

Caregiver Handbook

Red Wolf Overnight Camp 2022



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 ‘Teiaiaagon,’ 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.



Program Overview

Red Wolf Camp is all about learning to live in the wild. Campers and counsellors set out on a week-long adventure on the granite shield in the beautiful region of the Haliburton Highlands. These rolling hills are some of Ontario's highest points of elevation and are teeming with wildlife such as moose, wolves, otters, fishers and a diversity of birdlife. Campers will swim, canoe, hike, make fires by friction, cook over an open fire, play lots of games, meet new friends, sneak up on each other in natural forest camouflage, and more!

Below is a list of possible activities that your child will have the opportunity to experience during their time at camp. If they are really excited about something, we encourage them to talk to their counsellors and we'll try our best to incorporate it. Some of the common activities at camp include:

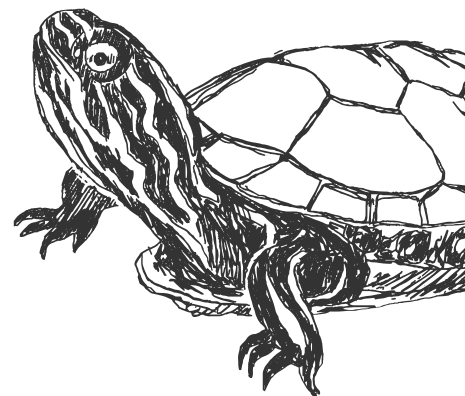
- Building and sleeping in shelters
- Archery & other target sports
- Camouflaging with natural materials
- Collecting and using wild edible plants
- Wildlife tracking and ecology
- Awareness challenges and games
- Navigation with maps, compasses, etc.
- Songs and storytelling
- Nighttime games & missions in the dark
- Star gazing
- Making fire by friction
- Creating fire pits and ovens out of rocks
- Cooking all meals over a camp-fire
- Wilderness living and survival skills
- Learning to paddle a canoe
- Crafting baskets with natural materials
- Quiet movement in the forest
- Group games and leadership development
- Overnight trips

Registered families will receive more information regarding camp specifics (maps, Covid-19 policies & procedures, drop-off/pick-up logistics, program details, etc.) in a Caregiver Handbook in the coming months as camp approaches. Please refer to our [Information for Overnight Camps webpage](#) for more information in the meantime.

Flow of the day!

As the camp is guided by natural curiosity and the changing needs of the group, a schedule is rarely followed exactly, but the below gives you a good idea of an average day at camp.

7:00-9:30	Breakfast - Breakfast Crew prepares and serves breakfast
9:30-12:00	Morning adventure and activities
12:00-1:00	Lunch - Lunch Crew prepares and serves lunch.
1:00-2:00	Rest hour
2:00-5:00	Afternoon adventure, crafting, and skill development
5:00-7:00	Dinner - Dinner Crew prepares and serve dinner
7:00-9:00	Evening games and activities





Location and Accommodation

Red Wolf Camp takes place in the forest on the Haliburton Forest & Wildlife Reserve, where we swim, canoe, catch frogs and watch the sun set. Campers should be prepared to carry their gear (our staff team is there to help when needed).

In the true spirit of nature connection and resilience building, we have no electricity, running water or buildings (other than tents and handmade shelters). In this wilderness setting we learn to live in balance with the land, combining minimal modern equipment with ancient wilderness living technology. Just as you would expect on a hiking or canoe trip, campers will sleep in tents with others of the same gender. Campers will have the opportunity to transition to sleeping in natural shelters that they build themselves if they choose.

Bed wetting Support

If your child is at risk of bed-wetting it is important that you let us know ahead of time so our staff can support them to manage this at camp. We also ask that you pack the following additional gear that will be kept on hand. Please hand this gear over to directors upon sign in on the first day.

1 extra duffle bag packed with:

- 1 extra sleeping bag,
- 2 absorbent blankets (terry cloth, flannel) to put under the sleeping bag,
- 3 pairs of pajamas,
- extra bed pads/pull-ups.

Please note that we do not have laundry facilities. Soiled clothing and bedding will be dried and sent home in need of a wash.

Food and Water

All food, meals and snacks are included at Red Wolf Camp. Campers will not need to bring any of their own food. We will do our best to accommodate all dietary restrictions mentioned in the supplementary form. We ask that you do not send extra snacks as food can absolutely not be kept in tents and there is limited room in camp food barrels. (Exceptions may be made for participants with very special dietary needs – please call or email the office so we can plan accordingly.) Drinking water is filtered onsite and made accessible to campers at all times.

Cleaning

We expect campers to go swimming (or at least go into the lake) to clean off regularly while at camp. Please have a conversation with your child about this. If they have a fear of water or can't swim well, we will be able to support them with lifejackets and instructions on how to be safe in shallow water. Children will be required to wash while at camp via frequent swims. This is part of a simple culture of clean living in the wilderness. We intentionally won't have hot water, showers, or many of the luxuries of everyday living.

If your child tends to resist water, swimming, or washing, please let staff know and prepare your child in advance to go with their group and their staff to keep clean as part of our core agreements (taking care of/respecting self, others, and nature). Please provide suggested strategies to staff to work with your child.



Swimming and Canoeing

Swimming and canoeing are big parts of our camp culture. It is important for campers to know we might not have time for this every day, but they will have opportunities throughout the week. Campers will always be supervised when swimming by staff with water safety certifications.

All campers are required to do a swim test at the beginning of camp to show their comfort and strength in swimming. Depending on our assessment of their swimming ability, they may be required to wear a life jacket whenever they are in the water. If they pass the test, they will be allowed to swim without a life jacket unless caregivers request otherwise on their application form or at the time of drop off. All campers must wear a life jacket whenever they are in a canoe.

Weather

We do not cancel camp due to weather. Camp will run each week, in all weather conditions. We employ strategies to stay cool: drinking lots of water, resting in shaded areas, swimming, wearing hats, etc. We have comprehensive emergency plans for all types of weather while at camp. Please reach out to our office team if you're concerned and would like to know more.

Washrooms

As it is a backcountry camp, we do not have access to washroom facilities. At base camp, campers have access to a wilderness latrine, similar to what you might find backcountry in Algonquin. While out on daily adventures or excursions, campers learn to use a "leave no trace" method. If your child struggles with communicating their washroom needs, please let field staff know on the first day of camp.

We set up hand washing stations and are sure to remind all campers to practice safe hygiene. Hands are washed using soap and water before each meal. At other times, when soap and water are not available hand sanitizer will be used. Please contact us if you have any concerns regarding the use of sanitizer.

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.

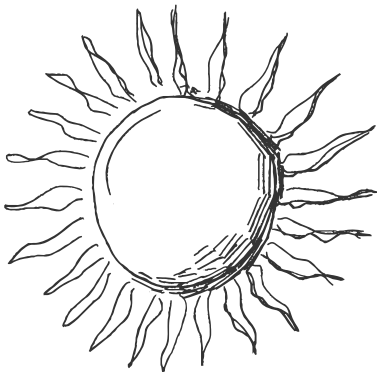
While we may not be able to meet every participant's needs, we try our best to provide a wonderful experience for all.

Health & Safety

Ticks

As with any location in Ontario, ticks may be present at Red Wolf Camp. We do our best to teach tick awareness in a positive and clear way. We will have a private tick-check station with mirrors, and children will be supported to check for ticks every day. It is critical to make sure that children know how important it is to thoroughly check their bodies and to feel comfortable asking for assistance from a staff. Please prepare your child to ask for help if they need it. They must ask for help from a same-gendered staff and have the suspected tick confirmed.

If we find a tick embedded in your child's skin, we will phone home immediately. When we are at base camp, we do not remove ticks ourselves, and instead bring them to a clinic to have the tick removed by a medical professional. When we are on our backcountry expedition, a staff trained in removing ticks will remove the tick and monitor the camper for symptoms of tick-borne illnesses. If any symptoms occur, the camper will be immediately escorted out of the backcountry and transported to a clinic. We suggest that you inform yourself on ticks and how to prevent and check for them by reading the information sheet from the Ontario Government at: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/lyme-disease>.



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.

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. Please be sure to let us know about if the medication requires special handling (e.g. requires refrigeration).

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

What to Bring Checklist

Red Wolf camp is about learning to create more, and work with less. Packing lightly means thinking about what we need versus what we want. Campers should be able to fit ALL items in two bags: one 30-40L dry bag and one small backpack. Too much gear takes up precious space in tents.

Please keep in mind that clothing is likely to get dirty and occasionally even ripped or lost – so please select accordingly and label everything with your child's full name!

From our experience, we believe this list works well and is all campers need:

Clothing

- 3 T-shirts
- 1 long-sleeve shirt
- 4 sweatshirts / sweaters (wool is preferred, 1 with a hood)
- Long underwear top and bottom
- 3 pairs of pants
- 1 or 2 pairs of shorts
- 1 pair of pyjamas
- 1 or 2 bathing suits
- 7 pairs of underwear
- Socks – enough for the week, include a couple pairs of heavy wool socks
- 1 sun hat and toque
- 1 rain suit (rain jacket + rain pants)
- 1 pair of sandals that can get wet
- 1 pair of running/hiking shoes
- 1 towel (shammy style camp towels are recommended)
- 7 clean face masks & 2 ziplock bags
- *Consider camouflage colours for sneaking activities

Bedding

- Sleeping bag and sleeping pad
- Pillow and pillow case
- Blanket and other bedding as desired

Optional Items

- Books
- Camera in waterproof case
- Musical instrument
- Binoculars

Equipment

- 30-40L dry bag (available at MEC)
- Headlamp and batteries
- PFD/Lifejacket
- Durable water bottle (at least 1 litre)
- Fixed blade knife – We use the MoraKniv carving tool, but any fixed blade knife should work! Please have your knife inspected by a staff member.
- Bug jacket or head net for bugs
- Writing supplies (pen, journal)
- Camp cutlery, bowl, plate, cup

Toiletries

- Toothbrush and eco-friendly toothpaste
- Sunscreen (SPF 30 or greater)
- Mosquito repellent – no aerosol cans, natural option is preferable
- Biodegradable soap and shampoo
- Comb / hairbrush



Please **DO NOT** bring:

Any expensive personal belongings or electronic devices such as cell phones and music-playing devices.



Behaviour & Expectations

At Pine, we're committed to living our values of diversity, equity, inclusion and justice. It's important that all people at programs feel included, safe and free from discrimination. Any language or behaviour intended to make participants or staff feel unwelcome or uncomfortable based on identity or ability will not be tolerated, and may lead to the participant being asked to leave programs.

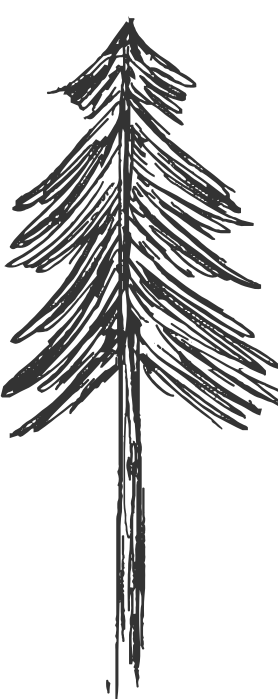
As always, we are committed to maintaining a safe and positive learning environment for participants and staff. Our programs aim to provide space and freedom to explore and learn, supported by clear agreements and expectations for participant behaviour. The reality of Covid-19 requires us all to be even 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:

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- ☐ Physical distancing from other groups 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
- ☐ Discrimination in any form 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.