

**COVID-19 Response:
Keeping our Camp Scugog Community and Connections Alive**

Dear Fairlawn Camp Scugog Supporter:

First, we want to take the opportunity to say **THANK YOU**. Fairlawn has been one of our most generous supporters for many years. From helping to open our facilities at Spring Cleaning and sending kids to camp, you've been an incredible friend to Camp Scugog, thank you!

Camp Scugog typically offers summer camp programming to children, youth and mothers affected by poverty. Programming runs through the months of July and August for our childrens, teens, and moms and children's programs, and we host a year round leadership program for youth aged 15-17. Most staff are hired from within, and campers return year after year. For many, this means camp is the one community where they feel truly safe and at home. That's why when COVID-19 struck Toronto in full force, we knew we needed to provide support in a significant way so that campers and staff could stay secure during these uncertain times.

When the pandemic hit, many of our staff, leadership program participants and moms began calling our Camp Director and Leadership Director panicked. They didn't know where to access credible information, they were scared to leave their apartments, and when they did, it was challenging to find supplies. Many live in food deserts with limited access to necessities, and where the lineups are as long as the rides they take on public transit to access food and other necessities. That's where Phase One of our COVID-19 program came into play.

In Phase One, we reached out to summer 2019 staff, leadership program participants and moms from our Mothers and Children's programs to see if they required food, sanitary products and other necessities. The response was overwhelming. In total, 40 families indicated a *great* need, so we created meal plans and put in an order of food with our supplier. Three of our senior staff spent time sorting, organizing and packing, and volunteers delivered boxes of a one month supply of food, games, crafts and other essentials to families in need.

One of the benefits of having a tight knit community at Camp Scugog, and of being a smaller organization is that we were able to pivot quickly, and fill in this immediate need. There is now more government support available, and other charities are set up to help with food and essential supplies. That's why we're once again pivoting our programming to meet the now more pressing need of addressing mental health.

Our Camp Director, Dana Leahey, along with our Leadership Director, Vicky Calvin, have spent countless hours on the phone texting, calling and speaking with staff, leadership program participants, alumni and moms who are simply overwhelmed with anxiety given today's climate. Many of our staff and campers don't have consistent parenting at home, leaving them to fend for themselves. Many have lost all sense of a routine, they are sleeping through the day, eating poorly, not engaging in any sort of physical activity and developing a whole host of other unhealthy habits. That's why we're now moving onto Phase Two which is all about supporting our moms, staff and leaders in maintaining their mental health during these scary times.

Phase Two includes:

- Bi-weekly “tea time” for our mom’s. They’re encouraged to pour themselves a cup of tea, and join our Assistant Director for a time of community, connection and sharing resources. One-on-one connections with Moms have also been established with weekly phone calls from senior staff members.
- Leadership program participants and staff are invited to participate in daily challenges to win camp swag. They can participate in activities individually, and once a week as part of a team. Each day, they're eligible to receive points for things like eating three healthy meals, participating in 30 minutes of physical activity, reading a book, doing something creative, completing school work, and being awake between the hours of 10am-8pm. All participants will be paired with one of our senior staff to provide daily check-ins and help with motivation and support.
- In addition to these programs, our Camp Director will continue to reach out on a 1:1 basis to the most vulnerable members of our community-those whose anxiety has boiled over to trigger additional mental health issues, who are in challenging relationships, or just need some 1:1 support. Our Camp Director will also continue to work closely with social workers and other community leaders to ensure consistent care for those in need.

For many in our community, camp is one of the only constants in their life. The relationships they form at camp serve as lifelines during difficult times, and right now, as our world spins and is more uncertain than ever, those who were already vulnerable are more exposed and their camping connection is more important than ever. We’ve all been told to stay home, and distance. But the reality is that staying home and social distancing are privileges that are not afforded to everyone equally. This virus disproportionately affects the poor in our society which is why it’s so important that we are here for our staff and campers at this time.

Please consider supporting our COVID-19 Response programming. A donation of \$100 will provide this new “camping experience” to someone for one month. We look forward to these programs evolving as we learn more about COVID-19, and the restrictions that will or will not be in place. In the meantime, we will continue to be nimble, creative, and provide care for those who need it most.

Sending thoughts and prayers your way,

Dana, Emily & the Camp Scugog Team

COVID-19 Response Budget:

We are budgeting the COVID-19 response programming for 8 weeks, or until June 14 at which point we will reassess. We will reassess both the effectiveness of the program, and also the state of COVID-19 in Ontario, and therefore the necessity of the program.

Currently, the COVID-19 response budget costs \$100/participant for Leadership Program participants and Staff for 4 weeks, and \$60 for the moms. These funds include:

- Staffing costs
- Internet & phone bills for staff to stay in contact with participants
- Camp Scugog Zoom account
- Camp swag (stickers, water bottles, sunglasses, hats, sweatshirts & blankets) to incentivize participation for the Leadership Program participants and staff.

We are anticipating about 50 Leadership Program participants (LIT/JC's) and staff, and about 30 moms.

As such, the budget is as follows:

	Staffing, internet, phone & Zoom	Swag	Total
30 Staff	\$60	\$40	\$3,000
20 LIT/JCs	\$60	\$40	\$2,000
30 Moms	\$60	\$0	\$1,800
Monthly Total:			\$6,800
Total Until June 14:			\$13,600

In addition to this budget, we need to raise an additional \$40,000 to cover the cost of items like property taxes, insurance, hydro and fuel for camp, and staffing costs beyond June 14. At this moment, it's challenging for us to budget exact programs because we are not sure when/if camp will open this summer. We are not sure if our COVID-19 response programming will continue, or if we will need to pivot again. These are incredibly uncertain times that make it difficult for us to project where we will be at in June vs. September. The \$40,000 is a "bare bones" budget that assumes camp will not open this summer, but that our year round staff remain employed, and that the physical property at camp is maintained.