2019 Camp Ooch Impact Report

In 2019, Camp Ooch programs will set 1,800 Campers and their families on a positive path towards fun and friendship.

Donors make it possible for us to:

- **Bring** more kids to Camp, all at no cost to families
- **Grow** our programs in more Ontario communities
- **Broaden** our support of parents and siblings
- **Deliver** thousands of healing interactions to Campers—from bedside visits in the hospital to a full two-week session at Overnight Camp

- **700 Campers** ages 4–18 enjoyed summer Overnight and Day Camps!
- **176 Campers** experienced Camp for the first time this summer!
- **90%** of last summer’s Campers returned in 2019—kids and parents love Camp!
Bringing More Campers to Ooch Muskoka

Ooch Muskoka is the only overnight oncology camp in Canada able to provide Campers with onsite IV chemotherapy and blood transfusions.

Volunteers from across Ontario (including a team of paediatric oncologists and nurses) are available 24 hours a day to support Campers so they can play, laugh, and grow with other kids just like them—even while on active treatment.

The Magic of Ooch takes many forms. For some kids, it’s a polar bear dip in the lake to start the day. For other kids, it’s a birthday pie in the face, a rowdy singalong, or a canoe trip.

Ooch Muskoka is all this and more!

Summer 2019

585 Campers left cancer behind for 1-2 weeks at Overnight Camp

154 Campers attended our largest summer oncology session

119 teens connected at 7Scape, a week-long program just for them

96 Campers joined Teomul, a one-week session for kids who’ve lost a sibling to cancer

136 Campers originated from outside the GTA—our outreach efforts are working!

200 Campers will experience a Weekend at Camp (WAC) in the fall; 123 Campers joined us in the spring. WACs keep kids connected, giving first-timers, bereaved siblings, palliative or fragile Campers an Overnight Camp experience.

462 volunteers delivered the Magic of Ooch to Campers. 57% more volunteers than last year came from outside the GTA. 27% of volunteers have supported Ooch for 5+ years!
Dr. David Malkin: “We believe that Camp complements chemotherapy and other treatments in seeing improvements in kids’ health. We rearrange their hospital treatment protocols to make sure they can get to Camp—it’s that important.”

Dr. Malkin has volunteered with Camp Ooch for more than thirty years. He is a Senior Staff Oncologist, Haematology/Oncology, and Director of the Cancer Genetics Program at SickKids Hospital. He is also the CIBC Children’s Foundation Chair for Child Health.

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**Ooch’s Unmatched Medical Program**

More medically fragile Campers joined us at Ooch Muskoka than ever before in 2019.

Thanks to our state-of-the-art paediatric oncology clinic and skilled medical team, kids can return to fun and friends faster than ever.

- **7,442 oral medications** were dispensed from our Med Shed during the summer

- **70 oncology nurses** from across the province volunteered in the Med Shed for 1-2 weeks

- **14 paediatric oncologists** from across the province joined them for a week—double the number of doctors in 2018

- **57% of our medical team** returned this year
Dr. Malkin, how is Camp changing the way we think about cancer treatment for kids?

“If you can treat a child in a camp setting, you should be able to do it everywhere. Ouch is bigger than itself, in that sense. It’s changing some core ideas about the practice of paediatric oncology that have been held for a very long time.”

What changes do you see in kids as a result of Camp?

“Camp is designed to improve independence and foster a can-do attitude, but how does that relate to pain? We see a statistically significant improvement in kids after Camp across the board, including pain management. One’s mental state can improve one’s quality of life—Ouch experiences help kids better manage, or overcome their pain.”

What remarkable events have you witnessed at Camp?

“There are so many wonderful stories! I don’t know of any other place where a kid can get a blood transfusion one minute, and be off waterskiing the next! Or, imagine the coordination that takes place between volunteers, medical staff, and counsellors to deliver and administer refrigerated medication at a pre-arranged meeting point on a canoe trip, so a Camper’s trip could continue. This is happening at Camp.

The most remarkable thing that we hear over and over again, is that from the moment kids get home, they are already planning their next Camp experience—they will drop everything to go to Camp.”

Study: How Camp Improves A Camper’s Quality of Life

Until now, all of the evidence about the benefits of Camp Ouch have been anecdotal or testimonial, but a study conducted by Dr. David Malkin, Camp Ouch’s former medical director, reinforces what we instinctively knew about the non-medical benefits of Camp.

“The most prominent changes in Campers were observed in psychological health including emotional, social and school functioning, communication, and self-perception.

This suggests that Camp addresses several non-medical issues resulting from cancer, and aids in areas that are not directly treated with chemotherapy or surgery.”

SickKids’ Senior Staff Oncologist “Dr. Dave” with Campers in Arts & Crafts
Bringing More Campers to Day Camp

Campers and siblings, ages four to seven, gain important opportunities for fun, friendship, and new experiences during a week of non-stop excitement.

Age four is a common age for a childhood cancer diagnosis, so having oncology nurses at Ooch Day Camps means that we can involve more kids on active treatment. We are actively expanding this program to reach more children across the province.

**2x the Campers** registered for Day Camp in Ottawa, over 2018. **New!** March Break Day Camp was introduced in London.

**56 Campers** attended a Day Camp for the first time in 2019.

**114 volunteers** dedicated 1-2 weeks to deliver the Magic of Ooch to Campers at a summer or March Break Day Camp!

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**2019 Summer Day Camp Participants**

- **50 Campers** at Camp Robin Hood in Markham
- **28 Campers** at Ooch Downtown in Toronto
- **37 Campers** in Ottawa

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**2019 March Break Day Camp Participants**

- **35 Campers** at Ooch Downtown in Toronto
- **26 Campers** in Ottawa
- **27 Campers** at our new program in London
Creating New Communities Across Ontario

Camp Ooch Community Programs keep families connected to a support network closer to their home communities.

Evening and weekend getaways offer normalcy, fun, and friendship for families that share similar cancer experiences—serving as a welcome break from hospitals, tests, and doctors’ appointments.

54 year-round programs were offered across Ontario in 2019, taking advantage of the great outdoors where possible. Theme nights, carnivals, an Ooch-style Amazing Race and other fun events keep families connected with each other.

340 families registered from their home communities of Hamilton, London, Ottawa, Windsor, and Sudbury, in addition to Toronto.

6 family weekend camping trips will take place in 2019. Interest for immersive programs like these are on the rise, and include an oncology nurse so that children requiring treatment are well cared for.

There’s something for everyone!
Deepening Support for Families Across Ontario

Fostering friendship and fun, Ooch brings a lighthearted Camp spirit to hospital in-patient and out-patient clinics. Arts & crafts, games, science experiments, or alien spaceship landings (once in a while) are just a few examples of the fun to be had.

This spring, Ooch acquired a dedicated programming room at London Health Sciences’ Children’s Hospital, and hired a staff member there to facilitate programs on a full-time basis.

1,800 patients (newborn to age 18), and their siblings will be met throughout our six hospital partners in 2019.

26% more Campers have already been served in 2019 compared to 2018.

90 volunteers help facilitate programs at six hospital sites year-round!
What's Next?
A New Path to Play!

79% of kids affected by childhood cancer in Ontario don’t yet have access to an overnight oncology camp

Up to 20% of Campers arrive at Ooch Muskoka with mobility devices

Up to 40% of Campers arrive at Camp on active cancer treatment

Our Path to Play Campaign will raise funds to make Ooch Muskoka accessible outdoors and grow the number of kids who come to Camp.

- Building community support systems for kids and their families
- Promoting agency for kids to build self-confidence and develop new skills
- Improving accessibility by eliminating physical or financial barriers to participation

Our vision is to dramatically improve kids’ access to Camp in all four seasons, and bring more than 1,100 children to Ooch Muskoka annually.

“It impacts a whole family when a community of people look past a child’s limitations and only see possibilities.”
—Averill Clarke, Director of Nursing, Camp Ooch
Better Together!

For more than thirty years, Camp Ooch and Camp Trillium have each provided programs for thousands of Campers and families affected by childhood cancer in Ontario. In September, Camp Ooch announced a merger with Camp Trillium.

Deeper support for families, Camp programs in more communities, and bringing more Campers and their families to Overnight Camps is now possible.

Marci Shea-Perry, Executive Director of Camp Trillium, will step into the new role of Executive Director, Strategy & Integration.

CEO of Camp Ooch, Alex Robertson, will become CEO of the new, province-wide organization.

“This merger is about leveraging our combined strengths for the benefit of Campers, their families, our collective volunteers and staffs, and the long-time supporters of both our organizations.”

—Alex Robertson
CEO, Camp Ooch
Erik came to Overnight Camp for the first time this past summer. At 13, he had been off treatment for leukemia since 2013. Injuries from a car accident meant his medical needs were complex, and prohibited him from attending other camps.

Every night, Erik required 16 hours of IV nutrition and hydration through his Central line since he could not maintain either on his own. Supporting a Camper in this way was a first for Ooch’s Med Shed team, requiring an overnight nurse to support the hourly line checks.

Weeks before attending Camp, a decision was made with Erik and his family, that Erik would not be able go on his cabin’s canoe trip. Nevertheless, every day Erik asked the Ooch nurses “How are we going to do this on trip?”

Two days before his cabin mates were to leave on their canoe trip without him, his eyes filled with tears as he asked his nurses the same question one more time. Their reply? “Let’s see what we can do.”

The next day, nurses Andrea and Cailey brainstormed solutions, sought approval from the Nursing Director, and with a few viable options ready, called Erik’s family. They agreed to let him go. It was a big moment—they couldn’t dream of taking Erik on a canoe trip on their own.

Erik went on the canoe trip and slept in a tent with his cabin mates. It was his favourite Camp experience.

Thank you for making Erik’s story, and others like his possible!