

# A NOTE TO PARENTS OF CHILDREN ATTENDING AN EDMUND RICE CAMP

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## WHAT ARE EDMUND RICE CAMPS?

Edmund Rice Camps aim to give kids a fun holiday, with a bunch of other kids. The leaders are young adults who volunteer their time to look after the kids and make them feel special. Each child has a young adult as a 'big buddy' during the camp, to try and give them the best possible time. The 'big buddies' and 'little buddies' are grouped in teams of about eight. Other activities involve the whole camp, often forty people or more. The camps normally last from a Tuesday morning to Friday afternoon.

## WHAT ACTIVITIES DO THEY DO?

There are outdoor activities like swimming, bushwalking, canoeing and games. There are also indoor activities like crafts, concerts, games and singing - lots of singing! The kids learn a lot of special, fun songs which get everyone involved. Of an evening there may be a movie, a concert and more indoor games. The kids normally design a T-shirt which they get to take home.

## WHAT SHOULD KIDS BRING ON CAMP?

They will need personal items such as soap, toothbrush and toothpaste, towel, sheets & blankets (or sleeping bag), sunscreen, insect repellent, a hat, shoes suitable for bushwalking, swimming togs. They should not bring valuable items or significant sums of money. If your child does not have some items, such as a sleeping bag, please tell the camp organisers before the camp so they can arrange one. Mobile phones should not be brought on camp.

## WHO RUNS EDMUND RICE CAMPS (ERC)?

In Townsville, ERC is an agency of the Catholic Diocese of Townsville, and the paid coordinators are employees of the Diocese. ERC exists throughout Australia, and a number of other countries around the world. The organisation is named after the man who founded the Christian Brothers.

## WHO WAS EDMUND RICE?

Edmund Rice was a wealthy businessman born in Ireland in 1762. Following the death of his pregnant wife from a horse-riding accident and the subsequent birth of his disabled daughter, Edmund felt a call to reassess his life. After many years of searching, Edmund left his home and devoted his fortune to providing opportunities for the growth and education of the downtrodden and needy children in his community. He opened a school in a stable, living in the loft. Other people, inspired by his example, joined him in offering their lives in the service of those in need.

## WHAT ABOUT THE KIDS' SAFETY?

All camp volunteers receive training in child protection, and are required to abide by a strict code of behaviour. No volunteer is allowed to be alone with a child. Activities are carefully planned to minimise risks, and camp leaders follow a detailed care and safety policy. Any medication for children must be given to the camp leaders by the parents before the camp, and the designated person ensures medication is given strictly according to instructions.