

Vancouver Island Society for Adaptive Snowsports

Nordic INFORMATION SHEET

A GUIDE FOR CAREGIVERS/PARENTS OF NEW STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Vancouver Island Society for Adaptive Snowsports (VISAS) is a nonprofit, volunteer organization that provides Canadian Adaptive Snowsports (CADS) certified instructors to teach differently-abled people, 6 years and older, to ski or snowboard. Mt. Washington Alpine Resort (MWAR) is a huge supporter of the VISAS Adaptive program, providing half price lift tickets and free snowsports equipment from their rental department. VISAS provides instruction and adaptive equipment for those requiring it, free of charge.

All instructors and students must be members of BC Adaptive Snowsports (BCAS) **but** for **first-timers** wanting to try skiing or snowboarding, VISAS offers a **“Have-a-Go”** Program for a \$10 temporary BCAS membership fee which covers a one-time session for either discipline with lift ticket, equipment and instruction free of charge. In order to give them a chance to try more than one snowsport, we are offering up to TWO Have-a-Go days, with the caveat that each day must be a different sport (one of skiing -*which includes sit-skiing & Nordic skiing*, or snowboarding). For more information, go to the VISAS website www.visasweb.ca and click on “Have-A-Go Program”. You will need to pay the \$10 fee for each “Have-a-Go” day. Nordic information is also located on the website. The following information pertains mostly to Alpine skiing and boarding.

To book a “Have-a-Go” Session:

1. For **Nordic skiing call the Nordic VISAS scheduler at 250-334-1086** or email Cathe at cegan10@telus.net. (Note: the Nordic ski centre is off Nordic Way – turn at the first left after passing the Sunrise parking lot, before you head up to the main Alpine Lodge).
2. For alpine (downhill skiing or snowboarding) call the VISAS office at Mt. Washington at **250-334-5755** or email adaptive@mountwashington.ca. (*Please ensure you have confirmation of a lesson before travelling to the Resort*).
3. You can book one “Have-a-Go” session for skiing or snowboarding (or one of each depending on availability). Sessions are from 10:00-12:00 and 1:00-3:00 and can be booked as a full day OR morning OR afternoon.
4. The VISAS Duty Day Supervisor (DDS) will ask for your child’s name, age, gender, height, weight, abilities or limitations (disability) and whether for skiing or snowboarding, plus a contact phone number or email. The last page of this guide is an information template you can complete to be ready with most of the required information.

On each day of your “Have-a-Go” session you will need to bring:

1. \$10 cash for temporary membership in BCAS
2. Strongly Recommended: Appropriate winter clothing – snow pants, jacket (*appropriate for movement in snow*), waterproof gloves or mitts (*large enough to accommodate wrist guards if snowboarding*), face cover (*balaclava, buff, scarf, etc.*), thin toque (*for under helmet if required and for travel between parking lot and lodge*), ski socks (*not ankle socks, for warmth & wicking*), long johns – top & bottoms or equivalent, fleece or sweater (*layering for differences in temperatures*). **Nordic skiing – it is recommended to dress in layers.**
3. Footwear appropriate for traveling between the parking lot and the lodge
4. Extra mitts and socks, in case they get wet
5. A big lunch, including water, with enough for snacks at the end of the day
6. A large bag for carrying extras; big enough to carry extra items at the end of the day
7. A copy of the completed template (*see end of this document*)
8. A caregiver is required to supervise the participant as required at lunchtime and if the lesson is shorter than anticipated for any reason and for signatures, payment, etc.

Generously provided by Mt. Washington Alpine Resort and VISAS:

1. Ski or Snowboard Boots
2. Skis & poles or Snowboard
3. Helmet & goggles
4. Wrist guards for snowboarding
5. Any adaptive equipment required

VISAS Regular Program:

If your child enjoyed their experience in “Have-a-Go”, they are welcome to continue taking lessons with VISAS when they choose, subject to availability of dates and instructors. For this program, the child must have a membership with BC Adaptive Snowsports which is currently \$53 for the year. The \$10 for each temporary membership fee for “Have-a-Go” will be taken off this amount. To register - on VISAS website www.visasweb.ca, click on Programs, scroll down to “Becoming a Student Member”.

Note: It is not necessary to participate in the Have-a-Go” program in order to join the regular program.

Booking is the same as for “Have-a-Go” except you will need to present your BCAS Membership number (only need to do this the first time each year). You are then entitled to a **half price lift ticket** courtesy of Mt. Washington Alpine Resort, free rentals and instruction. For beginners – downhill/snowboarding, the Easy Acres pass which gives you access to the Magic Carpets but not the chairlifts, is the best option to start.

For **Nordic skiers** – trail ticket gives you access to open trails in the Nordic park and upper area.

See the Mt. Washington website <https://www.mountwashington.ca> for pricing.

PLEASE NOTE: If for any reason you are unable to attend on your booked day, call the VISAS desk at **250-334-5755** or email adaptive@mountwashington.ca AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

If you have booked a **Nordic** session call: **250-334-1086** or email: cegan10@telus.net AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR CAREGIVERS/ PARENTS:

- Please aim to arrive 30 minutes before your child’s session is scheduled to begin (e.g. 9:30am). First time - allow a little extra time for parking, walking to the lodge and locating the VISAS office. The parking lot is often busy in the morning.
- **NOTE: The Nordic Centre is off Nordic Way – below the alpine area off. Turn at the first left after the Sunrise parking area. Disabled parking area at the Nordic centre is off to the left of the main parking area, right by the Nordic building.**
- Check DriveBC for current road conditions from your starting point to Mount Washington Alpine Resort. If the conditions are such that you are not comfortable driving, it’s okay to cancel – but please call the VISAS office at **250-334-5755 (Nordic #: 250-334-1086 or cell: 250-897-0654)** as soon as you know you need to cancel.
- Have sufficient gas in the car for the return trip. There are no vehicle fueling stations on the mountain.
- You must have winter tires and carry chains. Have sufficient windshield washer fluid, etc. Be prepared for winter conditions, snow, rain, dense fog, etc. – things can change from morning to afternoon when you go to leave!
- Driving up from the Inland Island Hwy (Hwy 19), follow signs for Mt. Washington- for downhill skiing/snowboarding continue to the Alpine Lodge parking lot at the top (on the left). (There is a parking lot above that for Deer Lodge and Bear Lodge – don’t go there). Parking is free. If required, you can drive up close to the lodge for unloading of the student and any equipment (such as walkers, wheelchairs for physically disabled). If you call ahead or from there, a VISAS volunteer will come out to assist in getting to the VISAS room. There are also some handicap parking spots near the lodge if you have the decal.
- **Nordic student meet up is in the lodge towards the back main windows on the left-hand side as you walk into the building. Unless arrangements have been made to meet in the disabled parking area.**

- **Alpine area:** To locate the VISAS room: Enter the building through the double doors at the end of the lodge closest to the parking lot, go down a flight of stairs and turn right into the “Marmot Lounge”, go past the “Hungry Marmot Express” café and tables & chairs to the back of the building. VISAS room is located next to the Security Office & Lost & Found. There are washrooms as you first come into the Marmot area and if you continue to the left from there, you will find the entrance hallway to the equipment rental area where you will go after you have checked in with VISAS.
- Enter the VISAS room and introduce yourself to the Duty Day Supervisor (DDS) at the reception desk. You will need to present your child’s details, even if you have already done so before (by email or phone). This is where the completed template at the end of this document comes in handy – give it to the DDS. If you do not have a BCAS membership number to present, you will pay the \$10 cash for a temporary BCAS membership here.
- After the paper work is done you will walk with your child and their Instructor(s) to the equipment rental area, to be fitted and sign a rental waiver agreement. If this is not a “Have-a-Go”, this is where you can also pay for the half price lift pass.
- Wait with the Instructor until they have confirmed your child is “good to go.” This may take up to half an hour.
- You are now free to hang out and check out the amenities in the lodge. You may also want to bring snacks, coffee, back-up power bar for electronics, etc. (*Once your child is comfortable in the program, you can go ski or snowboard too!*)
- There is the Hungry Marmot Express on the Marmot level, The Eagles View Bistro and Ted’s Bar & Grill plus a small store and washrooms on the main level and the Alpine Lodge Café - a cafeteria, on the upper level. The Marmot area has a microwave, water fountain and washrooms, etc. and is a good place to sit while waiting, and for eating lunch with your child. Make sure your cell phone is **on** in case the Instructors need to reach you and be available if needed. Weather conditions and the child’s stamina may mean an early finish to the day.
- **Lunch Hour** – By 11:45, please be at or just outside the VISAS room or **Nordic Lodge** to meet your child.
- **Nordic Lodge has a small take-away menu and/or tables to use if bringing your own lunch.**
NOTE: This is required even if they are doing a full day.
- If your child is doing an afternoon session as well, please ensure he has eaten well, has used the washroom and is back at the VISAS room by 1:00 pm, ready to go out on the snow.
- **End of Day** - Be at the VISAS room or Nordic Lodge by 2:45 PM to meet your child. They will likely be happy and very tired! Allow lots of time for their transition.
- Book your next session(s). One person can have up to three bookings in the computer at a time. (Not applicable for Nordic skiers)
- Nordic equipment rental pick up/returns at lower Nordic Lodge level. (VISAS instructor will usually accompany student to rental area).
- Take the “white return rental equipment slip” and all the rental equipment and accompany your child to the rental area. Their boots should be in the boot rental area unless you took them to the Marmot level with you earlier. Skis/board and helmet will be returned to the designated area. Return the white slip to an attendant or if none is available, drop the white rental return slip in a box on the counter.
- You’re all set for home! Drive safe! Hope to see you again!

Child's Information

Caregiver: Complete this form and print ONE COPY to bring with you for your first lesson.

Child's Name: _____ Gender _____

Child's Age: _____ Child's Height: _____ Child's Weight: _____

Child's Disability: _____

Name of Caregiver On-Site Today: _____ Cell Phone Number: _____

Child's BC Adaptive Snowsports Membership Number (if any): _____

Child's Boot Size for Ski Boots or Snowboard Boots: _____

Child's Snowboard Size (if known and applicable): _____

Child's Other Interests (for conversation topics, etc. with Instructors): _____

Child's Learning Supports (what helps him learn new things?) e.g., humour, patience, silliness, seriousness, fewer words, more words, demonstration):

Child's Learning Challenges or Needs (e.g. slow processing time, needs to see teacher's lips to process well, quiet voice, fewer words, etc.)

Other:
