



## NATURE PLAY SA GEOCACHING RISK BENEFIT ASSESSMENT

**Name of program** - Geocaching (GEO)

**Site** - Various outdoor learning environments including on site at Department of Education sites, Independent and Catholic Primary and High Schools. Also run within parks, gardens, beach and other public spaces with a similar environmental profile

**Date of Assessment and review** June 22, 2021- reviewed July 2021

**Plan prepared by** Nature Play SA Education Team (MT) and CEO (SS)

**Communicated to** All Nature Play SA staff and sites hosting this program

**Plan prepared** using the Department for Education SA Risk Matrix

*Nature Play SA will monitor the effectiveness of controls and change if necessary. This assessment will be reviewed every 6 months or if an incident or significant change occurs.*

### **Description of the program where risks have been identified**

- Geocaching incursion or excursion
- Outdoor learning areas, public Botanical Gardens or Parks
- Features may include shrubs, bushes, trees, rocks, water, sand, oval/open grassed area, bike paths, pedestrian paths
- Some or all of these listed features may be present in the outdoor area
- Participants will be in pairs or small groups, searching a given area to find hidden items using hand-held GPS devices

## **NATURE PLAY SA GEOCACHING RISK BENEFIT ASSESSMENT**

### **Benefits of activity for learning outcomes of children**

- General capabilities: teamwork, problem solving, critical thinking, persistence
- Maths: measurement, problem solving, location and direction, mapping, relative distance, interpretation of data
- Geography: Cardinal coordinates, navigational skills, mapping, topographical analysis
- Technology: GPS devices, smart-phone app usage and benefit, interpretation of data and digital information, discussing possible future jobs that use these technologies
- Outdoor Education: Spatial awareness, gross motor, use of environments/space for physical development, physical activity survival skills
- Aboriginal perspectives: wayfinding, technologies from long ago, use of night sky for navigation

### **Non-negotiable elements of this activity**

- Benefits outweigh risk 'when children encounter certain types of risks, it helps them to learn to assess and manage risks' (Gill, 2007)
- Educating children about risk, challenge, limitations, and safety in outdoor learning environments is part of every leader's introduction and brief
- Children learn about 'Leave No Trace' principles and their responsibilities and expectations when using an outdoor learning environment, Botanic Garden or National Park e.g., tread lightly and take all rubbish away with you.
- Site is to give final approval for all resources used for the program and everyone is made aware of any risks and expectations
- Appropriate supervision - child to staff ratio reflects department/site/sector policy.
- The identified teacher in charge is deferred to regarding pastoral care of students (administering first aid and behaviour management)
- Caches are hidden in places that are deemed safe for students to access.
- Children stay within the identified boundary during the activity.
- Students are reminded to be aware and observe their surroundings while using hand-held devices (remind students to watch where walking.)
- NPSA have the responsibility and right to amend or cancel the program if adverse conditions present before or during program.

### COVID-19 – Response - Additional Information

Nature Play SA is committed to supporting a safe environment for all by following all SA Government and health advice with reasonable adjustments to our incursion and excursion program implemented when necessary. The use of outdoor environments is key to our programs, and we support federal government advice for schools 'to teach outdoors when possible' through the delivery of our incursions.

#### Exposure to COVID-19 and associated response to COVID-19 and SA Health and Government Advice

Current SA Government and health guidelines inform all aspects of program delivery, including steps taken to cancel/reschedule when necessary and adjustments as dictated by SA Health and Government

- Nature Play SA is a COVID-safe workplace with required policies, protocols, and practises in place for all employees. ○ Programs are delivered in expansive outdoor areas on school grounds.
- NPSA facilitator(s) will ensure they adhere to current social distancing best practice protocols.
- Students have access to individual workspaces within this open area when required.
- Resources can be individually distributed amongst students when necessary (no communal resources if required or requested.) ○ Hand sanitiser and wipes are available.

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### Hazard Identified - Snake Bite

Preliminary Risk Assessment - Unlikely x Major = Moderate / Level of risk with control in place - Rare x Major = Moderate

Reduction and control measures	Who	When
Groups to stay a recommended distance from water and long grass during warmer months and children are alerted to the possible risk and what to do if snakes are seen (during safety briefing)	NPSA and school	Throughout program
Caches will be hidden in open low grass/dirt areas. Efforts will be made (stomping/clapping) throughout the 45-60min timeframe of setting caches to scare away any snakes that may be present. Students will be reminded on how to deal with a snake if seen.	NPSA and School	On the day

### Hazard Identified - Lost Children

Preliminary Risk Assessment - Unlikely x Major = Moderate / Level of risk with control in place - Rare x Major = Moderate

Reduction and control measures	Who	When
Geocaching will be done on school grounds. Boundaries will be set for the activity with clear instructions and supervised by roaming adults. Students will work in small groups (or pairs). Trained staff will run the activity.	NPSA Staff	Throughout program

### Hazard Identified - Personal safety and unwelcome interaction from people outside of the group.

Preliminary Risk Assessment - Rare x Moderate - Low / Level of risk with control in place - Rare x Moderate = Low

Reduction and control measures	Who	When
All staff and volunteers to have Teacher Registration or DCSI clearance / Working with Children Check and RAN training.	All staff	During program
Adult/child ratio as set per site is maintained and students are under constant supervision.	All staff	Throughout program

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### Hazard Identified - Trip / Fall

Preliminary Risk Assessment - Rare x Moderate - Low / Level of risk with control in place - Rare x Moderate = Low

Reduction and control measures	Who	When
Caches will be hidden where there are no hazardous obstacles or dangerous materials around. Students are reminded to walk, not run, while geocaching.	All staff	During program

### Hazard Identified - Hazardous items on site (broken bottles, syringes, etc)

Preliminary Risk Assessment - Rare x Moderate - Low / Level of risk with control in place - Rare x Moderate = Low

Reduction and control measures	Who	When
School is alerted to any hazardous material identified on their site and students redirected to other areas.	All staff	During program

### Hazard Identified - Insect bite / sting

Preliminary Risk Assessment - Rare x Moderate - Low / Level of risk with control in place - Rare x Moderate = Low

Reduction and control measures	Who	When
Hide caches in low-risk location, inspect location thoroughly when hiding cache, remind children to be safe and carefully consider where they put their hands.	All staff	During program

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### Hazard Identified - Dehydration

Preliminary Risk Assessment - Rare x Moderate - Low / Level of risk with control in place - Rare x Moderate = Low

Reduction and control measures	Who	When
Liaise with school to ensure students bring their water bottles and hats if needed.	All staff	During program

### Hazard Identified - Student clothing and protection from elements

Preliminary Risk Assessment - Rare x Moderate - Low / Level of risk with control in place - Rare x Moderate = Low

Reduction and control measures	Who	When
Provide school information regarding appropriate attire for the day to ensure children are comfortable and safe - advise hats, sunscreen, sturdy shoes with good grip and closed toes required, along with loose sports-style clothing, a warm jumper and protective raincoat if necessary.	NPSA	Before program During program

### Hazard Identified - Environmental damage to flora/fauna

Preliminary Risk Assessment - Unlikely x Minor - Low / Level of risk with control in place - Rare x Moderate = Low

Reduction and control measures	Who	When
NPSA staff will talk to participants at the beginning of the session re conservation and environmental protection/respect.	NPSA	During program

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## Hazard Identified - Extreme Weather Conditions

Preliminary Risk Assessment - Rare x Moderate - Low / Level of risk with control in place - Rare x Minor = Low

Reduction and control measures	Who	When
School protocols regarding severe weather will guide decision to postpone or cancel an event. If there is to be a cancellation due to weather, where possible schools will be notified by 4 pm the day before the incursion.	NPSA and Site staff	By 4pm day prior

Overall preliminary assessment Risk = low/moderate

Overall assessment with control in place risk = low

### Risk Matrix

Likelihood	Almost Certain	Possibility of occurrence more than 75% - expected to occur	Consequence	Critical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Critical incident (eg death or permanent disability of adult or child; high level of distress to other parties)</li> <li>Sustained negative publicity or damage to reputation from a national perspective or from the community welfare perspective</li> </ul>
	Likely	Possibility of occurrence between 50% and 75% - probably will occur		Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multiple injuries requiring specialist medical treatment or hospitalisation; and/or major occupational health safety and welfare liability incident/issue</li> <li>Major incident which damages public or parent confidence</li> </ul>
	Possible	Possibility of occurrence between 25% and 50% - may occur at some time		Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serious injuries and/or illness</li> <li>Complex welfare and/or health care issue</li> <li>Serious disruption or incident, resulting in distress to children and adults</li> </ul>
	Unlikely	Possibility of occurrence between 5% and 25% - could occur at some time		Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minor first aid or minor occupational health safety and welfare liability incident/issue (eg minor cuts, bruises, bumps)</li> </ul>
	Rare	Possibility of occurrence less than 5% - may never occur		Insignificant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No treatment required</li> </ul>

### Level of Risk

		Likelihood				
		Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost Certain
Consequence	Critical	Moderate	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
	Major	Moderate	Moderate	High	High	Extreme
	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High	High
	Minor	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
	Insignificant	Low	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate