

# Caregiver Handbook

Summer 2021



Pine Project



# Welcome to the Pine Project!

The Pine Project fosters confidence, competence, resilience and connection to nature through transformative outdoor experiences for people of all ages in Toronto and beyond.

Our work inspires a vital re-connection between people and nature, community and oneself. We work primarily with children and families in the urban context, delivering innovative year-round outdoor programming.



Our goal is to inspire nature connection in childhood, supporting children to grow into healthy, active, and resilient people.



We extend our deep gratitude to the generations of People – past and present – who have tended this land, the Dish with One Spoon Territory. We acknowledge the abiding wisdom of the Dish with One Spoon treaty between the Anishnabeg and Haudenosaunee that bound them to share the territory and protect the land. The ‘Dish’ represents what is now known as southern Ontario; we all eat out of the dish with only one spoon, ensuring that our dish is never empty. This symbolizes our ongoing roles and responsibilities of sustaining the land and treating each other and all living things with equity and respect.

The Pine Project operates on the land we now call Toronto, which has been a site of human activity for thousands of years. ‘Toronto’ or ‘Tkaronto’, a Mohawk word meaning “where the trees stand in the water,”\* is part of the traditional territory of many Nations, including the Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Haudenosaunee, and most recently the Mississaugas of the Credit (of the Anishnabeg Peoples).

We are so fortunate to learn and play in two historically significant Valleys of the city:

- The Lower Don also known as ‘Wonscotonach’, translating to “burning bright point” or “black burnt country”, may refer to the practice of torchlight salmon spearing on the river, or to the impact of fire on the landscape.\* The Mississaugas of the Credit had a seasonal settlement here and fished and hunted the marshlands for muskrat, duck and deer.
- The Humber, also known as ‘Niwa’ah Onega’gaih’ih’ or “little thundering waters.”\* For at least 12,000 years an Indigenous trail followed the edge of the bluffs along this section of the Humber River valley. Just up river from where we gather weekly is Baby’s Point, a neighbourhood built on the same spot as ‘Teiaiagon,’ once a village of the Seneca and later the Mississaugas of the Credit.

Today, Toronto is home to many First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples from across Turtle Island. We acknowledge the history and ongoing process of colonization, and recognize that in order to realize the promise and challenge of reconciliation, acknowledgement must be coupled with action. We seek to move forward with humility, respect, gratitude and meaningful relationship building.\*We respectfully acknowledge the many histories and several translations associated with the history of this land.



# Contents

This package contains information on the following topics:

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Health & Safety

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What to Bring Checklist

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Behaviour & Expectations

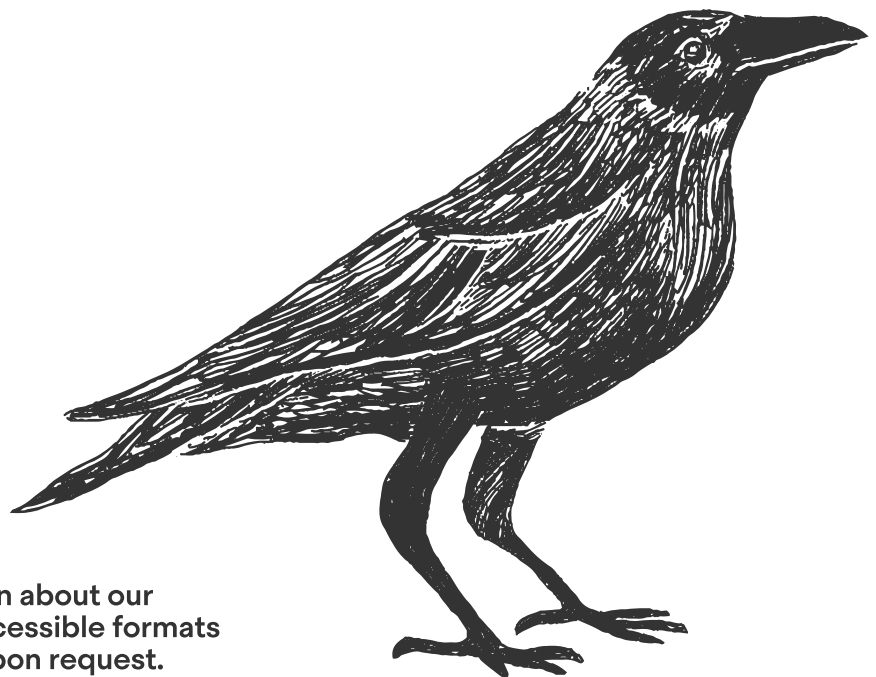
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Communication

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Directions

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All communications and information about our organization can be provided in accessible formats or with communication supports upon request.

# Health and Safety

We're committed to providing a safe environment for participants, staff and families.

**Pine camps will adhere to provincial and municipal public health guidelines as they continue to evolve, which means the details in this handbook may change.** We're continuing to closely monitor for updates and we're dedicated to communicating any changes to families as quickly as possible. Our [Summer Camps Covid-19 webpage](#) will be updated regularly and registered families will be emailed directly.

We all play a role in limiting the virus' spread in our community. Please visit the [City of Toronto's Covid-19 webpage](#) for more information on how you can protect yourself and others, how to identify and respond to symptoms of Covid-19, and other resources.

Please read the following details carefully and reach out to our team with any questions or concerns.

## Screening Procedures

### At-home online screening:

- Each morning, take your child's temperature and complete our [online Covid-19 Screening Form](#).
- This form only allows for "No" answers to the screening questions. If your answer is "Yes" to any of the questions, please keep your child home and email our team at [info@pineproject.org](mailto:info@pineproject.org) to notify us of the reason for their absence.
- Upon submitting the form, a confirmation email will be sent to the email you've provided. PLEASE BRING THIS CONFIRMATION EMAIL WITH YOU (ELECTRONIC OR PRINTED) TO PROGRAM FOR DROP OFF. Staff will confirm the date that the confirmation email was sent at drop-off (screening must be done each morning before program).

### If online screening is not possible:

- Any participants who arrive to program without a screening confirmation email will be screened on site upon arrival. Please see the sample screening form at the end of this welcome package for screening questions.

## Drop Off Procedure

Caregivers\* are required to bring their child's screening confirmation email with them to drop-off OR be prepared to participate in screening on-site.

**\*If someone other than the legal guardians will be dropping off your child, you must complete the Drop-off/Pick-up Authorization form online. Authorized drop-offs must bring the participant's screening confirmation email OR be able to screen the participant on site (must be 18+ yo & have knowledge of the participant's health).**

## Pick Up Procedure

**\*\*Please arrive 5 minutes before the end of program.\*\*** Caregivers\* are asked to wait outside of the group's space until an instructor invites them to pick up. Please be sure to maintain physical distance at all times.

**\*If someone other than the legal guardians will be picking up the participant, you must complete the Drop-off/Pick-up Authorization form online.**

**\*\*\*Caregivers are required to wear a face covering at drop-off and pick-up.\*\*\***

## Running Early or Late

We ask that caregivers do their best to respect drop-off and pick-up times.

### Late drop-off/ Early pick-up:

If you need to drop-off late or pick-up early, please let instructors know ahead of time if possible. Please stay in your vehicle and call the field phone to discuss the drop-off/pick-up logistics with the instructors.

### Late pick-up:

A late fee of \$20.00 will be charged for any child who has not been picked up by the end of program. Upon a late pick-up, staff will inform families that a late fee will be charged and our office team will be in touch to collect the fee electronically.

# Health and Safety

## Special Needs

We do our very best to provide a positive environment for all of our participants. If a child requires special accommodations beyond what was described upon registration, please reach out to our team. Elaborating as much as possible allows us to understand how best to support a youth's diverse needs.

While we may not be able to meet every participant's needs, we try our best to provide a wonderful experience for all.

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## Illness

**If your child is ill or if you know of a planned absence from program, please keep them home and email [info@pineproject.org](mailto:info@pineproject.org).**

We will be monitoring participants for signs and symptoms of Covid-19 throughout program.

If a participant falls ill with Covid-19 symptoms while at program, they will be isolated from the rest of the group. Caregivers will be contacted to pick up their child immediately. Please ensure that you've provided two emergency contacts who are able to pick up within 1 hour of being contacted, if needed.

**We develop our policies and procedures based on guidance from Toronto Public Health. As guidance continues to change in response to the evolving Covid-19 situation in Ontario, our policies and procedures will be updated accordingly. Please see our ['Summer Covid-19 Information page'](#) for the most up-to-date policies related to program screening, when participants can return to program after being ill, and more.**

## Physical Distancing

We will encourage physical distancing between participants, caregivers, and staff within a group whenever possible. However, physical distancing may not be possible in situations such as providing first aid, managing participant behaviour and emotions, during safety and emergency situations or inclement weather. In these cases, participants and staff are required to use face coverings.

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## Mask/Face Coverings

Children must bring two clean masks/face coverings to program everyday, as masks can become wet and soiled throughout the day. Participants will be required to wear face coverings if/when physical distancing cannot be maintained.\* Children should bring paper bags, breathable cloth bags, or Ziploc bags to store clean and dirty masks (separately) when not wearing a mask (plastic bags are not recommended).

We recognize that this might be frustrating and difficult for some children. Our instructors will do their best to explain why we need to wear face coverings and manage the amount of time that coverings are required during programs. Families can also help by talking to children about face coverings prior to program, and finding coverings that are comfortable and breathable.

Thanks to the nature of our programming, there is often opportunity to physically distance. Our intention is to create space for mask-free outdoor experiences in every session.

**Please refer to [Public Health Ontario](#) and [Public Health Toronto's](#) recommendations on how to choose and properly use face coverings.**



**Participants who do not pass the Covid-19 screening will not be permitted to attend program.**



# Health & Safety

## Hygiene and Sanitation

We have enhanced all hygiene and sanitation practices, including:

- Increasing the frequency of routine cleaning and disinfection of high touch surfaces and equipment.
- Requiring frequent hand washing/sanitizing. Hand sanitizer ( $\geq 70\%$  alcohol) will be used when soap and water is not available.
- Enforcing strict no-sharing policies for food and personal items.
- Reminding participants and staff to practice proper respiratory etiquette, such as sneezing or coughing into a sleeve or elbow.

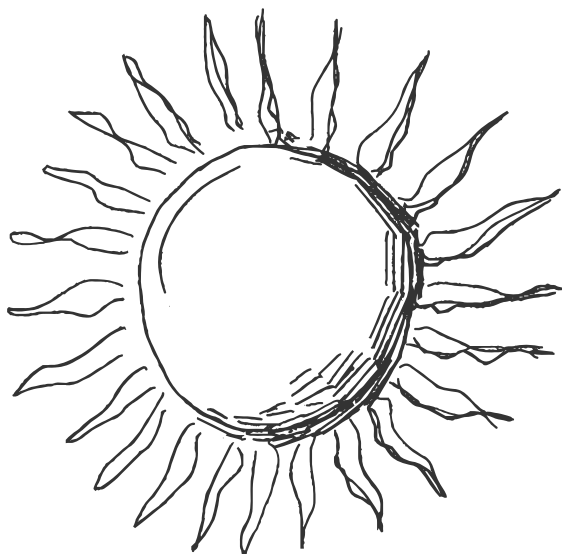
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## Ticks

Black legged ticks exist in Toronto city parks. We do our best to teach tick awareness in a positive and clear way. We recommend that kids change out of their clothes when they get home each day and conduct tick checks each night. If we find a tick embedded into your child's skin, we will phone home immediately. We do not remove the tick.

We suggest that you inform yourself on ticks, how to prevent and check for them, and options for their removal by reading the information sheet from the Ontario Government at:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/lyme-disease>.



## Washrooms

The parks are not equipped with washrooms or running water. There will be a private portable toilet available for the exclusive use of Pine Project participants and staff, which will be regularly cleaned and sanitized.

It is important that participants are able to use the washroom themselves to the extent possible, and to communicate their washroom needs.

**If your child struggles with communicating their washroom needs or requires washroom assistance, please let us know. Hand sanitizer ( $\geq 70\%$  alcohol) will be used when soap and water is not available.**

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## Weather

We do not cancel programs due to weather. Programs will run each day, in all weather conditions.

We employ strategies to stay cool: drinking lots of water, resting in shaded areas, wearing hats, etc. and we see rain as a great opportunity to play in puddles and look at snails!

We have comprehensive emergency plans for all types of weather while at program, and our staff are trained in how to assess and manage risk. Please reach out to our office team if you're concerned and would like to know more.

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## Sunscreen

**All campers must come with sunscreen pre-applied and their own bottle of sunscreen in their backpack.**

Campers must be able to reapply sunscreen themselves. Staff will encourage campers to reapply sunscreen at lunch each day.

# Health & Safety

## Supplemental Forms

In order to ensure a happy, healthy program culture we need to collect some important information from all families. Caregivers, please ensure that you fill out the following supplemental forms as they apply to your child. This year, it is especially critical that all families submit these forms.

**Please note that there will be no hardcopy forms available for you to complete at camp. If forms have not been completed online prior to camp, we may not be able to welcome the camper.**

**Please complete all registration and supplemental forms in detail. It is extremely important to let us know if your child has physical, mental, emotional, or social health challenges.**

- Secondary Caregiver Waivers (Mandatory for ALL participants with 2 legal guardians)
- Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan (Mandatory for any participant with a known anaphylactic allergy)
- Permission to Administer Medication Form (Mandatory for any participant taking medication at program)
- Drop-off/ Pick-up Authorization Form (optional)
- Friend Request Form\* (optional)



\*Our intention is to honour any friend requests, but we cannot make any guarantees.

You can access all forms by logging into your account on our online registration system.

**\*\*\*All supplemental forms must be submitted at least 2 weeks before the start of program.\*\*\***

## Medications

**Wherever possible, please administer medications for participants prior to coming to program.**

If the participant requires medications at program, please complete the Permission to Administer Medication Form, available in the online registration system.

Please provide enough medication for the session, and ensure all medication is sent in the original container or pharmacy-issued blister pack. Non-prescription medications must also be in the original container with proper labeling. All medications must be turned over to the instructors upon arrival.

Any staff administering medication will be required to wear the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (i.e. goggles, face mask, gloves, etc).

## Allergies

If the participant has any anaphylactic (life-threatening) allergies, please complete the Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan Form, available in the online registration system.

Please provide two epipens for your child, as well as a pouch/fanny pack so your child can carry one epipen with them at all times.

Please let your instructors know if your child suffers from seasonal allergies.





# What to Bring Checklist

Each day we will have a new adventure in the park following our inspirations and our keen senses of exploration. It's hard to say where the trails might take us, so it's important to pack lightly in a single backpack!

Participants will be required to carry their own backpacks, with all their belongings, themselves throughout the day.

All personal belongings (including backpacks) must be clearly labeled with the participant's full name.

Please send your child with:

## Clothing

**Weather Appropriate Clothing - REQUIRED**

Make sure to dress for the weather. We are outdoors in all weather (rain or shine!)

Please refer to the next page for our tips on dressing for all summer weather conditions!

Please ensure that your child arrives at program with sunscreen applied!

**Extra Clothing - REQUIRED**

Please send an extra set of clothes each day in your child's backpack (labelled with their name). They'll need these in case of a puddle encounter! Participants must be able to change their clothes themselves.

## Other

**Face Coverings - REQUIRED**

Participants must bring 2 clean non-medical mask each day. Please refer to [Public Health Ontario](#) and [Public Health Toronto's](#) recommendations on how to choose and properly use face coverings, and talk to your child about how to properly wear their mask. (Please refer to the Health & Safety section of this Welcome Package for more info.)

**Sunscreen - REQUIRED**

Please pack additional sunscreen in their backpack. Participants must be able to reapply sunscreen themselves.

**Hand Sanitizer - REQUIRED (if not allergic)**

**Carving Tool - Recommended**

We use the MoraKniv carving tool, but any fixed blade knife with a blade length of no more than 2.5 inches (63mm) is permitted. Please have your carving tool checked by a staff member.

**Nature Journal/Notebook - Recommended**

**A favourite field guide - Recommended**

**Pencil / pencil crayons - Recommended**

## Food & Drink

**Lunch & Snacks - REQUIRED**

We will stop for lunch and snacks each day. Please pack litter-free and nut-free food for your child to munch on.

**Participants must be able to open, eat, and pack up their snacks and lunch themselves. Please practice opening containers and water bottles with your child before program.**

**Water - REQUIRED**

Please send your child with all the drinking water they require for the day (1L minimum)

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## Lost & Found

Given the circumstances this year, we will not be managing Lost & Found.

**All personal belongings must be labeled!**



### Please **DO NOT** bring:

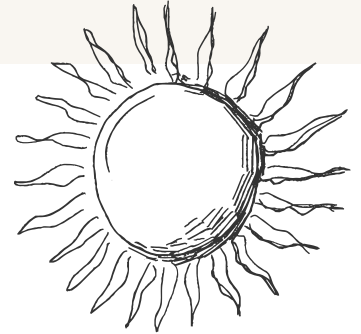
Anything valuable or electronic, or distracting toys.



# What to Wear for Summer Conditions

Summer is a ton of fun! Each day holds the potential for so many adventures.

But it's important to recognize and take the necessary precautions to avoid some of the hazards that summer brings with it, like heat stroke and ticks. Please see below for our tips on how to prepare for summer conditions!



## Clothing

- \* **A hat is required!** Hats help in the sun and in the rain.
- \* **On really hot days:** Dress in light and breezy clothing. e.g. thin cotton, light colours, quick dry or "camping style" materials, etc.
- \* **On rainy days:** A rain jacket and a warm layer are a must! We suggest a wool sweater or fleece, as cotton gets cold when wet. Cotton may work if your camper's rain jacket is quite durable and water resistant.
- \* **Tip!** On rainy days, line the inside of your backpack with a plastic bag so that belongings remain dry!
- \* Umbrellas are welcome, but please note that they often limit a camper's mobility throughout the day, and are also easy to lose!
- \* **Choosing between long pants and long sleeve vs shorts and t-shirts:**
  - \* Long pants and long sleeve shirts are often great options in summer - they offer some sun protection and can help against biting insects like mosquitoes and ticks. But it's also extremely important to consider the potential heat hazard - light, breezy layers that can wick sweat are most appropriate.
  - \* Shorts and t-shirts can also be good options - they hold less heat and are often more comfortable when moving. If choosing to wear shorts and t-shirts, it is extremely important to use sun protection and practice tick checks. We reapply sunscreen during the day and talk to campers about the importance of tick checks and, but it's important to talk to your camper about them too!
  - \* All Tick Checks require a thorough examination of the whole body, and must be done at home after each day of camp. More information about ticks, tick checks and Lyme disease can also be [found here](#).
- \* **Reminder: We need to wear masks at times too!** Please see our Health & Safety section for more info.

## Footwear

- \* **Participants are required to wear closed-toed shoes (e.g. sneakers). Closed-toed shoes provide support and stability, which prevents stubbed toes, ankle sprains, etc.**
- \* **On really hot days:** We suggest a closed toe sandal, like Keens, with breathing holes and ankle support. Please avoid Crocs and flip flops!
- \* **On rainy days:** We suggest rain boots, waterproof hiking boots or shoes (the key in rainy day footwear is traction and comfort). Some kids prefer the comfort of a sneaker and aren't bothered by a day of wet feet - please discuss with your camper!

# Behaviour & Expectations

As always, we are committed to maintaining a safe and positive learning environment for participants and staff. Our programs aim to provide space and freedom to explore and learn, supported by clear agreements and expectations for participant's behaviour.

The reality of Covid-19 requires us all to be even more aware of how we are interconnected, and how our actions impact others. **To ensure everyone's health and safety at program we are asking that participants honour some basic agreements and are outlining stricter consequences for behaviour that threatens the health and safety of others.**

\*\*\*Please read and talk about the Code of Conduct with your child.\*\*\*

## Code of Conduct:

**Our core agreements: Take care of 1) Self, 2) Others, 3) Nature.** ✓✓

Participants must be able to take care of themselves and others by:

- Physical distancing: Staying at least 2m away from others and using masks when needed
- Listening to and following staff instructions
- Following and staying within their group
- Not sharing items such as food and drinks
- Practicing healthy personal hygiene, such as sneezing or coughing into their arm
- Washing their hands themselves
- Using the washroom themselves
- Carrying all their items in their own backpack
- Caring for their own personal needs, such as eating, staying hydrated, changing wet socks (with verbal help and encouragement from staff)

### Communicating with staff:

- Letting staff know if they have a physical need (eg. washroom, feeling sick, thirsty)
- Letting staff know if something is bothering them

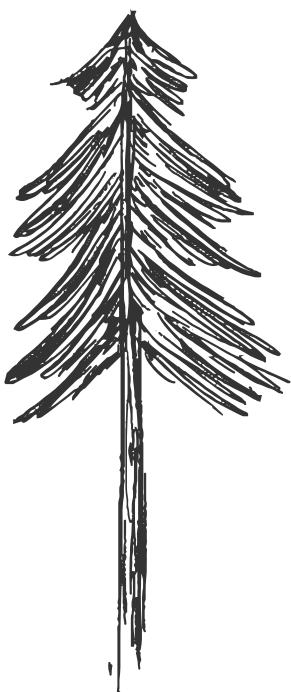
### Treating everyone with respect.

- Bullying will not be tolerated.
- Respecting the personal space of other participants.
- Engaging in physical conflict with other participants will not be tolerated.

Participants must also take care of nature by respecting and caring for our natural surroundings.

Supporting participants as they learn to integrate these expectations is a priority for our staff. It is our intention to work with caregivers and participants to address behaviour challenges as they arise.

**If these agreements are broken, staff will contact the participant's guardians to discuss strategies and align expectations. If the participant's behaviour does not improve and puts others at risk, the participant may be asked to leave the program.**



# Communication



If you're running early or late, or in case of emergency, you can contact the Camp Manager (during camp hours) at:

Field Phone Number:

**WEST: (437) 771 1176**

Field Phone Number:

**EAST: (437) 771 3225**

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For all inquiries, please contact our administrative team:

Contact us by phone:

**(416) 792 2772**

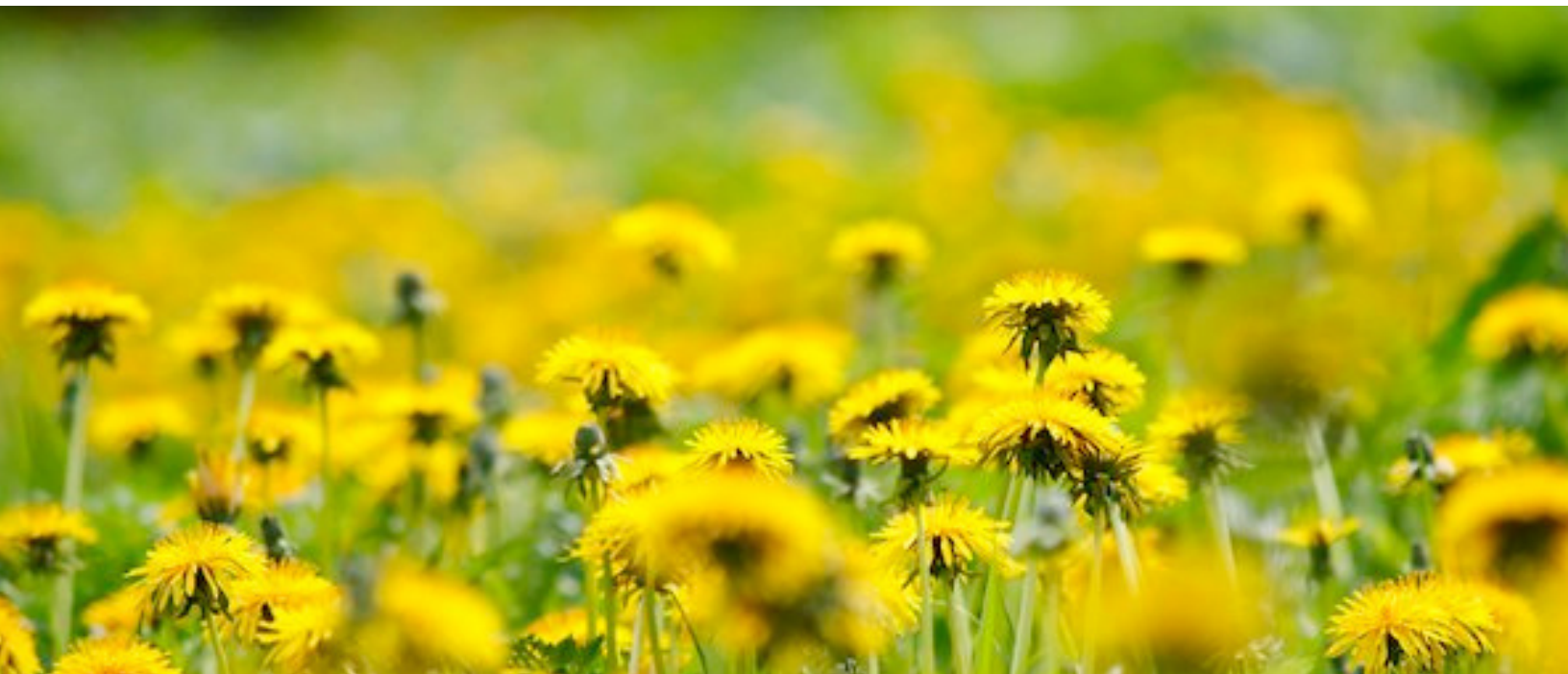
Contact us by email:

**[info@pineproject.org](mailto:info@pineproject.org)**

## Providing Feedback

At the Pine Project, we believe that transparent communication is the best way to work through a problem. We are committed to gathering feedback and hearing all voices. If something comes up that makes you or your child uncomfortable, please let us know by taking the following steps:

1. Talk to a lead instructor in your group. Let them know you have some feedback you'd like to share, and ask when a good time would be to share it. They will bring the feedback to their team for discussion.
2. Ask lots of questions and be curious about the issue. Find out as much as you can before forming a conclusion or judgment.
3. If you feel as though your concern has not been addressed, contact our office team.



# Directions - WEST END

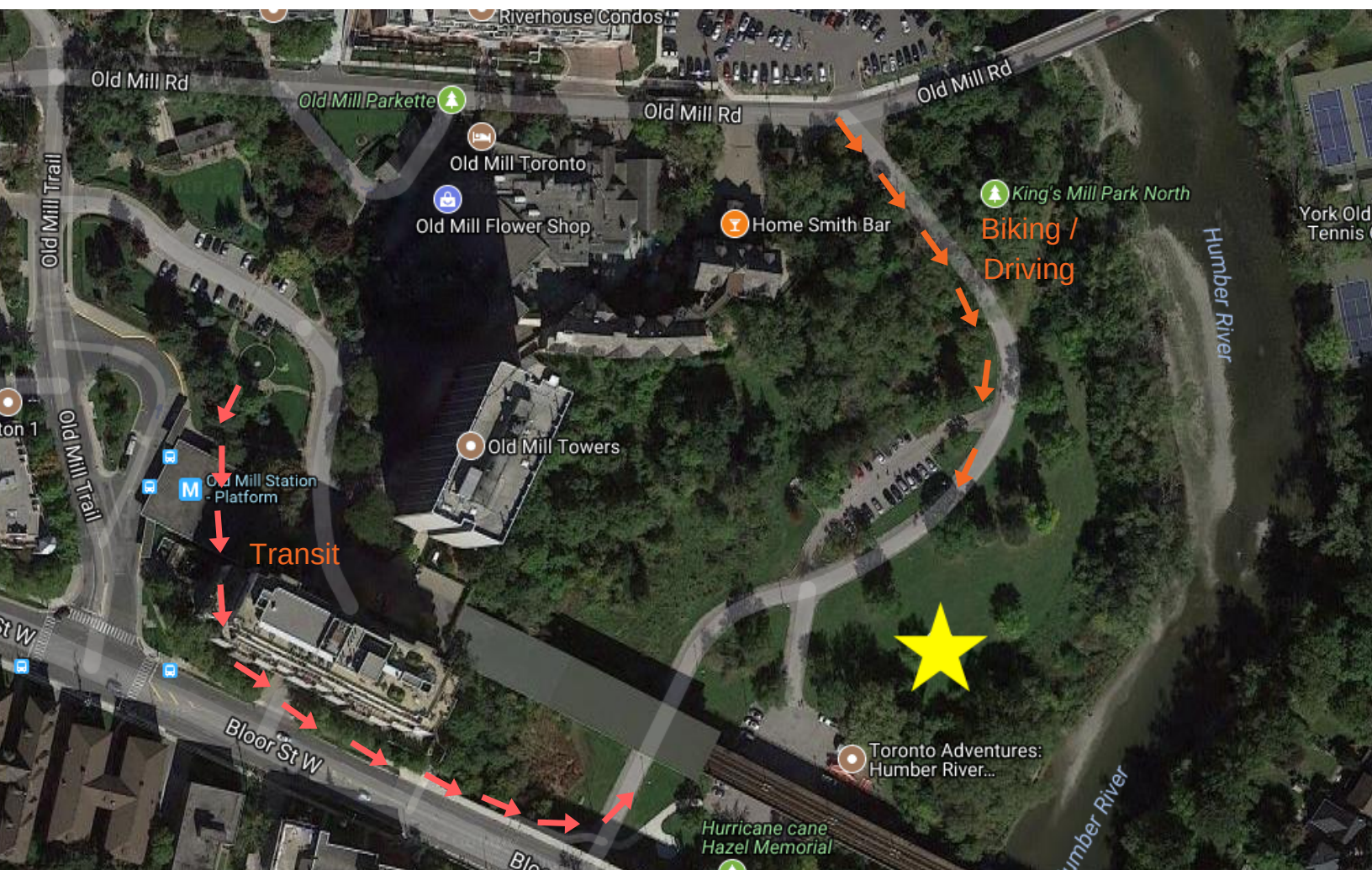
## King's Mill Park 43.64958, -79.49202

### Transit/Walking Instructions

- Take the subway to Old Mill Station.
- When you exit, turn left out of the station.
- Turn left again onto Bloor St. Stay on the North side as you walk East.
- When you approach the bridge you will see a set of stairs on your left side. If you cross over the Humber River you have gone too far.
- Take the stairs down and turn Left, walking Northeast, past the parking lot until you see us in the nearby field.

### Biking/Driving Instructions

- Heading West on Bloor St, turn right on Old Mill Trail (where the subway station is) and then another right on Old Mill Rd. Off of Old Mill Rd. you will see an entrance to King's Mill Park on the right.
- Turn right into the park and follow this paved road, past the first parking lot on your right. You will see us in the big field to your left (just before the second parking lot).



# Directions - EAST END

## E.T. Seton Park - Meeting Location

43.705485, -79.335813

If you use Google Maps to navigate, search for "43.705485, -79.335813". This will take you to the meeting spot in the park, a large round-about/parking lot. You'll see our team in the middle grassy area!

To get to the park by:

## TRANSIT/ WALKING

### From Pape Station:

- Take the 25B Bus heading North towards 'Don Mills Rd at McNicoll Ave'. Get off at 'Gateway Blvd'. \*The intersection is Overlea and Don Mills Rd.\* Walk back South (the way the bus came) down Don Mills Rd, and continue straight. Follow the instructions below.

### From Broadview Station:

- Take the 100A Bus heading Northeast towards 'Wynford Dr at Eglinton Ave East'. Get off at 'Don Mills Rd'. \*The intersection is Overlea and Don Mills Rd\* Walk back West (the way the bus came) and turn left on Don Mills Rd South. Follow the instructions below.

When walking South on Don Mills Rd, stay on the East side of the road. Just past Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute, follow the sidewalk to a path that steers left, called the Lower Don Recreational Trail. Walk the trail for about 5 minutes, and when you come to a fork, stay to the right. Follow the trail under Don Mills Rd and you will arrive at the meeting spot to your right.

## DRIVING/BIKING

### When taking the Don Valley Parkway (DVP):

South: Take the Don Mills Rd. NORTH exit, and turn right onto Don Mills Rd. Travel for 900m, and turn left onto Overlea Blvd.

North: Take the Don Mills Rd. NORTH exit, and merge onto Don Mills Rd. Travel for 1.2km, and turn left onto Overlea Blvd.

Then follow the Overlea Blvd. directions below:

### When taking Eglinton Avenue:

East: Head East on Eglinton Ave., and turn right onto Don Mills Rd. South.

West: Head West on Eglinton Ave, and turn left onto Don Mills Rd. South.

Travel for 1.2km and turn right onto Overlea Blvd. Once on Overlea Blvd, travel for 800m, and turn left onto Thorncliffe Park Drive. In 400m the driveway/parking lot will be on the left.

