

Issues that contribute to the undesired events can be sorted into three distinct areas – people, equipment and environment.

People are in charge of planning the journey and this planning can often be inadequate planning. It is important that information has gone out to the Parents and Caregivers so that they know when you are leaving and where from, the transportation, where you are staying, costs, timetable of events, expected guidelines and the contact details of the supervisors and the accommodation staff. This is important in case of an emergency at home, where you need to be contacted. It is also important in providing an opportunity for you to tell your supervisors about any sleeping conditions or dietary requirements. An example of a permission slip is on page.

People having a lack of area knowledge can result in skiers attempting slopes which are above their ability level. This can lead to skiing injuries or sometimes death. In order to reduce the chances of this it is important that you assess your ability level before you go up the mountain. I suggest that you visit snow planet, which is a safer environment to try out your skills within. You should reference the Ability level chart on page and assess which level you are from 1-6. This will give you information on which trails you would be most comfortable on. You can further this knowledge by carrying a Whakapapa Trail Map, on page, in your pocket. This is an easy guide to which runs are easiest, which are on more difficult terrain and which are on the most difficult terrain.

People must also make sure they are eating and drinking the right foods and liquids, as when you are exercising so it is important to replenish the water and food that you are working off. Water is a critical element of the body, and adequate hydration is a must to allow the body to function. Up to 75% of the body's weight is made up of water so minor dehydration can cause headaches, dizziness and tiredness. Food is also important to keep your energy levels up. Carbohydrates are the body's ideal fuel. They supply the body with the energy needed for the muscles, brain and central nervous system. In fact, the human brain depends exclusively on carbohydrates for its energy. A lack of carbohydrates in your food, so not eating fruits, vegetables, beans, dairy products, can cause fatigue and this is when you are potentially prone to injury or illness. People need the right knowledge of what to bring as well. As a lot of our class has been in the outdoors before we should know what to bring to give us the energy we need on the mountain. We have addressed this issue by looking at our menus for breakfast and dinner and making sure that we have lots of carbohydrates to fuel the body.

Weather has a major impact on trips in the outdoors. An easy and relaxed trip in warm weather can be physically and mentally demanding if the weather turns cold and wet. Strong winds, soft snow, or high rivers may make a route impassable. New Zealand's weather can change dramatically in a few minutes.

Every year people go and enjoy the wonders of the mountain scenery but for some the experience isn't so pleasant as they venture onto the mountain unaware of the weather they may meet. Every year, even in New Zealand people are hurt or sometimes die on mountains as a consequence of the weather. Some underestimate the mountain weather; some are unaware of the mountain weather and some leave decisions on the weather too late when on the mountainside.

A risk reduction strategy is having knowledgeable group supervisors. Skiing with a certified guide or instructor can reduce your chances of injury or getting lost and attempting a slope above your ability level. The Ruapehu Snow Academy trains internationally recognized ski and snowboard instructors and prepares individuals for both the NZSIA and SBINZ exam standards that each instructor must take in order to be certified. These exams ensure a high standard of teaching and safety on the slopes. Whakapapa has more than 1300 acres of varying terrain. With extensive beginner, intermediate and advanced skiing/riding and is renowned for its array of steep chutes and off road terrain. To cater for this diversity NZSIA Ski offer a whole range of courses and qualifications to ensure that a teacher has the knowledge and ability to attempt high level slopes.

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In terms of the environment it is important to check the weather and snow report to minimize the chance of getting caught off guard. MetService works with the Department of Conservation to provide weather forecasts for New Zealand's national parks including Mt Ruapehu. Also on the Mt Ruapehu webpage the weather and snow report are available both on a daily basis and a predicted weather pattern for 5 days in advance. On Page there is an example of a detailed weather forecast and snow report. With the ever-changing weather conditions on Ruapehu, no two trips are the same. Blue skies and stunning views may greet you one day. The next day you could have the adventure of a lifetime in the 2797m mountains strongest winds, remarkable fog and rapidly moving clouds. It is important to pack gear that is suitable for all weather not just those stated in the predictions.

When it comes to the issue of equipment you need the right clothing for the conditions. When skiing conditions can change suddenly and the climate is a winter one and the terrain is snow you need ski clothing which is manufactured to be functional. It is essential to wear the appropriate clothing in skiing because like in any outdoor activity, you are more susceptible to harmful influences when you are on the slopes. You need specialized clothing specifically made for the purpose of skiing or snow boarding. Skiwear must be able to keep you dry and warm. In general, a three layer system applies to ski clothing - an outer layer, which is resistant to wind, and water, mid-layer that can keep you warm, and thermal underwear. If there is cold weather, make sure that your ski clothing has insulating layers. On the other hand, give more importance to breathability if the weather is dry or warm. Thermals should be good quality and made of polypropylene, polyester, or other synthetic material. This should reduce your chances of hyperthermia dramatically. Wearing thick socks with stretchable material is also important to avoid lumps and blisters.

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Put on gloves or mittens that are water-resistant, especially if your hands chill after a short time in the slopes. Gloves or mittens should be tight enough so they do not interfere when you are holding your ski poles. However, they should be loose to permit blood circulation on your fingers. Finally you should wear UV-protected goggles or sunglasses which can protect your eyes from wind chill and snow. A better choice would be any model which provides 100% protection from ultraviolet rays. This should reduce your chances of getting sun burnt.