



Letter for Referrers

Camp Outlook is actively seeking potential campers for our summer tripping program. We rely on you, as childcare workers, guidance counselors, teachers, social workers, probation officers, and other professionals, for referrals. It is with your help that we are able to extend our services and provide youth with a 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 will 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 are also asking 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 work with us to help send campers to Camp Outlook. Without you this would not be possible. **Please feel free to pass it on to many others.** We look forward to working together to make the 2020 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,
Vlad Dubrovsky and Kyle Finnie
2020 Camp Outlook Summer Camp Directors
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 organization, 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 community of trip leaders and campers. **We are looking for youth who may have difficulty coping with their daily environment, those who are faced with particularly challenging situations, and those who could not otherwise afford to go on a wilderness trip.** Most campers are referred to us by social agencies such as Pathways, the Boys and Girls Club, Youth Diversion, Children's Aid Societies, 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 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 extra information from an unbiased source. We use the referrals to try and put campers into appropriate groupings, and to try to avoid groupings that would lead to more difficulties. **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 enclosed referral form.**

What is a summer trip like?

The average trip consists of nine days of paddling, portaging, swimming, 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. 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 a co-ed trip leader team.

What if there is an emergency?

In the rare case of an emergency, we have policies and procedures to guide us through. Most of our trips are in the Algonquin Park backcountry canoeing system where there is no easy access to help or a way out. To get to an access point we need to paddle and portage our way there which can often take several days. This means that we can only send people home early in exceptional circumstances, and it will take a long time to do so. Our trip leaders are trained in Advanced Wilderness First Aid and we carry well stocked first aid kits so we are able to manage injuries in the field and continue on. We also carry a satellite messaging system that can contact the police in an immediately life threatening situation, but it will still take emergency services 2 to 8 hours to get to the group. Conversely, there is no reliable way for us to get in contact with a tripping group.

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, Bronze Medallion/Cross, and Mental Health First Aid. Additionally, guest speakers and internally-run workshops provide a forum for developing skills in working with challenging behaviours, 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 vulnerable sector background 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 trips with us. **We do ask that guardians who can afford to do so make a donation to Camp Outlook.**

As a small organization 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 agencies that refer campers to us contribute financially to Camp Outlook whenever possible.**

Because ALL of our staff are volunteers and because we receive many discounts and contributions from generous Kingston businesses and organizations we are able to keep the cost of running our programs very low in comparison to most other canoe tripping camps. 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, staff 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 work hard to fundraise year-round. Most of our funding comes from donations made by generous individuals and organizations 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 Ontario, 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.

☐ **Card** through CanadaHelps at www.canadahelps.org/dn/4528

Donations made through CanadaHelps will receive a charitable tax receipt directly from CanadaHelps for the amount donated. CanadaHelps retains 3.5% of donations to cover payment processing fees and 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 staff 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 or summer@campoutlook.ca if you have any questions or to organize a donation.

Camper Name: _____

If filling out by hand, please print clearly

Camp Outlook Camper Referral Form

This form should be completed by the referring agency, organization, 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 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 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

Summer 2020 Camp Outlook Camper Referral Form - Page 1 of 3

Please attach additional information if more space is required

Camper Name:

If filling out by hand, please print clearly

Very common sources of problems on 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 or youth workers. Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns. Depending on the situation we may be able to accommodate a camper with any of the following but we **MUST** be well informed beforehand so we can adequately prepare and ensure the safety of **ALL** involved. **We must know if the camper currently has or has experienced any of the following:**

- ☐ Asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, arthritis, infections, and/or any other chronic medical condition
- ☐ Any sensory and/ or mobility aids
- ☐ Any allergies (medical or biological) and/or dietary restrictions
- ☐ Any history of violence and/or aggression
- ☐ Any history of sexual misconduct
- ☐ Any history of self harm and/or running away
- ☐ Any history of depression, anxiety, and/or other mental health diagnosis
- ☐ Autism, ADHD, ODD, learning difficulties, and/or other behavioural diagnosis
- ☐ Is pregnant or has any other medical condition not listed above

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

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

CONTINUED ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

Camper Name:

If filling out by hand, 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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You may type to sign

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 involved. **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);
- or is shorter than 5'10" (180cm) *and also* weighs more than 200lbs (90kg);
3. Has, in the past year, wet their bed more than once a month and/or on consecutive nights;
4. Has been hospitalized for asthma and/or an allergic reaction in the previous year;
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 had a seizure at any time in the last year, and/or has changed treatment medications within three months of the scheduled tripping date;
7. Is pregnant, diabetic, or has any chronic, recurring, and/or life threatening medical condition which may require hospitalization 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 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 call us at **613-544-6444**. If they are not eligible to trip with us we may be able to suggest an alternative.