



Letter for Referrers

Camp Outlook is taking referrals for new campers for our summer canoe tripping program. We rely on you, as youth workers, guidance counsellors, teachers, social workers, and other professionals, for referrals. It is with your help that we are able to **provide youth with a free wilderness experience** geared at strengthening their minds, bodies, and souls! At Camp Outlook, we believe strongly in the worth and potential of all youth, the power of experiential learning, and the therapeutic value of wilderness tripping.

We are asking you to forward any referrals for potential campers with whom you are in contact, and whom you believe could benefit from our program. Along with a referral form, we require camper application packages to be filled out in full by the campers and their guardian. Please pass along the application package to the campers whom you have referred. Enclosed in this referral package please find the following:

- Information about Camp Outlook (who we are, our campers, our trip leaders)
- A letter outlining Camp Outlook's policy on camper eligibility
- A referral form for you to complete and send back to us

We also ask for referral agencies to contribute what they can towards the cost of our programs. To make Camp Outlook as financially accessible as possible for all campers **there is no fee for campers to go on trip.** *We need the continued financial support of our referral agencies to keep offering high quality programs in future years.*

Please note, going on an Outlook trip should not be used as a reward or as a consequence for campers. **Our trips focus on creating a respectful, non-judgemental environment where everyone on the trip is valued equally.** While some apprehension is normal, campers who are very unwilling to go on trip will probably not have a very positive experience. Please refer as many youth as you feel would benefit from a trip with Camp Outlook. **We have many spaces available!**

Thank you for taking the time to help send campers to Camp Outlook! Without you this would not be possible. **Please feel free to pass this information on to many others.** We look forward to making this summer season a great success! More information about Camp Outlook is available at campoutlook.ca. If you have any questions or concerns about the program or the forms, please call us at 613-544-6444 or email us at summer@campoutlook.ca.

Please read the following pages in detail to learn more about Camp Outlook!

Sincerely,
Raven Loucks
2024 Camp Outlook Summer Camp Director
Email: summer@campoutlook.ca



What is Camp Outlook?

Created in 1970 by a Queen's University medical student, Camp Outlook is an independent, community-based, non-profit, charitable organisation, run entirely by volunteers. We believe strongly in the worth and potential of all youth, the power of experiential learning, and the therapeutic value of wilderness tripping. **Our mission is to provide young people a chance to develop their sense of self-worth, inner strength, and capacity to succeed.** To do this we provide youth of all genders, ages 13 to 17, with the opportunity to experience wilderness camping on summer backcountry canoe trips and fall/winter hiking trips and day activities. We use the therapeutic nature of wilderness tripping to provide an environment that allows them to respond to nature's challenges and learn about their own abilities in a team while being supported by trained trip leaders. Teamwork and cooperation are what allows our trips to run smoothly; our trip groups often come back from their adventure as a strong community. We are accredited by the [Ontario Camps Association](#).

Who are our campers?

Camp Outlook seeks to provide a wilderness camping experience to youth who may especially benefit from exploring their strengths and skills along with other youth in the outdoors as part of a supportive and small tripping group community. **They are youth who may have difficulty coping with their daily environment, who may be faced with particularly challenging situations, or who may not otherwise afford to go on a wilderness trip.** Most campers are referred to us by social agencies such as Pathways to Education, the Boys and Girls Club, Youth Diversion, Children's Aid Services, schools, and other professionals who work with youth. Camp Outlook trips help to foster self-confidence in campers by immersing them in a new environment and allowing them to see that they can meet the challenges they face in the woods, and by extension the challenges they face at home as well. **Some apprehension about tripping is normal, but it is best not to adamantly push a reluctant youth into tripping.**

Why do we ask campers to be referred?

Camp Outlook trip leaders are volunteers who have very little opportunity to interact with the campers before departing on trip. The referral process helps us plan trips that will best accommodate the needs and interests of our campers by providing us with information from an outside source. We use the referrals to try and put campers into appropriate groupings. The more information we have, the better prepared we will be and the more fun all the campers on the trip will have. **It is very important that we know as much as possible about the campers, their strengths and their challenges, and how best to support them,** especially because our trips take place in a remote wilderness setting away from outside help. While the change of environment of an Outlook trip can have a positive impact on campers, it also means that campers will be interacting very closely with others in a much less structured setting than at a school. The tight knit group is often one of the most rewarding parts of a canoe trip and offers a huge learning opportunity; we need your help through the referral form to try and make that group happen! **If you have concerns about a potential camper please call us before making the referral and also indicate your concerns on the referral form.**

What is a summer canoe trip like?

The average canoe trip consists of nine days of paddling, portaging, hiking, cooking, and setting up and taking down camp. **We are not a residential camp, and we move between campsites on a daily basis.** Canoe trips are extremely physically challenging but they are also a lot of fun and very rewarding, and are filled with swimming, card games, and fireside conversations. Campers do not need to be in top physical fitness to participate, but you should read the Camper Letter of Eligibility to ensure their ability to participate. Our canoe trips maintain a 2-to-1 or better camper-to-trip leader ratio with up to six campers per trip. We run separate trips for boys and girls that are led by co-ed trip leader teams.

What if there is an emergency?

In the rare case of an emergency, we have policies and procedures to help us manage the situation. Our trips are in the Algonquin Provincial Park backcountry canoeing system where there is not easy access to outside help or a way out. To get to an access point we need to paddle and portage to get there, which can often take several days. This means that we can only send campers home early in exceptional circumstances. Our trip leaders are trained in Advanced Wilderness First Aid and we carry well stocked first aid kits so we are able to manage most injuries in the field and continue on. We also carry a satellite messaging device that can contact outside help in an immediately life threatening situation, but it can still take emergency services 2 to 8 hours or more to get to the group. Conversely, there is no reliable way for us to get in contact with a tripping group while they are in the park.

Who leads the trips?

Every year, Camp Outlook brings together a dedicated group of enthusiastic volunteers eager and ready to contribute their diverse leadership styles to a successful summer. Camp Outlook summer trip leaders go through an intensive 6-week training program during which they are taught all the skills required to safely lead a canoe trip, including Advanced Wilderness First Aid and Bronze Medallion/Cross. Additionally, internally-run workshops and guest speakers provide a forum for developing skills in conflict resolution, low-impact and safe camping, crisis intervention, and assessing emergency situations. Training culminates with an intensive 8-day canoe trip in Algonquin Park, where our trip leaders have the opportunity to hone their skills and become familiar with the area.

All of our trip leaders are at least 18 years of age and are required to provide a satisfactory police vulnerable sector check. Many are post-secondary students or recent graduates from Queen's and other universities and colleges. They come to us from many different places and backgrounds from across Canada, and sometimes the world! They volunteer for 3 very busy full time months of their summer to lead our trips! We hope you like them as much as we do!

"I was MADE for this"

- Female camper, 16 years old, about portaging

"I learned that if I try really hard, I can achieve."

- Male camper, 14 years old

What is the cost of Camp Outlook?

There is no fee for campers to participate in our programs. We strive to make Camp Outlook as financially accessible as possible to all campers and so we do not charge anything to go on trip with us. **We do ask that guardians who can afford to do so consider making a donation to Camp Outlook to help keep the program available to all our campers.**

As a small organisation with a limited budget we also recognize that the agencies that refer campers to us also have varying abilities to contribute financially to our programs. As such we do not have a fee to refer campers. **We do ask that the agencies that refer campers to us contribute financially to Camp Outlook whenever possible.**

Because ALL of our trip leaders are volunteers and because we receive many discounts and contributions from generous Kingston businesses and organisations we are able to keep the cost of running our programs very low in comparison to most other canoe tripping programs. As well, we have very few administrative costs and nearly all of our costs are directly related to running our programs; most of our money is spent on transportation, food, park fees, trip leader training, and insurance. **However, it still costs us an average of about \$500 to send one camper on one canoe trip** (for comparison, the fee to go on a 9-day canoe trip at most commercial camps would often be around \$2000). In order to have enough money to run the summer we fundraise year-round. Most of our funding comes from donations made by generous individuals and organisations in the Kingston community. **All donations go directly towards running our programs.**

Donation Methods:

Cheque or Cash (cheques payable to Camp Outlook)

Please mail donations to **PO Box 811, Kingston ON, K7L 4X6**, or bring them to us in person when you see us next. We are able to provide charitable tax receipts for donations made by cheque or cash.

e-Transfer sent to bod@campoutlook.ca

Card through CanadaHelps at <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/4528>

Donations made through CanadaHelps will receive a charitable tax receipt directly from CanadaHelps for the amount donated. CanadaHelps retains 3.75% of donations to cover payment processing fees and their administrative costs.

Monthly Donations can also be set up through CanadaHelps

Any financial contribution made to Camp Outlook is completely voluntary. **We greatly appreciate any amount you are able to donate.** All donation information is confidential within the administrative team and will not affect the camper's registration or tripping experience. **Please note that we are not able to refund donations for any reason.** Please contact us at 613-544-6444 if you have any questions or to organise a donation.

Camper Name:

Please print clearly

Camp Outlook Camper Referral Form

This form should be completed by the referring agency, organisation, or school and returned directly to Camp Outlook. **It should be completed by an individual who works closely with the potential camper.** The information provided will be used to schedule campers together appropriately, as well as to help us plan for the needs of individual campers.

We require the following documents in order to schedule the camper for a trip. If possible, please send the following documents together as soon as possible.

- this Camper Referral Form - 3 pages (completed by the referring agency or school)
- Camper Application Package - 10 pages (completed by the camper and their guardian)

We require all information on this form to be completed before the camper goes on trip. **This form is not designed to exclude campers**, it is to ensure that we are prepared to meet their unique needs. All information in this form is kept confidential within Camp Outlook. **Please ask us if you have any questions or concerns about this form.**

Referrer Name: _____

Organization/Agency: _____

Phone: _____ - _____ - _____ x _____ Email: _____

Camper Name: _____ Age: _____ Gender: _____

Primary Contact Person for Camper: _____

Contact Phone: _____ - _____ - _____ Email: _____

Please answer the following questions in as much detail as possible:

In what context do you know the camper?

Why have you referred them?

CONTINUED ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

Camp Outlook Camper Referral Form - Page 1 of 3

Please attach additional information if more space is required

Camper Name:

Please print clearly

Common sources of problems on Camp Outlook trips are health and/or behavioural issues which were known to the camper, guardian, and/or referrer before the trip began. **If the camper has a health or behavioural issue it does not necessarily mean that they will not be able to participate.** If we know about an issue in advance we are usually able to accommodate it. In some cases however, it would not be in the best interest of the camper to go on the trip. In either case it is essential that we be aware of **ALL** possible concerns or considerations, **both medical and behavioural.** While all of our volunteer trip leaders receive extensive training, they are not professional counsellors, youth workers, or health care workers. Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns. Depending on the situation, we may be able to accommodate a camper with some of the following, but we **MUST** be well informed beforehand so we can adequately prepare and ensure the safety of **ALL** campers and trip leaders on the trip. **We must know if the camper currently has or has experienced any of the following:**

- Any history of violence and/or aggression
- Any history of sexual misconduct
- Any history of self harm, suicidality, and/or running away
- Any history of depression, anxiety, and/or other mental health diagnosis
- Autism, ADHD, ODD, learning difficulties, and/or other executive functioning diagnosis
- Any chronic, recurring, and/or life threatening medical condition which may require hospitalisation and/or may make it unsafe for them to be on the trip

If yes to any of the above, please describe in detail and list any treatments:

Please describe any other specific requirements that we may need to know to help support the camper while on trip:

CONTINUED ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

Camp Outlook Camper Referral Form - Page 2 of 3

Please attach additional information if more space is required

Camper Name:

Please print clearly

Please describe their personality and interests:

Please describe strategies for working with them:

Does the camper have any previous camping, boating, or swimming experience? (campers are **not** required to have any previous experience in order to participate) If so please describe:

How do they feel about going on a Camp Outlook trip? Please circle all that apply:

Enthusiastic Ambivalent Apprehensive Does not want to go

Nervous Reluctant Concerned Other:

Please use the space below to indicate any other information, not outlined above, which Camp Outlook should be aware of:

I have read this form and confirm that all information is current, complete, and accurate. I have read and understand the document entitled "Camp Outlook Camper Letter of Eligibility" and have raised any potential issues with the Camp Outlook Camp Directors.

Referrer Signature:	Date:
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Camp Outlook Camper Letter of Eligibility

VERY IMPORTANT - PLEASE READ CAREFULLY THE FOLLOWING RESTRICTIONS ARE FOR SAFETY REASONS

Depending on the situation, we may be able to accommodate a camper with some of the following, but we **MUST** be well informed beforehand so we can adequately prepare and ensure the safety of **ALL** campers and trip leaders on the trip. **We must know if the camper:**

1. Is younger than 13 or older than 17;
2. Weighs less than 90lbs (40kg) or more than 240lbs (110kg). If so, please contact us to make sure we can help them succeed with the physical aspects of trip;
3. Has, within the past year, wet their bed more than once a month and/or on consecutive nights;
4. Has, within the past year, been hospitalised for asthma and/or an allergic reaction;
5. Has a severe allergy to food, insect stings (bee, wasp, hornet, ...), and/or other allergens to the extent that a doctor has prescribed epinephrine for treatment if they are exposed;
6. Is epileptic and has, within the past year, had a seizure at any time, and/or has changed treatment medications within three months of the scheduled tripping date;
7. Is pregnant, diabetic, and/or has any chronic, recurring, and/or life threatening medical condition which may require hospitalisation and/or may make it unsafe for them to be on the trip;
8. Has a history of running away, suicide attempts, serious mental health conditions, and/or serious psychiatric illness which may make it unsafe for them to be on the trip;
9. Has a history of sexually abusive and/or molesting behaviour towards any other persons, of any gender, of any age, including, but not limited to, acting in a sexually aggressive, sexually inappropriate, and/or sexually harassing manner;
10. Has a history of violent behaviour including, but not limited to, violent behaviour involving weapons, an explosively violent temper, and/or a history of aggressive behaviour towards others including, but not limited to, those in authority.

If any of this is unclear, or if you are unsure if a potential camper is eligible, please contact us at **613-544-6444**. If they are not eligible to trip with us we may be able to suggest an alternative.