



CAMP OCONTO

Important Camper Information – Summer 2023

TRANSPORTATION

You will have filled out by which method of transportation your camper will be arriving and departing camp on the online application form. Before the start of your camper's camp session, you will receive an email from our office confirming this choice. Please let us know if your plans change between now and their arrival at camp.

Bus Transportation

Chartered buses are available at the beginning and end of each four-week session to and from Toronto. Fees will be charged to your camper's account.

TO Camp – July 1st and August 1st (Toronto Only)

- Arrive at the bus/van departure point thirty minutes prior to the departure time.
- Make sure your camper's name is on the outside of all their luggage.
- Say your good-byes with your camper and sign them in with the Oconto chaperones.
- Campers need to bring a lunch for the bus.
- No peanuts or nuts on the bus.

Location and Timing

The bus will leave from the Loblaws parking lot located at, 11 Redway Road (in Leaside, close to Laird). Please arrive by 9:30am. Departure time is 10:00am.

FROM Camp – July 28th and August 28th (Toronto Only)

Toronto: The bus will arrive at the Loblaws parking lot (11 Redway Road) at approximately 1:00pm.

Driving

Drop Off: Drop off is between 1:00pm – 1:30pm. Please do not arrive before 1:00pm.

Pick Up: At the end of each month (July 28th and August 28th), please pick your camper up between 10:00 and 10:30am.

For mid-month pick up (July 15th and August 12th), please arrive between 10:00 and 10:30am. These are Visitors' Days for our four-week campers; you are welcome to stay and join us for a buffet lunch and a swim.

Directions to Camp: Camp Oconto is located on Eagle Lake. If arriving from the south, Camp Oconto is located 1km west of Hwy. #38, which meets Hwy. #401 just west of Kingston. The camp road is approximately 56 km north of the 401, 2km north of Tichborne (If you get to Sharbot Lake, you've gone too far) Camp Oconto Road will be on your left. If arriving from the north (Hwy. #7), turn south onto Hwy. #38 and drive through Sharbot Lake Village. Approximately 9 km later, Camp Oconto Road will be on your right.

Chaperone Service for Flights

If you need to have a Camp Oconto staff member meet your camper's flight at Pearson airport and drive them to camp or take them to Pearson airport at the end of their session, **it is essential you contact us before booking any flights. Please email Emma Cusack, Administrative Director, at emma@campoconto.com with regards to flights.**

CLOTHING

Worn, laundry friendly, clothing is best for camp. The campers will be painting, getting dirty, and having fun.

Name Labels: Please label all of your camper's belongings, before sending them to camp. Permanent markers also work well, but please do not only write initials, at least a first initial and full last name are needed.

Laundry will be done once for two-week campers, and two or three times for four-week campers. All loads will be put in both the washer and dryer.

Costumes are great fun at camp. Please send any costumes your camper would like to wear, or that you would like to donate to our costume cupboard. If you do want the costumes going home with your camper at the end of their session, please make sure their name is in them.

Camper T-shirts: One will be given to each camper and are worn most nights to dinner. Extras can be ordered online along with other camp paraphernalia. Any version of the Oconto yellow t-shirt, old or new, is acceptable. If you have any old camper shirts that no longer fit, and you would like to donate them to camp, please send them with your camper and ask them to give the shirts to their counsellor. We will redistribute them to other campers.

COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR DAUGHTER

Mail – Letters should be addressed to Your Camper's Name, Camp Oconto, 1126 Camp Oconto Road, Tichborne, Ontario, KOH 2V0. Mail arrives and leaves camp Monday through Friday, with the exception of holidays. To receive mail from your camper, it is best to send them with addressed, stamped envelopes. Stamps are available at our tuck shop for Canadian, US, and international mail.

Emails – We have a one-way email system into camp. Your camper will not be able to email you. We use a company called Bunk1 for parents to be able communicate with campers while they are here. Campers do not have access to a computer and therefore will NOT be able to email you- only write letters back. These Bunk Notes will be printed and given out with the regular mail. Bunk Notes sent before 9:00am (Monday to Friday) will be given out the same day. Bunk Notes sent after 9:00am will be given out the following mail day. Bunk Notes can be sent up until 8:59am the day before your camper's session ends. (e.g. If your camper comes home on the 28th, you should stop sending Bunk Notes at 8:59am on the 27th). Any Bunk Notes sent after this time will not make it to your camper.

Using this system is entirely optional and you should not feel obligated to send emails. We still think that traditional mail (cards, post cards, etc.) are more fun for campers to receive! Although Bunk1 will not limit the number of emails you can send, we would like to stress the idea of quality over quantity. It is more meaningful to send a few letters or emails of substance. Also please note that every email has to be printed on its own sheet of paper, regardless of length, so a few longer emails are better for the environment.

To use this system, you will be prompted to pay Bunk1 directly, it will not be added to your camper's tuck bill. To sign up, visit www.bunk1.com and type in the invitation code "COC23". Returning parents will be able to use their previous email address and password to login. Upon access, you will be prompted to select a bundle which includes credits to send Bunk Notes and the ability to enhance your notes with borders, photos, sports scores, and puzzles. Bunk1 also provides users with the ability to purchase "Bunk Note Express" which creates a unique email address for your camper that can be shared with other relatives who want to send the camper a note as well.

When sending a Bunk Note, the system will ask you for your camper's cabin/zebo. If you send any Notes before your camper gets here, or do not know/remember after your camper gets here, please just choose "unknown". **Your Bunk Note will still make it to your camper.**

Homesickness- both you and your daughter should expect some homesickness. Homesickness is a natural and healthy feeling based on strong attachment and love for one's family. Please do not be alarmed if you receive a letter home expressing homesickness. You are welcome to call our camp office at 613-375-6678 and arrange to speak with Bronwyn and/or your camper's Section Head to hear an update on how your child is settling in. In mail/emails you are sending to your camper, please avoid saying the following types of statements:

- Do not highlight fun things your camper is missing out on at home.
- Do not say: "If you don't like camp, we will come and pick you up." This type of promise has a hugely negative impact on a camper's attitude towards camp.
- Do not say that your child can call you if they are homesick. We do not allow campers to use the phone.
- Do not share upsetting news with your camper in mail/emails. If there is an upsetting situation that needs to be communicated with your camper, please call Bronwyn at camp (613.375.6678) so that she can assist with communicating the information to your camper.

Office Hours run from 9:00am to 12:30pm and 2:30pm to 5:00pm, seven days a week throughout the summer. The phone is answered, or voice mail checked, 24 hours a day. The office number is 613.375.6678. There is only one telephone line in camp, with phones in both the office and the Directors' cabin. If you call us in the middle of the night, you will be waking us up!

Cell Phones are not permitted at camp. If your camper brings their cell phone to camp, we will keep it in the camp safe until departure day. They will not be able to use it.

Visitors' Days- will take place on Saturday, July 15th, and Saturday, August 12th. These are also pick-up days for two-week campers. Please arrive between 9:30 and 10:00am. Visitors are welcome to join us for a delicious buffet lunch. You are welcome to swim and participate in some camp activities after lunch. We ask that visitors respect our zero-tolerance policy on smoking, vaping, drinking and drugs, and remember that Oconto is a nut free environment. **Leave pets at home.** Your dog (or other pet) is not invited to Visitors' Day. Please plan for this now, so that it is not an issue in the summer. Programming for campers will resume at 3:30pm, so we ask that visitors leave between 3:00 and 3:20pm. If you choose to take your camper out of Oconto for the day, it is imperative that you tell their Section Head and sign them out in the office. Campers are not allowed out of camp with anyone other than their legal guardian, unless written permission from their legal guardian is first presented to the Camp Directors.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL ISSUES

We require full disclosure of all details regarding your camper's health history, illnesses, medications, inoculations, etc. *If there have been any changes to their health since completing the forms, please be sure to contact camp so that we can update her file.* Camp Oconto has a rotating professional medical staff of two nurses (one of whom may be an RPN or "first aider" (student nurse)) and one physician or nurse practitioner; two of whom are on site at all times. We have a small Health Centre where we can examine and treat minor illnesses such as colds, flu, sprains, scrapes, etc. Your camper will have a daily opportunity to check in with their counsellor about how they are feeling. During this time, our counsellors will ensure your camper is being sun safe, checking for ticks, etc.

We do maintain and dispense a small stock of over-the-counter and prescription medication to get campers started on treatment if required. We then fill prescriptions at the pharmacy. The camp nurses dispense all medication to ensure that campers are taking the correct amount of medication, at the appropriate time, and also to prevent medication being taken in error.

Accidents and Illness: Our medical staff will notify you if your camper suffers an accident or is put on medication. Campers will stay overnight in the Health Centre if they have a fever, are contagious, or need observation. Otherwise, they are often more comfortable in their own bed. If there is an emergency, we will call you as soon as possible. No charges apply for routine services, but special medicines, x-rays, etc. will be charged to your camper's tuck bill.

Epi-Pens: If your camper requires an Epi-Pen, please send them to camp with 2. Please make sure the Epi-Pens are not expired. They will be given a Camp Oconto specific Epi-Pen fanny pack, to be able to carry one with them at all times. The spare will be kept in our Health Centre.

Asthma and Allergies: If your camper needs to carry an inhaler with them, please send it, as well as a small fanny pack, with their name clearly printed inside and out.

Personal Medication: All medication must be sent to camp in the *original* container. Please provide a translation if directions are not in English. All medication is dispensed and managed by the Health Centre.
Medical Insurance Coverage: We do not carry extra accident or sickness insurance for campers; this is considered to be your responsibility. Please ensure you have adequate coverage to your satisfaction and include a copy of your Health Insurance coverage with the Camper Health History form for our records. Parents of campers who reside outside of Canada are advised to provide their own Canadian/International medical insurance coverage to their own satisfaction. Please send a photocopy of the policy (number, carrier, contact information, etc.) to our camp office before your camper arrives.

Insect Repellent: We suggest an insect repellent that does contain Deet as the active ingredient, however, no more than 10% concentration for children under 12, and no more than 30% concentration for children over 12. Consult your child's physician and the manufacturer's packaging for more information regarding suitability for your child, frequency of application, and handling care. Insect Repellent is especially important for tick bite prevention.

Ticks: Unfortunately, like many places in Ontario, we have ticks at Camp Oconto. One kind of tick, the Blacklegged Tick (also known as a Deer Tick), can carry the bacteria, which may cause Lyme disease. We are aware of the situation and we are doing our best on several fronts to still give everyone a safe and wonderful experience, while living with this reality in Ontario. Please be sure to send long, light weight, loose fitting pants and shirts with sleeves that are light in colour (in order to make spotting a tick easier). These clothes will be worn with pants tucked into socks and closed toed shoes, while playing certain games and doing certain activities. At Oconto, we do a health check each day using the acronym 'TWIST' which stands for: **T**icks, **W**ater, **I**nsect bites, **S**un protection, **T**ummy. Campers and staff will do this at least once a day, with supervision from staff for younger campers. The tick check will involve staff reminding campers to check their entire bodies including a reminder to check "where your bathing suit covers" the next time they change or go to the bathroom. Campers and staff will check each other's backs as well. Please practice doing a tick check with your camper before coming to camp, so they are familiar, and also understand what they are doing. Known areas for particular concern to check include: scalp, behind the ears, armpits, naval, groin, behind the knees, and between the toes. Please note that ticks can be as small as a pin head, so a visual check as well as gently rubbing your hands over your skin in both directions is helpful. It is important to realize that ticks need to be attached to a person for 36 to 48 hours for Lyme disease to be transmitted. We check once a day, because we never want a tick to be on a person for more than 24 hours. We want to enjoy the outdoors, while being cautious, but not fearful!

Mosquito Nets: Please send one to camp, if your camper would like to use one.

Lice: Lice is a manageable and common inconvenience that is easily spread in places like schools and summer camp. Check your camper's head before bringing them to camp. If you are unfamiliar with it, please check www.headlice.org for more information. If your camper does have lice when they are supposed to be coming to camp, please let us know so that we can continue treatment once they arrive. Treatment costs will be charged to

your tuck bill. Please talk to your camper about the importance of not sharing things like hats, pillows, and hairbrushes.

OCONTO POLICIES – DOs AND DON'Ts

Cigarettes, Drugs and Alcohol: The use or possession of cigarettes, vape products, alcohol and/or drugs is strictly prohibited. The use or possession of any of these things on or off camp property during the time of enrollment is cause for immediate dismissal.

Electronics and Valuables: Camp cannot be held responsible for the loss or damage of any personal property that a camper brings with them. We recommend leaving all valuables at home. Camp is a place for making friends and interacting with the group – these items inhibit socializing. If you insist on bringing any of these items, there will be restrictions on their use.

Electronics NOT allowed:

- iPhones/phones
- Tech watches (even if the sim cards have been removed)
- Portable chargers (including solar)
- e-readers (Kindles, Kobos, etc.)
- iPads, tablets, laptops
- Portable games (such as Game Boys, PSPs)
- Movie playing devices

Electronics allowed at Oconto (these items are allowed if they ONLY contain music):

- MP3 players (no data or Wifi capabilities). Here is a link to an example: [\(Gully Blue\) - Mighty Vibe Spotify Music Player - Gully Blue - Sports Clip, For Bluetooth and Wired Earphones - Streaming MP3 Player - No Need For Your Phone : Amazon.ca: Electronics](#)

Food Parcels: Do not send food parcels to your camper. Food attracts unwanted animals. Campers must open all parcels in front of a counsellor, in order to ensure that food is not kept in cabins and that campers with food allergies are not put at risk. Food will be confiscated and not returned. Please send books, comics, toys, etc. instead of food.

Disposable Cameras: We encourage you to send disposable cameras with your camper as they are inexpensive and far less fragile than a digital camera. Write your camper's name on the camera itself and not the box. Please note that we will also be taking photos during their time at camp to reduce the need for camera technologies. These photos will be shared through a password-protected link to families by email, at the end of the summer.

Tuck Shop: Your camper may purchase notepaper, sunscreen, hats, pens, soap, stamps, etc. at the tuck shop. They are also permitted to buy a limited amount of candy twice a week. This is about \$3.00 worth of candy or potato chips, per tuck time. Extra items available in the Tuck Shop include Oconto water bottles and sun hats. Purchases are recorded and invoiced to you after your camper returns home.

Camp Awakening: Camp Awakening is a registered charity whose summer home is Seven-Up, a fully accessible cabin just across from The Bung at Camp Oconto. Their campers with physical disabilities have been hosted at Oconto since the summer of 2002! Camp Awakening is very much a part of the Oconto community, as they intermingle at meals and camp wide activities, and most of their staff grew up attending Oconto. For more information please visit: campawakening.com

Please talk to your camper about Awakening and consider the following discussion topics:

- **Asking Questions:** It is okay to have questions about an Awakening camper. Encourage your camper to ask her counsellor or the Awakening camper in a respectful way.
- **Keep your explanations positive and emphasize sameness:** It is important to emphasize points of connection instead of separation. For example, it is better to say, "That wheelchair helps that person move around, just like your legs help you move around," rather than "That person's legs don't work, so she needs a wheelchair."

OPTIONAL PROGRAMS

Campers 13 years and older: Camp Oconto has a two-year counsellor in training program. Year one is called QCs and year two is called Semis. If your camper would like to become a QC at Oconto, they will be expected to pass their Basic 3/C in canoeing and be working towards their Bronze Cross swimming level before their QC year. They should start working towards these goals when they are 13 years old. There will be a meeting for campers turning 15 about the CIT program at the end of each session. Please remember that as a prerequisite to Bronze Cross, the Bronze Medallion candidate must also complete a separate First Aid Course. If you have your camper's Lifesaving Society ID number, please send it to camp with your camper or email it to bronwyn@campoconto.com.

English Riding Lessons: Horseback riding is an optional activity at Camp Oconto. The sign up was on the online application form. An additional fee of \$40.00 per lesson will be added to your camper's tuck bill at the end of their camp session. All riders must bring their own A.S.T.M. approved riding safety helmet with a chinstrap made of plastic or leather (not elastic), in order to participate in our riding program. Oconto will not lend riding helmets; each camper must have their own. All riders must also have hard-soled shoes or boots with no less than a 1.5cm heel (a pair of rainboots will typically meet these requirements). Campers need to wear long pants while riding, light weight leggings are ideal. If you have questions about the riding waitlist, please email emma@campoconto.com.

SWIM LEVELS AND REQUIREMENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN BOATING ACTIVITIES

Swimming Lessons: Swimming lessons are mandatory for all campers at Oconto. We offer Lifesaving Society (LSS) lessons only – not Red Cross. Campers must pass their Lifesaving "Swim to Survive" test (comparable to LSS level Swimmer 2) in order to participate in any boating activities. If your camper cannot pass this swim test, we will give them extra help and swimming lessons so that they can hopefully pass quickly and participate more fully in all activities. If they are at all apprehensive, it is a good idea to have your camper swim in a lake or river before coming to camp. Swimming in the lake is very different than swimming in a pool, and we want them to be as comfortable as possible.

Please note that Bronze Medallion candidates must also complete a separate First Aid course as a prerequisite for the next level, Bronze Cross.

Windsurfing: Campers must have a swimming ability equivalent to Lifesaving Swimmer 4 Level in order to participate in windsurfing. We do have children's rig boards so that the younger or smaller campers may try windsurfing.

Life Jackets: Each camper must have a life jacket that fits properly, with their name on it! Campers need to carry their own life jacket to each water activity to use it there. In the past, some campers have come with life jackets that are too big. This is more of a threat than a help. Ensure it fits your camper, has their name on it, and is Canadian government approved. It must also have a whistle attached. International campers will be given a life jacket to use while at camp.