



Sparrow Lake Camp

Camper Family Information
Summer 2024

A Home Away from Home Since 1912

Welcome to Sparrow Lake Camp

A History Belonging

Since 1912, Sparrow Lake Camp has been focused on providing a caring and welcoming environment for youth. We believe that everyone is deserving of acceptance, friendship, and happiness - regardless of their background, their faith, the clothes they wear, or the way they laugh. All kids need to know they're cared for - just the way they are.

With over 110 years of camping to build on, the staff here at Sparrow Lake Camp work to continually improve the camp experience for your child. We're busy year-round, preparing new activities, painting, planning meals, and reaching out to welcome new friends to our home away from home. We're so glad to be able to welcome your children. Whether it's for the first time, or the fifth, we want them to experience the sense of belonging that's been the heart of Sparrow Lake for all these years.



Friendship and fun are things we take seriously at Sparrow! With both new and traditional activities like Sailing, Swimming, Arts & Crafts, Adventure Zone, along with an amazing catalogue of evening program games, there's something for everyone. Offering a balance of both group and individualized activities helps to make sure kids get the best out of their camp experience. This guide will help you and your child understand how you can make the most of your time at SLC.

So thanks again for choosing SLC. We can't wait to see you back on the sunny shores of Sparrow Lake!



If you have any questions, suggestions, or want to connect with us, please reach out by phone at (416) 483-2619 or contact Executive Director, Brendan Turner by email at brendan@sparrowlakecamp.com

Sincerely,

Your Sparrow Lake Camp Directors

A Typical Day at Sparrow Lake Camp

Our schedule is designed to build community and friendships, while at the same time, giving individual campers the opportunity to pursue their own interests. Campers spend the morning with their cabin groups, the afternoons at some of their own favourite activities with kids of all ages and genders. Evenings are spent with the camp as a whole.

- 7:00 a.m. Polar Bear Dip** (Optional quick morning dip)
- 7:20 a.m. Wake-up Bell**
- 7:45 a.m. Morning Watch & Flagpole**
(A morning reflection, acknowledgement, flag raising, and a short game to get us all moving!)
- 8:00 a.m. Breakfast**
(Campers line up outside dining hall for announcements and a secular grace before breakfast)
- 8:45 a.m. Cabin Clean-up**
- 9:00 a.m. Cabin Inspections**
(Cabins are checked for cleanliness)
- 9:30-10:45 a.m. First Cabin Activity Session**
(Campers participate in activities with their cabin group)
- 11:00-12:15 a.m. Second Cabin Activity Session**
(Campers participate in activities with their cabin group)
- 12:30 p.m. Lunch**
- 1:00 p.m. Rest Hour**
(Campers spend time relaxing, socializing, playing games, or reading in their cabins)
- 2:00 p.m. Round-Up**
(Campers meet at basketball courts to be taken to their afternoon activities)
- 2:05-3:20 p.m. Third Activity Session (Camper Choice)**
(Campers are scheduled for one of their favourite activities for the week)
- 3:20 p.m. Snack & Round-Up**
- 3:35-4:50 p.m. Fourth Activity Session (Camper Choice)**
(Campers are scheduled for one of their favourite activities for the week)
- 4:55 p.m. Free Swim**
(Time for a quick swim, crafts, socializing and relaxing before dinner)
- 6:00 p.m. Supper**
- 6:45 p.m. Vesper**
(The entire camp attends an evening reflection, often with a song, poem, or short story)
- 7:15 p.m. Camp-wide Evening Program**
(Amazing big group games, dances, air bands, surprise activities, and more!)
- 8:15 p.m. Taps**
(We gather together to close the day and sing 'Taps')
- 8:20 p.m. Younger (Discovery) Camper Bedtime**
(A light snack is offered and younger campers get ready for bed)
- 8:20 p.m. Evening Social**
(Older campers snack, socialize, play games, and hang-out before bed)
- 9:30 p.m. In Cabins - Bedtime**
(Older campers in cabins - lights-out time depending on age)



Activities

Camper's Choice!

Sparrow Lake Camp offers a variety of activities for campers of all skill levels. Listed here are the activities offered during the 2 daily afternoon camper-choice activity periods.

Campers choose 4-5 favourites, and we will create a personalized schedule for each camper based on their interests.

Because there are limits to the number of campers who can participate in each activity at once, we may have to draw names for that session, which would mean that your camper might not get their top pick. But don't dismay - cabin activity periods, and Free Swim offer campers the opportunity to participate in all activity areas during their time at camp.

Land Sports

Baseball, Basketball, Soccer, and more are all part of the fun. Campers learn skills and play a variety of games with others in this action-packed activity.

Leisure Games

Ladder Toss, Corn hole, Kubb, Bocce Ball, and many others are on offer. Perfect for hot days, these more laid back activities give campers a chance to test their skills and try new games like Scatter, or Frisbee Golf. There's a little something for everyone at Leisure Games!

Target Sports

Giant Catapults, Water Balloon Launchers, Paint-ball Sling-Shots, Archery, Life-Sized Angry Birds, and others offer kids a light-hearted way to practice their focussing skills. We focus on the fun, and do not use targets that resemble living things.

Wonders of Wilderness (WoW)

Campers learn about the wonderful natural world around them in this hands-on activity. Fire building, orienteering, nature hikes, shelter building, and all manner of camp craft are what makes WoW wonderful.

Crafts

No summer would be complete without some time at the Craft Hut! The social and creative hub of camp, Crafts offers an opportunity for campers to express themselves with eye-catching projects like tie-dye, jewellery making, candle dipping, and other classic camp crafts.

Fine Arts

Sculpture, Painting, Drawing, Nature Art, and Carving are just some of the ways campers can learn to express themselves creatively. They can even mix them all together if they choose - imagination is the only limit here!

Canoeing

In both instructional and recreational sessions, campers learn the path of the paddle in this classic Canadian activity area. Proper j-strokes, and sweeps, together with classic games of canoe-tag are on offer.

Kayaking

Our sit-in kayaks offer kids an opportunity to learn this independent form of fast water travel. For beginners and more skilled paddlers alike, Kayaking will also include an opportunity to try Stand Up Paddle Boarding.

Sailing

A wildly popular activity on Sparrow Lake, sailing is offered for both beginner and experienced skippers of all ages. Our RS Quest and Topper Taz sailboats are perfect for learning to harness the winds and gain independence as the captain of your own vessel.

Beginner and Intermediate sailors will learn in our larger boats with an older and experienced leadership camper or staff member to guide them.

Advanced sailors can use our smaller 2-3 person Taz boats with their peers, or solo as they gain independence.

Performing Arts

Dance, sing, and act your way to Sparrow stardom in this multidisciplinary program. Our newly renovated "Massey Hall" is the summer home of anyone who wants to show off their talents!

Swimming (Recreational)

There's no better way to stay cool during the summer than to take a trip to our guarded beach! Once all campers have completed a mandatory swim test, swimmers can splash and play in the cool waters of Sparrow Lake.

Adventure Zone (Ropes Course)

Both low and high ropes course elements, as well as a rock climbing wall make up our awesome Adventure Zone. Campers learn to work together and support one another through a series of progressive challenges that will push them to discover that they are more capable than they'd ever known!



Camper Care

Water Safety

All campers and staff are required to wear a properly fitting, personal flotation device (life jacket) at all times while they are in any boat at camp. These are provided by the camp. As well, all campers must take a swim test before they participate in any water activity. The swim tests requires they **swim 50 meters & tread water for 1 minute**. Campers who choose not to take the swim test, or who do not pass will not be able to enter the deep area of the waterfront and may be limited in their participation in some boating activities.

Nuts & Allergies

Campers who have a life-threatening allergy should come to camp with at least 2 Epi-pens, one of which they will be with them at all times, the other with their counsellor. As well, the camp has many epi-pens stationed around the camp and in the Clinic.

While we do as much as we can to eliminate camper exposure to nuts and allergens, caregivers need to be aware that it is not possible to completely eliminate the possibility of exposure. We ask that no campers bring nuts, or products that may contain nuts to camp, and will work with parents and campers to ensure that any food served to campers is safe for them to eat. Should your child have a known life-threatening allergy, we invite you to speak with our Director of Medical Staff to ensure that we are able to provide them with a safe camp experience.

Medication

We can ONLY legally dispense medications with prescription labels, in original packaging/blister packs at camp. Non-prescription allergy medications must be identified on the camper's health form, and come in the original packaging with your child's name clearly labelled on it. No supplements, or naturopathic remedies can be administered by our staff. All medication is stored in a locked cabinet in the clinic.

The camp keeps a stock of common non-prescription medications (Tylenol, Aspirin, Benadryl, etc.) which can be provided at no charge with your consent (our medical form allows you to select which medications are OK for your child).

Dietary Needs

Our kitchen staff love what they do, and look forward to accommodating your child's needs. In order to do proper menu planning, we ask that you include any dietary needs on your campers' health forms at least two weeks before camp. Vegan, Vegetarian, as well as Lactose and Gluten Free options are commonly available. Should your child require a more restrictive diet, please contact us to make arrangements. In some cases, we may ask that you send some supplementary food items if we are unable to source items through our regular supplier.

Lice

All campers must be checked for lice prior to their arrival at camp. Any child found with lice at camp may be sent home for treatment at your expense. Campers may not return to camp until they are clear of all nits and adults. Refunds for camp fees will not be provided due to time lost for lice treatment. Many articles and videos are available online which can show you how to check for lice at home.

When Your Child Gets Sick or Injured

Our medical team is on site at all times in order to provide first aid, and administer camper medications. If your child receives a minor cut or scrape, or has minor symptoms, we will treat them on site. Should their symptoms worsen, or persist, you will be contacted and further treatment discussed. For serious injuries, we will contact parents, and send campers to hospital in Orillia, which is 25 minutes away. Emergency response time is approx. 15 minutes.

Please note: 16+ year-olds have a legal right to privacy regarding medical information. This prevents camps from sharing specific medical information without their consent - which we must request before contacting you regarding any clinic visits. As substitute carers, however, we are permitted and will inform you of an emergency, if your child is unable to provide such consent.

Inclusion in Camp Programs

Sparrow Lake Camp is constantly working toward creating an inclusive environment for kids. However, in order to participate fully and safely in the camp program, each child must be able to do the following things **independently**:

- Communicate well in spoken English (express needs, understand directions)
- Navigate uneven terrain, climb stairs, & avoid obstacles
- Perform toileting and hygiene tasks
- Get dressed & change their own clothes
- Eat & drink a healthy amount during mealtimes
- Control urges to harm to themselves or others
- Be a willing participant in camp life

Our staff are trained to encourage, support, and remind children in regards to these behaviours. However, if you believe your child may have difficulties in these areas, it is important that you contact us, or provide details in your child's registration forms. This way, we can work with you to create an appropriate inclusion plan for your child, if possible.

In some cases, where space allows, we may be able to allow a 1:1 carer to accompany children with clinically diagnosed disabilities while at camp - at no extra charge. This carer would sleep outside of the camper cabin, and assist the child as needed during the day or night. Each carer must pass a police background check, complete a camp orientation, follow the same rules as regular staff, and not interfere in the camp experiences of other children. At no time are they permitted to supervise or be alone with other children. At the present time, our ability to accommodate support people is very limited.

In cases where our medical team feel that we are unable to



Camper Care

provide the support your child requires to be safe and maintain the safety of others while at camp, we may have to ask that your child remain in your care.

Homesickness

Separation anxiety is a normal and regular part of the summer camp experience. We will talk with your child to help them work through these feelings, and encourage them to make the most of the amazing opportunity you have given them. With some preparation, your child can also develop tools to help them reduce the impact of homesickness.

Here are some ideas to prepare your child for camp, and to reduce separation anxiety:

- Make sure they have some practice staying over outside your home at a friend or relative's house.
- Visit camp (contact us to arrange a tour) or look over images on our website.
- Let your child know you will miss them as well, and that missing people is very normal. Repeat this from time to time when the topic of camp comes up.
- Talk with them and help them plan for times when they might normally seek your support. Discuss what can they do if they have a bad dream, or miss you, etc.
- A special stuffed animal, blanket, photo, or other object from home will go a long way in helping kids feel secure. We strongly encourage your child bring these.
- Research homesickness and discuss it openly as a family. Leaving home for a week, or a month is a big change, and everyone needs to be prepared.

If your child feels upset while at camp, we will work to comfort them, and help them to work through their feelings. We have several parents on staff who will work with kids as well. In most cases, we are successful in helping overcome homesickness and take an important step towards independence.

If our Directing or Medical Teams feel that your child's emotional health is seriously affecting their ability to take part in camp, we will contact you and work with you to create a plan which supports the best interests of your family and the camp community.

Religion & Spirituality

Sparrow Lake Camp is part of the United Church of Canada. Like many camps, our history is tied to the idea of encouraging spiritual growth in children. This means that want kids to learn who they are, and about the special gifts they offer the world. We hope they see what's special in others and create meaningful relationships and new friends. We want them to feel connected with the earth and the stars in the night sky. We also want them to feel cared for in this world, and what it is to give and receive love. To us, these are the fundamentals of both spiritual and emotional growth - and the heart of camp.

We know the needs of the community have changed since we

first opened over 110 years ago. Our culture has changed, and the words and ideas we use to connect with and identify the source of all things has changed as well. With many campers coming from families who see faith differently, we choose not to impose specific religious language on our camp-wide reflections, graces, and ceremonies. This way, campers can all share in a common experience without our philosophical differences getting in the way. We also welcome different faiths, ideas, and language, and invite campers and staff to share their own perspectives during our evening vespers, and other times of reflection. Each person's faith is a personal journey, and we aim to respect that.

We do not operate with the intention of converting children to our brand of Christianity. We do not wish to contradict the teachings shared in your home. We simply wish to bring kids together in community, let them know they belong, have a lot of fun together, then send them home a bit more confident in their ability to thrive in this ever-changing world.

Sun Safety

Please send your child to camp with a hat and sunscreen. All campers must wear appropriate sun protection while outside in full sun. Extra hats and sunscreen are available at camp should your child forget theirs.

Bullying & Violence

Sparrow Lake Camp will not tolerate premeditated violence by campers. Any child who presents a threat to, or intentionally assaults another camper or staff may be sent home at the Director's discretion. Refunds will not be given.

We recognize that kids engage in conflict. If this occurs, our staff will work with campers to resolve conflicts in a restorative and respectful manner. In the event that a conflict becomes physical, or potentially psychologically harmful, we will contact the parents to involve you in a resolution that meets the needs for safety and security of all.

Things NOT to Bring to Camp

The following items are not allowed at Sparrow Lake Camp. Should your camper be found to be in possession of any of these items, they may be subject to disciplinary action including confiscation and forfeiture of the items, and possible dismissal from camp:

- Weapons or knives of any kind
- Recreational drugs or alcohol
- Cigarettes, cigars, pipes, vapes
- Matches, lighters, fireworks, or other flammable items
- Food or candy (these attract rodents and wildlife)

We also ask that you **not send expensive items**, money, or family heirlooms with your child.

Phones & Screens

Sparrow Lake Camp is an **unplugged camp**. As such, we ask that you do not send your child to camp with any screens. If your child has such a device at camp, it will be held in our office until the end of camp. Keep in mind that we do not have a locking safe, and cannot take responsibility for the safe return of these devices.



Get Ready!

CONTACTING US

Our Associate Director, Jon Fredrick is available by email at jon@sparrowlakecamp.com or 416-483-2619 to discuss registration or payment questions.

Executive Director, Brendan Turner is available at brendan@sparrowlakecamp.com or 416-483-2619.

Our phone extensions connect directly with our cell phones. If you need to speak with us urgently, please feel free to call at any time, day or night, during the camp season. At other times, we are available 9-5 Monday-Friday, except on holidays.

CONTACTING YOUR CHILD AT CAMP

Campers love to receive mail and care packages! Mail is distributed to cabins after lunch each day. There are 3 ways to get in touch with campers at camp:

One-Way Email

Send an Email to campers@sparrowlakecamp.com

Please put your child's full name in the *subject line*. We will print emails to all campers sent to that address and deliver them to their cabin after lunch each day.

Regular Mail

Your child's full name
c/o Sparrow Lake Camp
1437 United Church Camp Lane
Severn Bridge, ON
POE 1N0

(Be sure to provide your child with stationary and stamps so they can send a reply.)

Drop-off Mail with your camper

You can put pre-dated letters in your child's suitcase to open while they are at camp or, give the letters to the office when you sign your camper in at camp. We can hold the items until the specified date and distribute them during cabin mail delivery.

Please note that all incoming packages will be opened and checked for nut products. In order to avoid attracting animals into your child's cabin, large amounts of food will be removed. A small snack or candy bar (without nuts) would be OK to send.

Phone

While an emergency phone call to our camp office number at 416-483-2619 during the summer will ensure you connect with your child quickly, we ask that parents not use the phone with the expectation of catching up with their child.

Visiting Camp

In order for parents and campers to make the most of their child's time away at camp, we ask that families do not visit campers during the camp sessions. However, if there are special circumstances, please contact the camp office to arrange a time to visit your child. Please do not arrive at camp without making arrangements with us for a visit so that we can properly coordinate your visit.

PRE-CAMP CHECKLIST

- Depending on the age of your camper, practice a few overnight stays at family or friends.
- Talk to your child about any anxiety or concerns they have about camp. Visiting camp in advance may help. Just contact us to arrange a tour. We suggest tours happen while camp is taking place so that you can see it in action!
- Go through your packing for camp list with your camper so they know what items are coming to camp.
- Label all items with your camper's first and last names.
- Check your child's hair for lice and treat if necessary.
- Fill in the change in plans form on the website for any changes in transportation, medical or dietary changes.
- Alert the camp to any serious medical changes via an email
- Pre-address and stamp a few envelopes for writing letters to family and friends and put in your child's suitcase.
- Ween your camper off their cell phone use. Cell phones are not permitted at camp.
- Pack a few pre-addressed and stamped envelopes for your child to write letters home.



Packing List

For a ~~Week~~-long Camp*

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Clothing

- T-shirts - 7-9*
 - We play a lot of camp-wide games in the evenings, and divide teams into groups identified by **red**, **yellow**, **blue**, and **green** shirts/clothing. If you don't have a shirt in each colour, we urge you to visit your local thrift shop to buy some cheap ones, as they may get dirty!
- Shorts - 4-5 pairs*
- Pants - 2-3 pairs*
- Long Sleeved Shirts - good for buggy evenings - 2-4
- Sweaters/Sweatshirts - 2-4
- Socks - 7-8 pairs*
- Underwear - 7 pairs*
- Pyjamas - 5-6 sets*
- Bathing Suits - 2 (sport-appropriate)
- Sneakers - 2 pairs - campers must wear closed-toed shoes on our ropes
- Sandals or Shower Shoes
- Rain Boots
- Light Jacket/Fleece
- Rain Coat
- A nice outfit for banquet and the dance!

**Double these amounts for a 2-week camp*



Bedding and Linens

- Pillow and case
- Sheets/blankets for a twin-sized bed or sleeping bag
- Sleeping bag for 2 week-campers who all do a one-night sleep-out on site in tents
- 2 beach/large towels
- 2 smaller towels for drying feet, etc.

Personal Items

- Toothpaste/Toothbrush
- Hairbrush
- Soap and shampoo
- Insect repellent
- Feminine hygiene products
- Hat
- Sunscreen
- Refillable water bottle
- Flashlight
- Camera (cheap, optional)
- Laundry/mesh bag for dirty clothes

KIDS DROP THINGS EVERYWHERE!

LABEL EVERYTHING

Sparrow Lake Camp is a big place with lots of people around, so it's a great place for kids to misplace things. In order to prevent loss, **PLEASE LABEL EVERYTHING** your child brings to camp with their **FULL NAME**. Use name tag labels, or a permanent fabric marker on the item's tag.

Lost and Found items will be laid out for campers to view during camp, and returned to our winter office in Toronto after the summer. **Unclaimed items will be donated to charity** after 3 months.

We take NO RESPONSIBILITY for lost, stolen, or damaged items..

PHONES/SCREENS ARE NOT ALLOWED AT CAMP

Terms and Conditions

PAYMENTS

A \$300.00 CAD deposit is required on all registrations. The balance of the remaining camp fee is due by May 15th, 2024. Sparrow Lake Camp offers equal payment plans, and accepts E-Cheques, Cheques, or Visa & Master Card Credit Cards. NSF Cheques will be subject to an additional \$45.00 administration charge.

REFUND POLICY

If you cancel your child's registration prior to May 15th, you will receive a refund, including your deposit, less a \$25 admin fee. If you cancel after May 15th, but before 21 days prior to the start of the session for which they are registered, you will receive all fees paid less the deposit. If there are less than 21 days before the start of the session for which they are registered, no refunds will be given.

CHANGES IN REGISTRATION

If you have a medical update, need to change your child's travel plans, or if there is anything else that changes the information provided regarding your child's registration, you must contact the camp in writing at jon@sparrowlakecamp.com and let us know as soon as you are able.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Sparrow Lake Camp will make reasonable efforts to accommodate children who may have unique needs, (i.e. food allergies/ sensitivities, time limited health needs requiring assistance or medication administration by the health team) who are able to actively participate in the majority of camp activities, either fully or with reasonable accommodations.

In the event that the information related to my child's health (physical, social or emotional) changes or is different from what is submitted with the application, you must notify the camp office. Camp administration will assess the health needs of each child as outlined on their health and application forms. In the event the camp administration determines that the needs of your child exceed the ability of the staff to care for your child, or interferes with their ability to provide care for other children, the camp administration reserves the right to decline the application for any child to attend Sparrow Lake Camp, and you will be notified.

A full refund, inclusive of registration fees and deposits will be given in the event that it is determined that Sparrow Lake Camp is not able to accommodate your child safely, provided you have provided us with your child's full and up-to-date medical information at least 14 days before the start of camp. If our medical staff find that your child's medical condition does not match the information provided by you in health forms, the standard refund policy will apply, meaning that any refund given will be at the discretion of the Executive Director.

