

Individualized Student Profile for Outdoor Learning

The following Individualized Student Profile for Outdoor Learning can be utilized by non-formal educators to ensure successful inclusion and outdoor education programming.

Knowing the needs of participants beforehand can greatly increase the success of both the child and activities itself.

Non-formal educators can use this tool to ask formal educators about the needs of their students prior to a field trip. The program can then be modified to meet the needs of the student(s). This can be an invaluable tool for non-formal educators, as this allows the educator to critically reflect on the program(s) offered, and to begin to adapt activities ahead of the program.

Individualized Student Profile for Outdoor Learning	
General Information	Notes
Outdoor likes/dislikes	
Environmental allergies	
Outdoor fears, if known	
Preferred/non-preferred outdoor activities	
Behavioral rewards or incentives used	
Mobility	Notes
Assistive mobility device(s)	
Tires easily/low stamina?	
Poor balance?	
Ability to traverse difficult (uneven, hilly, rocky, etc.) terrain?	

Social	Notes
How does participant act in social situations?	
Participant respond better to males or females?	
Does participant share/take turns?	
How does participant interact with peers vs. adults?	
Shy or withdrawn?	
Communication	Notes
How does participant communicate?	
Verbally	
Sign language	
Points or gestures	
Visual aids	
Communication device(s)	
Other	
How does participant communicate hunger, thirst, tired, upset, etc.?	
Sensory	Notes
Participant sensitive to sensory input?	
Participant seeks certain type of input (see below)?	
Sounds	
Visual	
Textures	
Smells	
Movement	

Behaviors	Notes
Does participant display any need-to-know behaviors that may affect the safety or wellbeing of participant or others?	
Short attention span	
Running/wandering off	
Emotional meltdowns	
Tantrums	
Self-harm or harm to others	
Verbal outbursts	
Self-stimulatory behavior(s)	
Other	
Transitions	Notes
What is the best way to assist transitioning from one activity to the next?	
Schedules	
Countdowns	
Warnings	
“First/Then” statements	
Visual timer	
Learning Styles	Notes
How does participant learn best?	
Small/large groups	
Visual	
Kinesthetic	
Auditory	
Verbal	

Safety	Notes
Is participant aware of safety, or lack safety awareness?	
Include any site-specific safety concerns (bodies of water, busy roads, high-traffic areas, etc.)	
Additional Information	

Illustrative Example of Individualized Student Profile and Activity Modifications

Individualized Student Profile for Outdoor Learning	
Name: <i>Sample Student</i>	
General Information	Notes
Outdoor likes/dislikes	<i>Dislikes bugs</i>
Environmental allergies	<i>Peanuts/tree nuts</i>
Outdoor fears, if known	<i>Spiders</i>
Preferred/non-preferred outdoor activities	
Behavioral rewards or incentives used	
Mobility	Notes
Assistive mobility device(s)	
Tires easily/low stamina?	<i>Cannot walk at sustained fast pace</i>
Poor balance?	
Ability to traverse difficult (uneven, hilly, rocky, etc.) terrain?	<i>Unsteady on rocky or hilly ground</i>
Communication	Notes
How does participant communicate?	<i>Student is nonverbal</i>
How does participant communicate they are hungry, thirsty, tired, upset, etc.?	<i>Communication cards</i>
Does participant use a communication device?	<i>Pencil/paper and communication cards</i>

Social	Notes
How does participant act in social situations?	
Participant respond better to males or females?	
Does participant share/take turns?	<i>Difficulty sharing</i>
How does participant interact with peers vs. adults?	<i>Interacts with adults best</i>
Shy or withdrawn?	
Communication	Notes
How does participant communicate?	
Verbally	
Sign language	
Points or gestures	X
Visual aids	X
Communication device(s)	
Other	
How does participant communicate hunger, thirst, tired, upset, etc.?	<i>Student will sit or lie down on the floor if very upset</i>
Sensory	Notes
Participant sensitive to sensory input?	<i>Loud noises and large crowds</i>
Participant seeks certain type of input (see below)?	
Sounds	
Visual	
Textures	
Smells	
Movement	

Behaviors	Notes
Does participant display any need-to-know behaviors that may affect the safety or wellbeing of participant or others?	
Short attention span	X
Running/wandering off	X
Emotional meltdowns	
Tantrums	
Self harm or harm to others	
Verbal outbursts	
Self-stimulatory behavior(s)	<i>Shakes hands, paces, covers ears</i>
Other	
Transitions	Notes
What is the best way to assist transitioning from one activity to the next?	
Schedules	
Countdowns	X
Warnings	X
“First/Then” statements	
Visual timer	

Learning Styles	Notes
How does participant learn best?	
Small/large groups	<i>Small groups 1:1 best</i>
Visual	<i>X</i>
Kinesthetic	
Auditory	
Verbal	
Safety	Notes
Is participant aware of safety, or lack safety awareness?	<i>Doesn't pay attention to surroundings, will get easily lost</i>
Include any site-specific safety concerns (bodies of water, busy roads, high-traffic areas, etc.)	<i>High traffic main parking lot, especially after lunchtime</i>
Additional Information	Notes
<i>Student has a 1:1 paraprofessional at school. Participates minimally in specials (PE, music, art)</i>	

Illustrative Examples of Activity Modifications Integrating Individualized Student Profile

Sample Student has an allergy to tree nuts, so avoid handling any walnuts or other tree nuts that may be encountered during hikes and activities. Stay on flat, even ground as much as possible as Sample Student is unsteady on uneven ground. Keep walking distances short and sporadic. Arrange for transportation for Sample Student and their paraprofessional to/from the activity location if it is a great distance away or if Sample Student cannot reach the destination. Walk to a location that is in the opposite direction of the busy parking lot, if possible. Use communication cards and a small whiteboard and marker so Sample Student can participate in the writing portion of the activity. Have a pair of noise canceling headphones available if outdoor noise is or gets too great. Sample Student likes to pace and wave hands as a self-stimulatory behavior, so allow for them to stand in the back or take frequent breaks if there is a prolonged period of listening or staying in one place. Use a five, three, and one-minute countdown or warning system when transitioning from one area to another.