



Pine Project

Building Resilience for Lasting Impact

Strategic Plan Summary | 2026–2030





A roadmap to deeper impact for children and nature

At a time of growing complexity and change, Pine's mission—to connect children with nature through transformative outdoor experiences—has never been more urgent.

Across Toronto and beyond, children and youth are facing rising anxiety, screen dependence, and disconnection from others and the natural world. At the same time, our planet faces accelerating climate and ecological crises that demand a generation rooted in care, connection, and stewardship.

Pine exists to meet this moment. Through meaningful outdoor experiences guided by skilled and caring mentors, we foster confidence, curiosity, and connection—inspiring young people to grow into resilient individuals and compassionate caretakers of the Earth.

Over the past 15+ years, Pine has grown into a trusted leader in outdoor education. Our programs are recognized for their high quality, unique approach, and lasting impact. This growth has been made possible by a dedicated team, strong partnerships, and a clear sense of purpose.

Now, as we look ahead to the next five years, our 2026–2030 Strategic Plan sets out a bold, values-driven roadmap for deepening our impact and strengthening the foundation of our work in an ever-changing world.

This plan ensures we can continue offering high-quality, inclusive, and transformative experiences for years to come—while growing with purpose, care, and resilience.



Our Vision

We envision a world where all people are deeply connected to and care for nature, themselves, and their community.



Our Mission

The Pine Project fosters confidence, resilience, learning and connection to nature through transformative outdoor experiences for children and youth in Toronto and beyond.

Our Values

Nature



We know the transformative power of nature to shape lives and are passionate about connecting young people to the natural world.

Belonging



We are committed to the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion. We strive to create programs where children of all races, backgrounds, genders and identities can feel a sense of belonging.

Connection



We believe building meaningful, long-term relationships drives lasting impact. Our approach to mentoring children and working with community partners is grounded in connection and reciprocity.

Gratitude



We weave gratitude into everything we do, fostering interconnectedness, inspiring awe and appreciation, and spreading positivity!

Stewardship



Gratitude and connection guide us to act with care, making intentional choices that nurture people and the Earth.

Simplicity



Embracing our mantra “be more, need less,” we value simplicity as a path to deeper meaning, presence, and joy. Simplicity means making space to slow down and learn through unstructured play, hands-on experiences, and meaningful discovery.

Our Theory of Change

At the Pine Project, we know that meaningful outdoor experiences help young people build the skills, confidence, and connections they need to thrive. Our Theory of Change shows how our programs create lasting outcomes for children and youth, beginning with the core ingredients that make our programs unique. Our intentional design shapes how young people explore, learn and grow with us. Over time, these developments support young people in thriving in all areas of their lives and contributing positively to their communities and the natural world. Central to our work is increasing access for equity-deserving children through strong partnerships and reducing barriers to ensure that all children can benefit from the power of nature.

Our magic ingredients (Program Design)

Our people

- Qualified, knowledgeable mentors
- Long-term mentoring relationships with low participant-to-mentor ratios
- Inclusive culture & supportive social environment

Our places

- 100% outdoors, rain or shine!
- Place-based learning rooted in local ecology

Our programs

- Experiential & inquiry-based learning
- Child-led & play-based experiences
- Consistent routines that deepen connection to nature
- Intentional program design linked to positive youth development outcomes
- Actively reducing barriers so more youth can access meaningful outdoor experiences

What young people develop (Shorter-term outcomes)

Outdoors

- Outdoor skills
- Sense of connection to nature
- Commitment to the environment & stewardship
- Well-being in the outdoors

Youth development

- Social skills
- Confidence and leadership
- Competence
- Resilience and perseverance
- Academic self-efficacy


Health & wellbeing

- Emotional well-being and reduced stress
- Physical well-being

Young people thriving! (Long-term outcomes)

3 core connections

- Connection to self: identity, self-awareness, self-efficacy
- Connection to others: community, belonging, collaboration, pro-social behaviour
- Connection to nature: care, reciprocity, environmental stewardship

 Young people—deeply connected to nature—contributing positively to their communities & the natural world 

Our Strategic Priorities

Building Resilience for Impact

2026 - 2030

To ensure Pine can continue delivering transformative outdoor experiences for generations to come, we're investing in the core strengths that sustain our mission. Over the next five years, we will focus on five interconnected priorities that reinforce our ability to grow, adapt, and thrive in a rapidly changing world.

Our priorities are grounded in an understanding of five dimensions of organizational resilience—social, financial, workforce, infrastructure, and environmental—which reflect the core resources and capabilities organizations rely on to navigate change. Together, these dimensions create a balanced foundation that helps us understand our strengths, address vulnerabilities, and plan for the future. This resilience-focused approach ensures Pine remains strong and able to grow with purpose.



Priority 1:

Deepen Program Impact

Why it matters

Deepening our program impact is central to our strategy of building resilience because it is the core of why we exist and how effectively we serve our mission. We are committed to continually enhancing the quality, effectiveness, and sustainability of our programs so we can best serve the children, youth, and communities we support.



Our goals



Strengthen climate adaptation and emergency preparedness



Advance program evaluation to drive program quality and demonstrate impact



Continue to identify, evaluate, and address barriers to access

Priority 2:

Secure a Wilderness Home for Pine

Why it matters

Immersive experiences in the wilderness are among the most life-changing opportunities we offer, but they remain out of reach for many young people. Our long-term vision is to find a home for Pine: a place in Ontario's wilderness where more children can experience the confidence, connection, and sense of belonging that come from meaningful time in nature. Owning land would remove a critical constraint, expand access for equity-deserving communities, and provide the stable foundation needed to grow our programs and deepen our long-term impact.

Our goals



Develop strategy for raising capital for land purchase



Develop and implement capital campaign



Priority 3:

Build Strategic Relationships & Sector Leadership



Why it matters

Resilient organizations do not operate in isolation—they are grounded in strong, reciprocal relationships that enhance their capacity to adapt and thrive. Pine has a valuable opportunity to deepen collaboration with like-minded organizations, building connections that foster shared learning, innovation, and collective impact. By actively engaging in broader conversations and initiatives, we can contribute to addressing the larger forces that affect our work.

Our goals



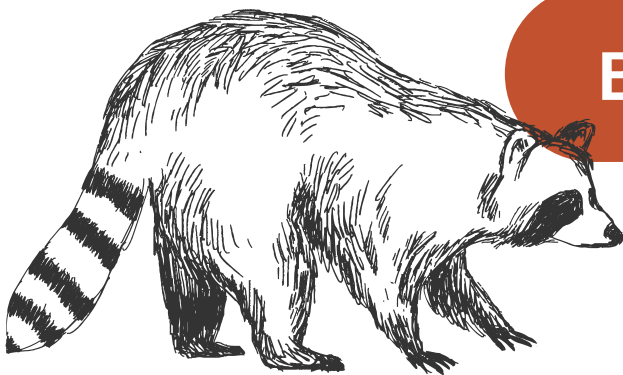
Increase collaboration
with like-minded
organizations



Support the outdoor education
sector by sharing approaches
and practices

Priority 4:

Bolster Financial Resilience



Why it matters

Overall, Pine has established a strong financial foundation. And in a time of economic uncertainty, strengthening our financial resilience will allow us to dream boldly, respond to emerging needs, and adapt and grow in ways that expand our impact for children and youth into the future.

Our goals



Diversify and strengthen
mission-aligned revenue
streams



Grow fundraising
and build internal
capacity

Priority 5:

Invest in Strong Governance, Leadership & Staff

Why it matters

Strong, adaptable leadership—supported by a strategic Board and an inspired, highly skilled staff team—is essential to building Pine’s organizational resilience. As we look to the future, the growing complexity of our work demands even more from our people and our systems. We are committed to continuing to strengthen our governance and leadership, expanding staff capacity, and building inclusive, sustainable systems that will support Pine’s mission for years to come.

Our goals



Model exemplary governance and leadership



Continue to strengthen recruitment practices to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion so that our staff teams reflect the diversity of the communities we serve



Build staff capacity in youth development and nature-based mentoring so our team remains trusted leaders in their field



Thank you for helping shape the Pine Project into the thriving, community-rooted organization it is today. This bold next chapter is possible because of you.

