

Outdoor Adventure Camp Handbook





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INTRODUCTION

The following handbook provides an overall guideline to our day camp program to ensure that you and your child get the most fun and excitement possible from the experience. Please read this information carefully and share important details with your child to ensure that they understand what the instructors expect from campers and what items your child should bring along with them. On the first day of camp, we will have a form to sign indicating you've read our handbook. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out and ask.

Thank you for joining us - we cannot wait to host your camper.

What is Day Camp at the Mill of Kintail?

The Mill of Kintail Day Camps are a chance for children aged 6-12 to get outside, explore, be active, and have fun in the outdoors! Activities will include (but not be limited to) nature exploration, games, other nature-based activities, wildlife or nature education, forest walks, crafts, and free-play. Seasonally, activities will change. We will be spending most of the day outside and we cannot stress enough how important it is for your child to be dressed appropriately for the weather conditions.

Regular Camp Hours are 9:00 am to 4:00 pm at the Mill of Kintail Conservation Area Education Centre.

The Mill of Kintail Conservation Area is located at 2854 Ramsay Concession 8 in Mississippi Mills. Follow past the Gatehouse Welcome Centre and follow the road, staying to the right. Look for the play ground, education building and picnic shelter and staff will be waiting to greet you!



Facilities:

- The camp is run out of the picnic shelter and education building. We will also be making use of the playground, snowshoe or hiking trails, forest, grassy fields or snowy areas, Museum, stream study area, and other play spaces around the site.

Contact Information/Site Phone Number:

- Emma Higgins, Program Coordinator
613-256-3610 ext. 2. (Site office)
programs@mvc.on.ca.
- In Case of Emergency: 8:30am – 4:30 pm MVCA Main Office (613)-253-0006.
- NOTE: these numbers will not be answered outside of camp business hours or on weekends. Please use the email noted above for outside of camp hours, or leave a non-urgent voicemail.

Program Staff

All our staff have first aid training and any staff over the age of 18 will have a clear vulnerable sector screening (in-depth criminal reference screening) with their local police department. All our staff are energized and confident leaders, with a love of nature, a passion for working with children, and a desire to bring amazing programming to your child. They may wear many hats: educators, facilitators, supervisors, mentors - while working with our campers.



A Typical Day at Camp

8:00 am or after	Early Drop Off (must be pre-registered)
9:00 am	Regular Drop Off and Sign In
9:15 am	Outdoor Free-Play
9:30 am	Welcome Circle + Icebreaker Game
10:00 am	Active Program Block 1
12:00 pm	Lunch
12:45 pm	Active Program Block 2
3:00 pm	Sit Spots and Reflections/ Art Period
3:30 pm	Yard Games (snack, pack-up)
4:00 pm	Departure and Sign Out
Up to 5:00 pm	Late Pickup (must be pre-registered)

In winter months, this will be adapted to include indoor breaks in a warm space based on temperatures.

REGISTRATION AND DETAILS

Registration and Payment Information

The program is for children aged 6 — 12, Monday — Friday, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm (with early drop-off and late pick-up with pre-registration from 8:00 am onwards, and latest 5:00 pm).

In order to participate in the Mill of Kintail Day Camp programs, **registration (including the ‘Day Camper Child Waiver and Consent’ must be completed in full before the program begins. Payment must be made in full before the program begins.** Payment can be completed here: [Home | MVCA](#), or by emailing programs@mvc.on.ca.

Refunds and Cancellation Policy

- If registration is cancelled more than 20 working days before the session is scheduled to start, you will receive a full refund, minus a \$40 administration fee.
- If registration is cancelled less than 20 working days before the session is scheduled to start, you will receive a full refund ONLY if we are able to fill the vacant spot, minus a \$40 administration fee. If we are unable to fill the spot, you will receive a refund, minus \$140 administration fee.
- A full refund will be given if a program is cancelled due to factors including by not limited to insufficient registration, or any closures deemed necessary by local authorities.
- Any child who leaves during the session due to expulsion or any other reason that staff deem to fall under the "extreme circumstances" (as noted in "Behaviour Guidelines") will not be refunded any portion of the program fees.

Underage Participant Guideline

With communicated pre-approval through the MVCA, we allow participants under the age of 6 to join our programs under the parent/guardian's responsibility and discretion, coinciding with use of the following guideline:

If a child is within 6 months of the program acceptance age when camp starts they can be accepted when accompanied by an older sibling. The child should be able to manage their own belongings, keep up with children aged 6 and over, and be comfortable changing clothes/using the washroom independently. This is to ensure the child is comfortable, and able to enjoy the program alongside other participants.



HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

Privacy Policy

The Mill of Kintail Day Camps takes the privacy of its clients seriously and we have taken steps to protect it. Any personal data shared with us, including photographic images, will be processed strictly in accordance with privacy legislation and will be used for the purposes that you have consented to. We will not share details with third parties without consent, except where we are legally compelled or obligated to do so. There is a media release included on the 'Day Camper Child Waiver and Consent'.

Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns about protecting the privacy of the information you provide.

Illness Policy

In the following cases, we ask that participants (including students, staff, and volunteers) stay home from day camp if they are feeling unwell for at least 24 hours after their symptoms have improved. For gastrointestinal symptoms, we ask that you stay home for at least 48 hours after symptoms have improved.

Should someone become unwell at day camp, the affected participants will be asked to return home as soon as possible.

Participants affected by communicable diseases including (but not limited to) COVID-19, measles, chicken pox, mumps, flu, strep throat, viral pneumonia, conjunctivitis (pink-eye), etc., are asked to stay home from day camp until their health care provider (i.e. doctor, nurse practitioner, etc.) has communicated that it is safe for them to attend. Any outbreak of communicable disease will be communicated to parents via email.

Head lice is not considered a communicable disease but rather an annoying condition which spreads rapidly. If a participant is affected by head lice or nits are present we ask that you:

- Contact staff at the Mill of Kintail Day Camps immediately so that other families can be informed (the affected individuals will remain anonymous).
- Follow the treatment suggestions on the information sheet provided by Lanark, Leeds and Grenville Public Health.

Medication Administration Policy

We do not generally administer medication to your child during the day camp. Please contact us directly should you have any unique circumstances where your child requires medication during camp hours and we will review protocol on how to best support your child on a case-by-case basis.



Food Policies

We will have nut-free snacks available should a child ever not have enough snacks or require extra based on the movement of the day. We ask that if you have any allergy concerns or don't wish for your child to have extra snacks, please let us know.

- **Nut-Free Zone:** Due to the prevalence of life-threatening nut allergies, we ask that participants refrain from bringing ANY nuts to day camp. Soy and sunflower seed substitutes for nut butters are welcome. Since day camp is in a public conservation area and our park buildings are offered for event rentals, we cannot guarantee that they are 100% nut free.
- **Snack-Sharing:** In addition, we ask that participants do not share or trade snacks, as this ensures the health, safety, and happiness of the community.
- **Low-Waste Lunches:** We encourage participants to try to bring lunches that are waste-mindful. At the same time, we ask that parents/caregivers consider the size/weight/safety of the containers in which their child's food is packed as we sometimes take our lunches on adventures with us. Children should also bring a reusable water bottle, filled. For winter, thermal bottles are best.
- **Hand Washing and Drinking Water:** Participants will be asked to wash their hands with soap and water or use an appropriate alternative if in the field before eating, after using the bathroom, after blowing their nose or coughing, and other instances as deemed necessary. They will also be able to refill their water bottles on site.

Emergency Procedures and First Aid

The Mill of Kintail has written emergency procedures with which all staff are familiar. A copy of these procedures, including camper emergency contact information, is carried by staff and affiliates at all times in the emergency/first aid staff pack.

The group will always have at least one mobile first aid kit with them, including the emergency backpack with items such as emergency blankets, bandages, blister-care, extra rain ponchos, 'hot paws' and more. There is always a master first aid kit available at both the Education Center and Gate House on-site.



Risk Management

Definition: Risk is an inherent and an integral part of nature-based day camp and indeed a healthy part of child development. ‘Risky Play’ can be defined as a “thrilling and exciting activity that involves a risk of physical injury, and play that provides opportunities for challenge... exploring boundaries and learnings about the risks of injury” (Little and Wyver, 2008).

The Mill of Kintail and its staff work to co-assess and co-manage risk with participants. We believe this is an essential skill for children to acquire. By embracing physical, emotional, and social risk we provide an environment for children where they feel in control, capable, and trusted to make decisions for themselves. With that being said, safety, is of course, the number one priority during all of our activities.

Risk Assessment: Day camp staff implement dynamic risk assessments every day, based on need, as we visit natural sites and pick locations for lessons and activities. The following risk assessments are conducted:

- Seasonal risk assessments (flooding, ice, forest management, wildlife management)
- Activity risk assessments (hazard matrix)
- Daily risk assessments (weather adaptations, group readiness)

Activities: When we are assessing risks in an area relating to an activity, we balance the benefit of the activity to the risk probability or consequence. We guide children toward safe behaviour in the forest. During the camp, children may partake in perceived ‘risky’ activities including but not limited to:

- Hiking/walking/snowshoeing
- Playing with sticks/rocks
- Climbing around roots, rocks or trees
- Digging in the soil or snow
- Learning about fire (guided)
- Exploring around or near a body of water
- Using tools or items to explore and create
- Walking on slippery surfaces (wet rocks, mud, ice, snow)
- Touching natural objects
- Being in areas surrounded by wildlife



Participant Ratios

At day camp, the ratio of unaccompanied school-aged children aged 6-12 during regular camp programming will be 8:1. At times, we will have all staff available for a ratio of 7:1.

If your child requires one on one support, **parents/guardians will be responsible for providing this support during the day camp at their own expense.** We want every child to have the same opportunities and experiences available to them. Please contact us if you wish to discuss any unique circumstances.

Camper Behaviour Guidelines

Our goal is to ensure the Mill of Kintail camp is a positive experience for all of our campers. Please inform staff ahead of time if your child has any special considerations so that we can make your child's experience a positive one.

Here are the fundamental behaviour principles we ask of you/your child:

- **No Violence (physical, verbal or otherwise)**
- Respect all living things
- Respect diversity
- Respect yourself, your peers, and your staff
- Use items with care
- Enjoy learning and exploring
- Help others learn
- Be prepared
- **Listen and respond to safety instructions**



If issues arise with a camper's behaviour at day camp, staff will communicate with the family in person, over the phone, or by email as appropriate to the situation. If a camper's behaviour proves to be an ongoing issue in relation to the above behaviour principles, day camp staff will work with the family and the camper to develop a behaviour plan and resolve the issue. In the rare case where this process is not successful, the camper may be asked to leave the program if their behaviour proves to be unsafe for themselves, the other campers, or the staff (see below).

Extreme Circumstances

If your child is severely misbehaving or verbally/physically abusing another camper or staff, MVCA reserves the right to expel or suspend a child from the program should their behaviour be deemed unsafe for themselves or others. This includes not listening to critical safety instructions or trying to depart the camp ('run off'). In this event, a day phone call home to a parent/guardian will be made, and the child will be asked to leave camp immediately with no refund issued. This is only in extreme circumstances when the camper, other children and/or staff safety is a concern.

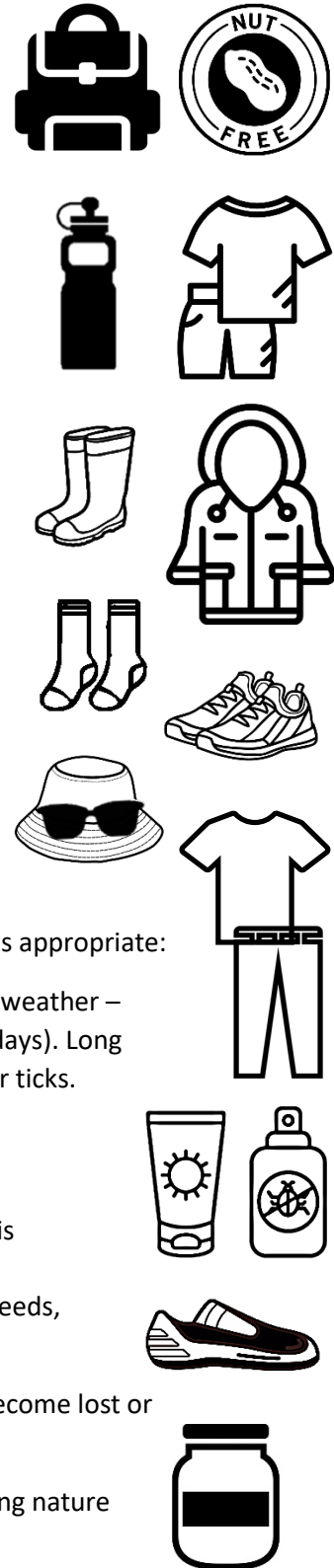
PREPARING FOR OUTDOOR ADVENTURE CAMP

Supply List – Fall/Spring

Please bring the following (labeled with camper name) for our day camp adventures.

A more specific list will be provided for winter day programs.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Backpack
<input type="checkbox"/>	Nut-free Lunch
<input type="checkbox"/>	Water bottle/ drinks: there will be re-fill water available
<input type="checkbox"/>	Change of clothes (quick dry clothing for play in the wet, snow, or water if warm enough)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rain gear/Shell (boots, pants, jacket)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Closed-toed shoes suitable for running/hiking with socks
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hat, sunglasses and light gloves (based on temperature)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Breathable/athletic clothing (long pants recommended)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Old shirt for painting or messy activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Insect repellent/sunscreen
<input type="checkbox"/>	Water shoes or “wet” running shoes with grip
<input type="checkbox"/>	Layers for cooler days – fleece, wool, quick-dry jacket



The MVCA and local Health Unit recommend the following for visits to any natural space as appropriate:

- Long, light colored pants and long sleeve lightweight breathable ‘sun shirt’ (warm weather – breathability and sun protection are of the utmost importance, especially on hot days). Long pants aid in preventing rashes or scratches in brushy areas and reduce bug bites or ticks.
- Closed-toed shoes
- Insect repellent with child-safe levels of DEET or Icaridin
- Sunscreen and hat
- Checking for ticks upon coming home (let us know if you want a pamphlet with this information)
- For more information on enviro. Health, visit www.healthunit.org or contact the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit.

DO NOT BRING: Gum, candy, electronics, money, valuables, special belongings that can become lost or broken, knives or multi-tools. We are not responsible for damage or loss of these items.

NOTE: Campers should wear clothes that can get soiled/dirty – we are at camp and enjoying nature without fear of mud, leaves and dirt!



Sunscreen and Bug spray

The Mill of Kintail Day Camp asks that all participants arrive with sunscreen and bug spray applied and/or in their backpack. Staff will assist children if re-application is needed. We will have backup sunscreen and bug spray bottles should the need arise. In spring, bug jackets are recommended.

Lost Items

The Mill of Kintail Day Camp is not responsible for any lost or stolen items while on-site, although we will do our best to keep backpacks locked away when not in use. We encourage parents to label everything coming with your child to help ensure it ends up back home. Any items left at camp will be placed in a Lost and Found that can be made available upon request.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Time and Location

The Mill of Kintail Day Camp will run out of the Education Center and picnic shelter.

- 2854 Ramsay Concession 8, Almonte
- The entrance is 1 km north of the intersection of Ramsay Concession 8 and Bennies Corners Road.
- Enter the main parking lot, pass through the gate, and keep to the right. You will reach a brown building, play structure and picnic shelter – along with staff waving at you!

NOTE: GPS directions will bring you close, but not to the exact entrance. Cross-reference your directions before leaving.

Regular camp hours: arrive at 9:00 am and pick-up is at 4:00 pm.

Early and late arrivals: Pre-registered participants in the before/after care program can be dropped off no earlier than 8:00 am, and picked-up no later than 5:00 pm.

For safety purposes, staff will sign your child in each morning when they are dropped off. At pick up time a child will not be released into any adult's care until they have been signed out.



Drop-Off and Pick-Up Authorization

We ask that parents/guardians give the Mill of Kintail Day Camp written authorization for the people who may have access to their children (ex. A relative who picks up a child, emergency contact in cases where parents cannot be reached). If written authorization is not possible, and a change occurs, parents must phone or email us to give authorization. Please notify us of changes in the usual pick-up routine. We always act in the best interests of the child if there is any confusion or uncertainty.

Here are some examples where we may not allow your child for pick-up and/or will call for confirmation:

- If a person appears intoxicated or impaired
- A family member/friend comes to pick up the child without the written or verbal consent ahead of time

Staff members are legally responsible to protect the children in their care from any perceived risk.

Inclement or Extreme Weather Policy/ Closure Policy

If the weather conditions or other unusual circumstance make the Mill of Kintail Day Camp program unsafe for either staff or participants and we need to cancel programs for the day, we will notify you by telephone and/or email at least one hour prior to the time of program commencement. We will do our best to monitor severe weather or circumstances in advance as best as possible. Closure reasons could include but are not limited to: risk of extreme and hazardous storms/winds (tornados), very poor air quality, extreme heat or cold, public health circumstances, public emergency.



If the weather makes it necessary for the Mill of Kintail to close earlier than normal, this decision will be communicated to families by phone such that they are able to make the necessary arrangements for early pick-up.

Staff will consult the forecast regularly, and weather-related safety is considered in all decision-making. In the case of predicted thunder and lightning/ high-winds, staff will ensure participants are close to shelter so that it may be sought quickly should thunder and lightning/high-winds occur. During a storm, participants will stay under or inside a shelter. In cases of extreme heat (30C +) or cold (- 30) staff will limit participants length of exposure based on age/clothing and will constantly assess participants' comfort and safety, as well as watching for temperature-related health issues and react accordingly.

COMMUNICATION

General Communication

The Mill of Kintail Day Camps will communicate predominately through email. To reach us in a timely manner with registration or program related questions, send an email to: programs@mvc.on.ca.

- To reach someone on-site during camp hours, follow the information outlined on this document under [Contact Information/Site Phone Number](#) on page 3.

Please be sure to always communicate:

- If you are late/ the camper is absent
- If your child is ill with a communicable disease or is being treated for head lice
- Changes to the pickup authorization person(s)
- Any other information relating to your camper that will help them have a good day!

Emergency Communication to Parents

In the event of an emergency at day camp, parents/guardians will be contacted via telephone once emergency personnel (if needed) have been contacted.

In the event that weather/road conditions make travel to and from camp dangerous for staff and participants and day camp needs to be cancelled and/or ended early, parent/guardians will be notified by telephone and an email.



REFERENCES

This handbook was inspired by the following documents:

- Mill of Kintail Day Camp Handbook (June 1st, 2022 Update), RVCA, Rebecca Whitman.
- Parent Teacher Handbook, (2017), Ottawa Forest and Nature School.
- Parent Handbook, Natural Pathways Forest and Nature School.
- The Nature School Parent Information Manual, Kortright Centre for Conservation.