **Booking time available** - Yes
2. **What type of community group are you?** – clients who experience mental illness
3. **Minimum numbers** (10 – 20)? Consider the cost per person and perhaps only charge for the participants that attend.
4. **Have the participants been on a camp before?**
 - I. Yes – Investigate what type of activities, whether it was hard top or tent accommodation and the length of stay on the camp. You can then tell the agency staff about the differences or similarities when they come on your camp.
 - II. No – there are certain expectations about being on camp which the participants should know about. These can include and should be discussed with the agency staff:
 - i. Waking early in the morning (7 or 8am)
 - ii. Sharing a room with up to four other people
 - iii. Being around a group of 20 people day and night
 - iv. Listening and following instructions
 - v. Working with others to solve problems
 - vi. Trusting other people and at times being physically close in activities
 - vii. Refraining from using drugs and alcohol for the duration of the camp
 - viii. Being physically active such as walking or riding a mountain bike
 - ix. Some activities may be water based so an indication of the participants level of ability should be explored by the agency:
 - I am familiar with swimming/playing in water
 - I am unfamiliar with swimming/playing in the water
 - I can float
 - I find it hard to float
 - I can swim with clothes on
 - I find it hard to swim with clothes on
 - I can swim 25m or more
 - I find it hard to swim 25m
5. **Investigate how many agency staff are attending and have they considered contingency plans so that if a participant is ill, there will be enough staff to take care of the group if one has to leave the campsite.**
6. **Consider providing a key campsite leader for the group who can act as liaison about campsite issues and facilitate the campsite sessions. They should also be skilled in front loading and debriefing activities in a way that participants can relate the outcomes to situations in life.**

