



FORMERLY CAMP OUCH & CAMP TRILLIUM

Annual Report 2021



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Land Acknowledgment

Campfire Circle acknowledges that we operate on the traditional territory of many nations, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples, and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

On this land, we are grateful to share the magic of camp with children and families, and we endeavour to create a community of joy, hope and healing. Acknowledging the land that we occupy is just one small step on the path towards Truth and Reconciliation.

From Our CEO

I'm pleased to share some exciting updates. Following the merger of Camp Ooch and Camp Trillium in 2020, we engaged in a process to select a new name for our organization that would celebrate our vibrant heritage and carry us forward into the future together. With the input of our board, staff, donors, volunteers and Camper families, we officially became Campfire Circle on January 1, 2022. We also updated our mission, vision and values statements to better guide our newly merged organization as we seek to serve even more children and families affected by childhood cancer or serious illness in Ontario (learn more on pages 4-6).

In summer 2021, thanks to the expert guidance of our Medical Advisory Committee and COVID-19 Medical Task Force (see page 12), we safely reopened our overnight camps in Muskoka and Rainbow Lake. Due to pandemic restrictions, the camps functioned as family retreats, in which Campers remained in their household "bubbles." As one parent remarked, "It was so incredible to hear kids laughing and playing again. Thank you for giving us a fun, full of memories time after a very challenging two years."

We also scaled up our in-person hospital team to provide more one-to-one experiences for patients receiving treatment in paediatric hospitals across the province. We even found a new way of connecting with all of our young friends at SickKids by creating a live CCTV show called That Camp Show! This show enabled kids in the hospital to tune in from their hospital rooms to experience crafts, games, magic tricks and songs! In addition, we resumed our in-person community events to complement our weekly virtual programs. I'm proud of our team for making the necessary adjustments so that we could continue to create opportunities for Campers to build friendships and social skills, develop self-confidence and resiliency, and improve their overall well-being (learn more about our amazing programs on pages 13-14).

None of this would have happened without the generous support of our donors, volunteers and community partners. Thank you for being part of our circle!



Alex Robertson
Chief Executive Officer





HEALING THROUGH HAPPINESS

Our New Name

When Camp Ooch and Camp Trillium merged in 2020, the newly formed organization embarked on a process to discover a new name that would signal a bright future together. We wanted this new identity to place kids and families affected by childhood cancer at the heart of what we do, and recognize the caring community surrounding them. With the input of our board, staff, donors, volunteers and Camper families, we established a new organizational name that would both celebrate our vibrant history and propel us into the future. On January 1, 2022, we officially became Campfire Circle.

Our Campfire Circle identity represents the coming together of a community to create a safe and joyful space for kids to be kids, and families to be families. We haven't changed what we do—we've just changed our name. The Campfire Circle symbolizes the central gathering place at camp, bringing friends and family together, which we've done for nearly 40 years. We also introduced a new organizational tagline "Healing Through Happiness," that reinforces our ongoing commitment to fostering life-changing experiences that allow children and families to heal.

For our official logo, we created a brand icon that utilizes the letter C. The centre dot in the C represents both the warmth of the campfire and also the child, who is always at the heart of our organization. The rays that make up the surrounding C visualizes our coming together as a community to make this a safe and welcoming space for all.

Vision, Mission and Values

Following the merger of Camp Ooch and Camp Trillium, we took the opportunity to revisit our vision, mission and values statements. Approved by our Board of Directors, our new vision, mission and values (see next page) will both ground and guide us as we seek to serve even more children and families across Ontario.

The new vision statement inspires us to recognize that “Campfire Circle is a world where children thrive and families heal.” While hospitals are well equipped to handle the clinical side of childhood illness, our camp-inspired programs provide the social cure. We offer compassionate and innovative care to children and families year-round, through our in-hospital, community and overnight programs that meet complex social, emotional and developmental needs. Through research and feedback from participants, we know that by creating joyful and playful experiences we give kids the chance to just be kids, so that families can rediscover a spark of light and laughter—this is what healing through happiness looks like.

Our mission statement challenges us to “foster resilience, well-being and lifelong connections for children with serious illness and their families through camp-inspired programs.” Whether in hospitals, communities or overnight camps, we create opportunities for children to build friendships and social skills, develop self-confidence and resiliency and improve their overall well-being. We tailor our programs to promote inclusivity for everyone—whatever their needs—and wherever they are in their families’ childhood cancer journey.

In addition, the mission statement acknowledges the critical and meaningful support offered year-round by our in-hospital program staff to not only children with cancer but also those with serious illnesses. It’s a privilege to come alongside children and families in hospitals during moments of diagnosis and treatment—often at their deepest fear and discomfort—and bring joy and laughter in the midst of confusion and pain. As children with cancer often stay in the same hospital wards as children affected by other serious illnesses, our program staff ensure that our creative and playful camp-inspired programs are offered to all of the children present during our hospital visits. While supporting kids with cancer will always remain central to our programming, we want our mission statement to also recognize this important aspect of our work.

Campfire Circle has five new organizational values: care, inclusion, community, integrity and sustainability. These five values shape how we will live out our vision and carry out our mission, each and every day. Each value has a guiding principle that provides additional context into how the value should impact our organization.



Vision

Campfire Circle is a world where children thrive and families heal.

Mission

We foster resilience, well-being and lifelong connections for children with serious illness and their families through camp-inspired programs.

Values & Guiding Principles



INCLUSION

Campfire Circlec strives to provide equitable access to our programs and we are committed to ongoing improvement. We believe diversity makes us stronger. Everyone is welcome and respected.



COMMUNITY

We are committed to building community by making joyful moments that ignite laughter, create memories and build meaningful, lifelong friendships through shared experiences.



CARE

We hold our Campers and their families at the heart of all we do. We support the well-being and development of staff and volunteers. We provide enriching experiences in a safe and caring environment, working with our healthcare partners.



SUSTAINABILITY

We preserve and protect the lands used by Campfire Circle. We consider environmental sustainability in our decision-making.



INTEGRITY

We create an environment that fosters trust and transparency. We are focused on the impact of our programs on all of our stakeholders.

Camper Stories

In hospital

Being newly diagnosed and starting the cancer journey is scary for every family. There are so many unknowns and new people are surrounding you in the hospital.

For one new 4-year-old at The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids), it has been especially overwhelming. But that is when our program specialist Ciana swooped in to try to help ease her nerves. Even though the initial reaction was fear, from seeing yet another new face, once Ciana introduced herself and shared that she had a craft for them to do together, the little girl started to warm up a little.

The moment of winning her over completely was when the stickers were brought out to decorate the craft. All of a sudden, a little hand darted out to grab them and our young Camper proceeded to sticker everything and everyone she could. In the end, she and her dad's faces were covered as well as her bed, sheets and anything else within arm's reach. Her mom shared her appreciation for seeing her daughter smile again for the first time in quite a while.

“

This is the first time we've been able to sit down all day and enjoy. On clinic days we never know how long it is going to be. You help make the time go by.
—Appreciative Grandmother



Overnight camp

Although the pandemic limited overnight camp options in 2021, families were given the special opportunity to attend WAC (Weekend at camp) family retreats. After many years of attending overnight camp on his own in Muskoka, one Camper finally had the chance to show his family his home away from home and have them experience everything he loved about camp, together as a family.

When he first came to camp in 2019 he spent most of his time in a power chair, navigating around the site. When he arrived this time, we were all happy to see he was up and walking around with a four-point cane. Now with all the updates to the site, he had the chance to show his family around with ease, participate in all the activities and make many new friends without letting anything stop him! He was even the first Camper to use the brand new E-Z launch that gave him the confidence to get into the canoe without hesitation.

“

I always loved camp because of how happy it made him, now I love it even more because we got to make memories here together.

—Camper Mom



Virtual community programs

One of the most special parts of camp is the close friendships and experiences our Campers share. Although we're glad to bring our in-person community programs back all over Ontario, virtual programs have allowed Campers to stay socially connected and given them something to look forward to.

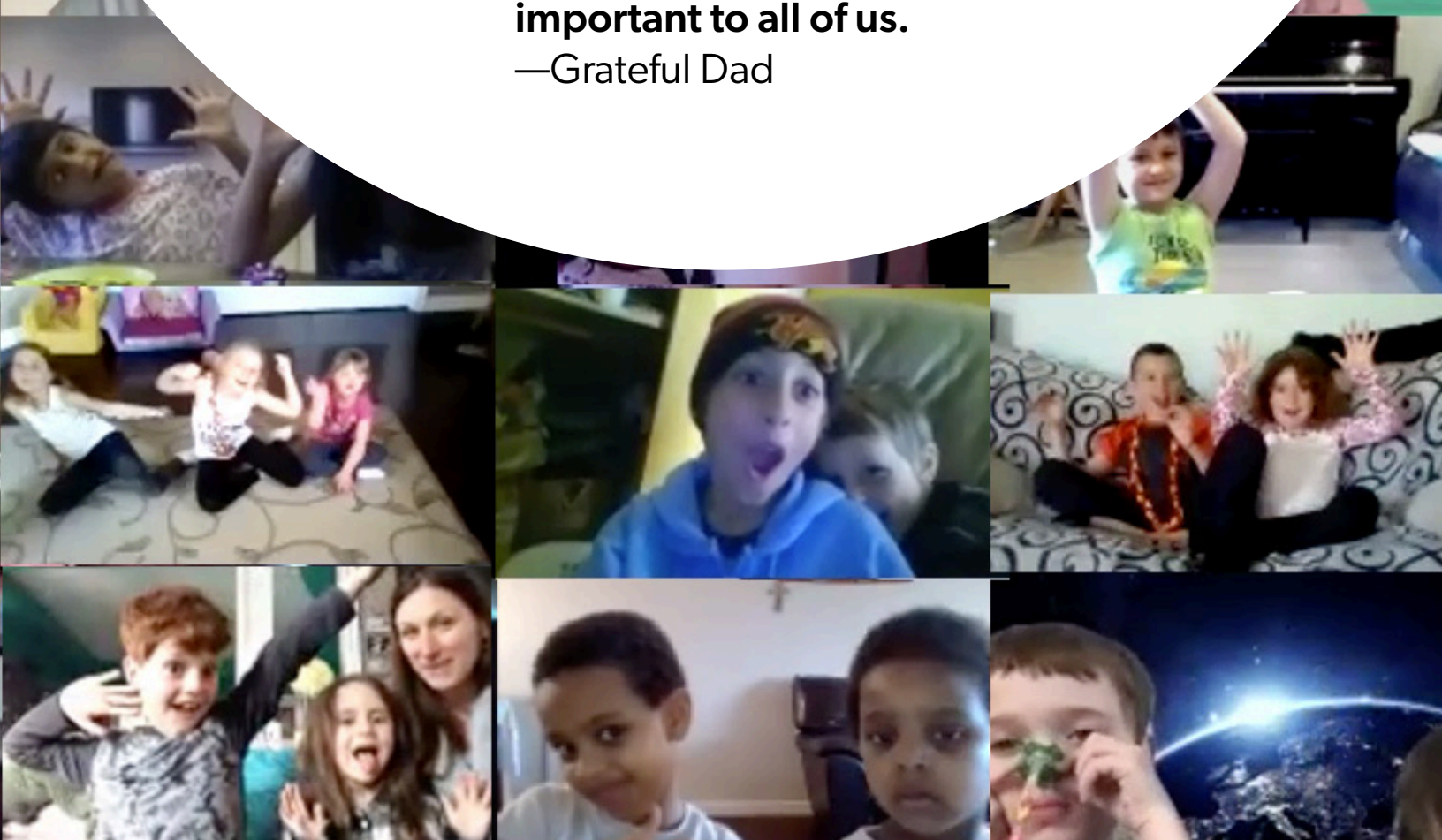
Through virtual programs like Book Club, kids create bonds over their love of reading and escaping into different worlds through books. It also allows them to socialize, share their interests, talk about their lives and become friends.

Recently we learned that two of our Camper families have become friends outside of camp! The girls were talking about an activity they had done together, and explained to us that they have been friends "ever since we went to camp together!" A blossoming friendship that will continue to grow thanks to camp.



She has not been herself, but playing with Campfire Circle gives her a moment where she can be herself again. These moments are so important to all of us.

—Grateful Dad



Donor Profiles

Campfire Circle relies on the generosity of our donors who make our transformational programming possible. Thanks to their support, all of our programs are offered free of charge to families affected by childhood cancer or serious illness.

Here are two Campfire Circle champions helping to bring joy and laughter to kids who need it most!

Elizabeth: Medicine Saved My Child, Camp Saved My Family

32 years ago, cancer and camp joined our family. My son, Patrick, was diagnosed with leukemia when he was 2 ½ and we were at Camp Trillium OuR Island the very next summer. Our first year, the dining platform didn't even have walls—they were tarps! But it didn't matter for a moment. From our first minutes at camp, we were surrounded by fun and by love. My late husband John and I met other parents going through the same thing and we felt seen and understood. We shared stories and experiences without judgment or fear. My husband passed away from a heart attack in 2004 and we never went back to camp, but it lives forever in our hearts. A friend took all his camp T-shirts and made a quilt for me—I can feel the love sewn in every stitch and I treasure it. Five years ago I reconnected with camp as a volunteer, supporting families just like mine. I also make a monthly gift to Campfire Circle now, and I tell you, every month I have this brief and joyful mom moment of reflection when I see my bank statement. I know the impact I am having on other families, and it makes me feel lighter. I'm so grateful for all our camp experiences, and that my son Patrick is a strong, resilient, two-time childhood cancer survivor! – Elizabeth



Shirley: Leaving a Legacy

I remember loving camping as a kid. When I first heard about Campfire Circle, I thought the idea of getting kids with cancer to camp was just terrific. I started making donations and have been giving for ages. For me, it's an honour to be able to do this. My gifts are really quite modest, but the organization makes me feel really appreciated and valued. Over time, I've made some decisions about the charities I support. And I asked myself: "What are the charities that speak to me the most? Which ones really connect with my values?" And it was camp.

At some point, I learned that they needed volunteers to help out in the office and I was happy to help. That first day, I was so impressed with everyone I met. Everyone knew my name, thanked me, brought me tea and I felt so welcome and at home. The enthusiasm, dedication and passion of everyone is just incredible. One day, I was there stuffing envelopes (I like to say I'm an envelope stuffer extraordinaire) and I overheard a conversation about legacy giving—donors who remember camp in their Will. Right away I thought this would be an excellent way for me to be able to give more, over time. I had a conversation with the staff, who gave me some information about how to make it happen. Not only was it simple, it was also rewarding for me personally. I'm really proud to be playing even just a small part.

And I was delighted to join an Open House up at Campfire Circle Muskoka. You might think it breaks your heart, but the opposite happens—it's overwhelmingly positive and joyful. It also happened to be my birthday and when Alex heard that he orchestrated a Happy Birthday sing-a-long with all the Campers and guests. I'll never forget that, ever.

What do I hope my legacy gift will accomplish in the future? At first, I think, well, Campfire Circle is already pretty amazing, can it get any better? But then I think, well, I can be part of making sure that camp continues to do the outstanding work they are doing, forever. For as long as there are kids who need camp, I'm part of making sure it will always be there for them. And that makes me feel really good.

- Shirley, Volunteer (Envelope Stuffer Extraordinaire) and Legacy Circle Member



Medical Advisory Committee

As an organization that serves kids and families affected by childhood cancer or serious illness, it's imperative that Campfire Circle rely on the guidance and advice of dedicated health care professionals. All of Campfire Circle's medical policies and procedures are developed and approved by our Medical Advisory Committee (MAC). The MAC is comprised of oncology specialists from medical centres across Ontario who are passionate about making certain that children impacted by childhood cancer or serious illness receive excellent care while they participate in our in-hospital, community and overnight camp programs.

Since 2020, our infection prevention and control practices have received additional counsel from our COVID-19 Medical Task Force (MTF), a group of infectious disease specialists formed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are grateful for the support provided by our MAC and MTF, who help to ensure that we are always providing the highest standard of care to our Campers and families

Medical Advisory Committee

Dr. Sarah Alexander,
Chair & Medical Director
(SickKids)

Michaila Aitcheson N.P.
(London Health Sciences Centre)

Dr. Beth Cairney
(London Health Sciences Centre)

Dr. Paul Gibson
(McMaster Children's Hospital)

Dr. Donna Johnston
(Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario)

Dr. David Malkin
(SickKids)

Dr. Stacey Marjerrison
(McMaster Children's Hospital)

Dr. Michelle Science
(SickKids)

COVID-19 Medical Task Force

Dr. Sarah Alexander
(SickKids)

Jenny Barron Couperthwaite RN
(Public Health Toronto)

Dr. Paul Gibson
(McMaster Children's Hospital)

Dr. Jeff Pernica
(McMaster Children's Hospital)

Fiorella Reyes
(Parent Representative)

Laurie Streitenberger
(SickKids)



Program Update

Through our in-hospital, virtual, community and overnight camp programs, we connected with over **1,500** kids affected by cancer or serious illness and their families throughout the year.

In Hospital

With hospital restrictions in place that did not permit volunteers or siblings to visit, we scaled up our in-person hospital team so that we could provide more support and respite to caregivers. Our goal was to enhance the well-being and resiliency of kids and families in crisis with camp-inspired experiences that allow kids to learn, grow and just be kids. At SickKids, we also created a live CCTV show called That Camp Show! that was broadcasted to all of the patients in the hospital, enabling them to connect with camp friends for shared crafts, games, magic tricks, and songs!

Overnight Camp

Families were overjoyed when we announced plans to welcome them back to overnight camp in August and throughout the fall with family weekend retreats. Our Muskoka and Rainbow Lake sites brought families back to camp, safe in their household “bubbles.” Families had the opportunity to try new things together and enjoy the company of others who understand the challenges they are facing.

With outdoor accessibility improvements at Muskoka now complete, Campers and volunteers with mobility limitations can now experience full independence and barrier-free access to all outdoor activities. We also provided teens with three-day canoe and portage adventures in Algonquin Park.

Community

With so many Campers forced to isolate during the pandemic, our weekly virtual programs for the whole family ensured that camp friendships and fun continued to flourish. In addition, due to the ease of virtual access, we connected with many new families from Ottawa, Kingston, Hamilton and London. As well, for the first time ever, kids in the hospital could attend virtual summer camp and participate with their siblings joining from home.

We also launched our first virtual summer teen conference, guiding teens through weekly skill-building and social activities like Zumba, coding, photography, career planning and their very own music festival! Our teen programs help teens achieve two of their most critical tasks (which have proved even more difficult during the pandemic): discovering independence from caregivers and developing their own personal identities.



Count the Impact



125

new families accessed our programs for the first time in 2021

109 families attended a family weekend retreat

35 camp-themed days in hospitals, such as "Rainforest Café," "Space," and "Under the Sea," brought patients out from their rooms and into the hallways to make friends and have fun



4,700

virtual experiences were delivered across Ontario. Campers logged in from over **130** communities across the province

5,800

one-to-one experiences were provided at SickKids, McMaster Children's Hospital and the Children's Hospital at London Health Sciences Centre

500

summer camp kits packed and delivered to doorsteps and hospital beds across Ontario

188

virtual family and Camper programs delivered on Zoom



Volunteer Appreciation

Our volunteers are amazing, and help us in so many ways!

1,000+

volunteers supported our programs in 2021!

PREP! Volunteers helped us pack and deliver over 500 camp kits for virtual summer camp.

ENGAGE! 490 volunteer counsellors jumped into virtual cabins and cabins at overnight camp, campfires, and countless other virtual programs to bring the fun to our Campers.

LEADERSHIP!

Our COVID Medical Task Force volunteers worked tirelessly to safely guide us back to in-person programming.

PARTICIPATE!

Volunteers joined virtual fundraising events like the Sporting Life 10K, CampOut for Cancer, R2//TOURCHALLENGE, R2//CAMP and Bonfire Bash—Cottage Edition.

Board of Directors

Don McCreesh
Board Chair

Derek Cardy
Board Member

Susan Huggett
Board Member

Andrea Metrick
Board Member

Kristine McTaggart
Vice-Chair

Emily Burnett
Board Member

Peter Johnston
Board Member

Judy Van-Clieaf
Board Member

Mark Redmond
Vice-Chair

Jennifer Grossklaus
Board Member

John Langhorne
Board Member

Sean Van Leeuwen
Board Member

Dr. Sarah Alexander
Board Member

Lyndsay Hatlelid
Board Member

Viki Lazaris
Board Member

Rodney Yip
Board Member

Financial Update

We are deeply grateful to our incredible community of donors and supporters for their generosity and deep commitment to supporting kids and families affected by childhood cancer or serious illness, particularly as we continue to navigate through the challenging COVID-19 pandemic.



- **Donations & Fundraising 89%**
- **Government subsidies & Other 11%**



- **Camp Programs 63%**
- **Fundraising 21%**
- **Administration & Rental 11%**
- **Other 5%**

2021 Financial Statements

Detailed Impact Report

* The financial information in this update is drawn from Camp Ooch and Camp Trillium Corporation's audited financial statements.

Imagine Canada Accreditation

In 2021, Camp Ooch & Camp Trillium was accredited by Imagine Canada's Standards Programs for charities and not-for-profit organizations. The accreditation recognizes our commitment to operate at the highest level of accountability and transparency.



Thank You!

Throughout the pandemic, we witnessed an outpouring of support from our community who rallied around us to ensure we could continue to serve thousands of kids and families affected by childhood cancer or serious illness. We are grateful to our Board of Directors, our faithful donors and our trusted partners. Click on the links to learn more about their support. **Thank you for being a part of our circle!**



Our Board

Our Volunteers & Donors



Our Partners



CAMPFIRE CIRCLE

FORMERLY CAMP OUCH & CAMP TRILLIUM

Contact Us:

464 Bathurst St
Toronto, ON
M5T 2S6

info@campfirecircle.org

