



Boys & Girls Clubs
of South Coast BC

Camp Potlatch

Summer Camp 2018 Parent Handbook



City Office

7595 Victoria Drive
Vancouver, BC
V5P 3Z6

604-324-CAMP

Welcome!

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the Camp Potlatch family! The entire team is thrilled to have been selected by you to give your child a camp experience this summer! For over 70 years, we've had the privilege of working with thousands of children at our beautiful ocean-front location. We strive to build campers to become more resilient, self-confident, and independent in a safe and supportive environment. Your child will have the opportunity to try a whole range of amazing activities at Potlatch this summer all while under the close supervision of our incredible staff team. We hope the memories your camper makes this summer last a lifetime!

The summer is rapidly approaching and it will soon be time to get your child packed up to join the fun at Camp Potlatch. We've created this handbook to assist both you and your camper to prepare for the upcoming summer. Whether this is your child's first time at camp or he/she is a seasoned Potlatch veteran, we encourage you to take some time to carefully review this information prior to your child's upcoming camp adventure.

Can't wait to see you this summer!

Sincerely,

The Camp Potlatch Team

Who are We?

Boys and Girls Clubs of South Coast BC

Boys and Girls Clubs of South Coast BC (BGC) was founded in 1936, and has been serving young people and their families in BC's Lower Mainland for over 80 years. Our mission is to provide a safe, supportive environment where children, youth, and families can experience new opportunities, overcome barriers, build positive relationships, and develop confidence and skills in life. At our neighborhood-based Clubs, professional staff and trained volunteers offer a wide range of programs for children and youth during the critical out-of-school hours. We also offer a summer wilderness camp (Camp Potlatch), youth and family counselling, substance abuse services for youth, employment services, and parent support and early years programs. Across the Lower Mainland we currently serve 1,000 kids per day, and more than 12,000 children, youth, and families annually.

Camp Potlatch Mission Statement

Camp Potlatch's mission has been established in part from the mission statement of Boys and Girls Clubs of South Coast BC, and from the influence of a more generic philosophy of residential camping. Our mission is to create a 24-hour group-living experience for young people in a wilderness environment that provides campers with opportunities that will develop their self-esteem, and enhance their appreciation and understanding of the natural environment. The overall camp program is designed to create opportunities that will enhance the social, recreational, educational, health, and character development of each camper.



Camper Forms

All camper forms will be delivered to you via email within a week of registration. Refer to the checklist below for all forms required prior to the beginning of camp:

- ❑ **Medical Form:** This form is used to collect detailed health, medical, dietary, and behaviour management information, so we can safely ensure that your child has a safe and successful time at camp this summer. Please call the Camp Registrar or attach a detailed letter to this form explaining any specific needs your camper may have.
- ❑ **Transportation Form:** Choose either to meet the boat at the Plaza of Nations Marina or drop off and pick up your camper at our Vancouver, Burnaby, or Surrey Boys and Girls Club locations.
- ❑ **Consent Form:** All overnight camping programs have a certain amount of risk involved to each participant. Please take some time to carefully read through and sign to acknowledge that you understand these risks.
- ❑ **Behaviour Contract:** Every Potlatch camper is expected to fully participate in our programs and to abide by certain rules. Please ensure you read and sign this document with your camper so he/she has a clear understanding of these expectations.

All forms are due 3 weeks prior to the start of your camper's session and can also be found online at www.camppotlatch.com.

Final Registration Steps

All outstanding camp fees are due one month prior to the first day of your camper's session. Failure to complete payment by this time may jeopardize your camper's registration.

Please make cheques payable to **Boys and Girls Clubs of South Coast BC** and mail to:

**Camp Potlatch
7595 Victoria Drive
Vancouver, BC V5P 3Z6**

Post-dated credit card payments and cheques are acceptable, dated for the 1st and/or 15th of each month. This method of payment must be approved by the Camp Registrar, and should be submitted along with the registration form.

If you need to cancel your camper's registration, advance notice is required to provide the following refunds:

100% refund = 4 weeks prior
50% refund = 2 weeks prior



Keeping Your Child Happy & Healthy at Camp

Medications

If your camper requires any medication during their camp stay, please hand it directly to a Potlatch staff member at your child's drop-off location. All medication must be in its original packaging with the camper's name, medication, and dosage clearly marked. Camp Potlatch employs a full-time Registered Nurse in each session to administer medications and ensure camper wellness. A call home will be made if there is concern or questions regarding medication, dosages, etc.

Parents of campers carrying Epinephrine, an EpiPen, or an inhaler for asthma are asked to ensure that this information is brought to the attention of the staff and that the camp is provided with medical directives and consent concerning their use (e.g., on the Medical Form).

Head Lice Policy

All campers will be discreetly checked for head lice upon arrival at a drop-off location. This is a standard health procedure to prevent and control the spread of lice to other participants. In the event we discover lice or nits, the camper will be sent home. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to treat the camper and subsequently arrange alternative transportation to camp with the Camp Director.

We encourage all families to check their camper for lice and nits a week prior to camp, especially if a camper has recently been exposed to lice. For more information about head lice and how to complete a thorough head check, check out this great resource: greatervancouverliceclinic.ca/how-to-check-for-head-lice.

Dietary Restrictions

We can accommodate the following dietary restrictions at Camp Potlatch without supplementary food from the parents: *Lactose Intolerance, Vegetarian, Gluten-Free, No Red Meat, and No Pork Diets.*

Camp Potlatch offers a **nut aware facility**. While we do not serve nut products when there is a participant with a nut allergy on site, we are unable to guarantee that your camper will not come in contact with nut products during their stay at camp.



***Please do not send food with your camper to camp.
All food items will be taken by staff and returned to campers on departure day.***

Emergency Procedures

If there is an emergency at camp involving your camper, we will immediately contact you using the following procedure:

1. The person listed as Parent A on the Registration Form at home, then at work, and then at other numbers provided.
2. The person listed as Parent B on the Registration Form.
3. The emergency contact person listed on the Registration Form.

If we cannot contact you at any of the above numbers we will continue to try to contact you, however the Camp Director may be required to make a decision on behalf of your camper's best interest.

It is extremely important that you fill out and send in all camp forms prior to camp. It is also important that you make your wishes known to anyone who may make a decision about your camper on your behalf.



Preparing Your Camper for Camp

First Time Campers

If this is your camper's first time to an overnight camp they might be experiencing a little anxiety about spending a week away from home. The Potlatch Team has put our heads together to come up with a few key suggestions to help prepare your camper for their first summer with us at Camp Potlatch:

- Try not to talk too much about the time away from you. A big part of camp is learning life skills, problem solving, learning to cope with upset feelings, but most of all having a blast! Be positive and talk about the many great opportunities your child will have at camp.
- Check out our Camp Potlatch website to look at some of the pictures of camp.
- Reassure your camper that they do not need to know everything before coming to camp. Let them know that everybody will be learning new things and it is a great opportunity to try something they have never tried before.
- Your camper might be nervous or hesitant due to concerns over showering or using the washrooms at camp. You can reassure them that washrooms are very close to the cabins and to bring their bathing suit for showers.
- Encourage your camper to make new friends and approach a camp staff member if they feel upset or uncomfortable.



Homesickness

Your camper might miss home while at camp this summer. These are normal and natural feelings. Please discuss this with your camper and let him/her know that everyone misses home sometimes.

Feelings of homesickness typically arise during low activity times and rest hour. Encourage your camper to keep busy during these times. Suggest they write a letter to you, play a game with a new friend, or talk to a camp staff member. It's important your camper understands you believe they are capable of having a fun and successful week away from home.

It has been our experience that homesickness can be mild or severe, and can produce stomach aches, headaches, or even anxiety. Our staff are trained to identify the early signs of homesickness and to help campers to feel comfortable at camp.

While most instances of homesickness disappear as campers adjust to their new surroundings and become accustomed to camp routines, sometimes feelings of homesickness continue to escalate. If your child's homesickness is severe or continues beyond 24 hours, you will be contacted in the hopes that we can work together to support your camper to have a fun camp experience.



Please make sure you do not tell your camper that they will be able to phone home from camp or return home if they do not like it. Instead, talk with your camper by encouraging them to try the experience this year and if they don't enjoy it, they do not have to return next year. Encourage them also to participate and have fun while they are at camp.

If you would like an update on your camper's progress, please contact the camp site at 604-290-2267 and a staff member from camp will return your call.



Camper Responsibilities

Community Living

As a member of a cabin group, each camper is expected to keep their belongings tidy and to share in the responsibilities of keeping the cabin clean. Campers also assist with table setting and clearing during meals, and even help with cleaning dishes on out-trips! Please help us to reinforce the value of these duties and the importance of taking a willing and cheerful attitude towards them.

Healthy Behaviour at Camp

- Shower with soap and shampoo at least two times per week.
- Follow sun safety rules: wear a hat and sunscreen, and drink lots of water.
- Brush your teeth at least twice per day.
- Change your clothing as cleanliness and weather change.
- Please let your cabin leader know if you are having health-related problems as soon as possible.



Behaviour Expectations

Please read over and check off these basic rules with your camper before the start of camp:

- Please use appropriate language. There should be no fighting, swearing, put-downs, name calling, or cliques at camp.
- Camp Potlatch has zero tolerance for bullying.
- It is okay to be angry, but it is not okay to hit or hurt anything or anyone at camp.
- If you are angry or upset, talk to a friend or a cabin leader for help.
- Listen to others and they will listen to you.
- Show respect to other campers, staff, the environment, and Camp Potlatch.
- We will not allow destructive pranks.
- You may not enter any other cabins except your own.

On the rare occasion that campers choose to consistently break these rules or to display behaviours that put themselves or other participants in danger, we may not be able to keep them at camp for the rest of the session.

We make every effort to contact families to discuss problems prior to having to make any decision about sending a camper home early, but in some cases we may not be able to reach a family prior to making a decision. No refund will be given to campers leaving camp before the end of the session.

Camp Potlatch Programs

Camp Potlatch offers a wide range of programs designed to meet the needs and abilities of a variety of campers. As a cabin group, campers take part in pre-scheduled activities throughout the day. Each morning's free time block allows campers to choose their own adventure. There are also opportunities to mix and mingle with the entire Potlatch community during camp-wide activities. Some situations such as camper age, group interest and ability, weather conditions, and time constraints may prevent your camper's participation in every camp activity.



Ma’Kya Levels Program

The Ma’Kya Program was first started in the 1940s for the purpose of helping campers develop sufficient skills to safely venture off site and to assist in developing their appreciation for nature.

Today, while the focus is much the same, the program also concentrates on promoting campers’ self-worth and providing opportunities for them to achieve success.

When your camper comes to camp they can work towards badges and levels within the Ma’Kya Program. Year after year campers return to Potlatch earning new badges and learning new skills.

Level 1 – Explorer Badge

Level 2 – Pathfinder Badge

Level 3 – Trailblazer Badge

Level 4 – Coureur-De-Bois Badge

Level 5 – Wood Craft Council Badge

Out-Trips

All campers take part in a fun-filled 24-hour camping trip during their camp adventure. Younger campers hike to a site closer to main camp, while older campers embark on either a water-based camping trip or a land-based hiking trip. These trips depend on the overall skills of each cabin group, which are assessed prior to the out-trip.



Rain or shine, our campers still take part in this wonderful experience – as long as it is safe to do so (i.e., we wouldn’t send campers out in a thunderstorm, or to water locations in high winds). It is important to make sure that your camper has the basic gear to stay warm, dry, and happy regardless of the weather. Each camper is encouraged to bring a waterproof rain jacket, pants, and/or poncho. Consider also packing a garbage bag to line the inside of your camper’s backpack for extra waterproofing.

Each camper is responsible for “sharing the load” while on the out-trip. This includes carrying their own sleeping bag, extra clothes, and toiletries to the overnight site as well as some group gear (i.e., food, utensils, pots, rope, etc.). As a cabin group, campers help prepare meals, set up the camp site, and even wash dishes! The out-trip is often a highlight of a camper’s overall Potlatch experience. It provides the opportunity for cabin groups to work together toward a shared goal, further build as a team, and overcome challenges as a group.

Communicating with Your Camper

Phone

While campers are unable to use the camp phone during their stay, feel free to give us a call at 604-290-2267 for an update on your camper. Camp is a busy place and we sometimes aren’t in the office when parents call. Please leave a message with your name and phone number and we will return your call within 24 hours. You can also relay messages to camp by calling our Camp Potlatch city office at 604-324-2267 (between 9:30 am and 4:00 pm on weekdays).

Email

Email messages to your camper through our Camp Coordinator, Katie Ellison, at summer@bgcbc.ca. In the subject line please include the camper’s name and the session number in bold.



Snail Mail

Campers love to receive handwritten letters! We encourage you to send letters before your camper has left for camp. In a 6-day session, this is the only way we can ensure that campers receive the letters you send. Please remember to include the camper's full name and session number. Another option is to drop off a series of letters on arrival day to be distributed throughout the duration of your camper's stay. This is the most efficient method of communication.

Please post letters to: **Camp Potlatch**
Box 130
Britannia Beach, BC V0N 1J0
Attn: Camper Name and Session Number



Visiting Camp

Unfortunately, due to Camp Potlatch being accessible by boat only, we are unable to invite parents to visit the camp while it is in session. Parents who would like to visit Camp Potlatch by their own means are asked to make arrangements in advance with our Camp Director.

Promotional Pictures

Every summer many pictures and video clips are taken at Potlatch. These photos are often used in promotional pieces such as our camp brochure, website, PowerPoint school presentations, and other such media.

If you do not want your camper to appear in any pictures/videos, please indicate this to us in writing prior to your camper's first day of camp (i.e., on the Consent Form).

Please read our privacy policy on the camp brochure, or on our camp website at www.camppotlatch.com.

Packing for Camp

Tips & Tricks

Please review the enclosed "Packing List" (pages 12-13) to assist you and your camper in packing for their summer camp adventure. Ensuring that all of the necessary clothing and equipment arrives at camp with your child is essential for them to have an enjoyable camping experience

- **LABEL EVERYTHING!** We recommend iron-on or sewn-on labels for clothing, and magic marker for other things. Include your child's first and last name.
- Make sure all bags your camper brings to camp are clearly marked with their name so they can't be mistaken for someone else's luggage.
- Avoid using garbage bags, as they easily tear and cause items to fall out. Also, since all garbage bags look the same, someone may go home with the wrong bag.
- Pack with your camper. Campers have a much easier time finding things in their bag when you pack it together.
- Send a laundry bag. This will help your camper keep the dirty clothes separate from the clean ones.
- Send toiletries in a toiletry bag that can be easily carried from the cabin to the shower house.
- Pack a small day pack with books and activities for transportation day.
- Send old clothes, as camp clothes tend to get super dirty!
- Your camper is responsible for carrying their own bags and equipment. It is important they do not bring more than they can carry.
- Laundry is only available for hygiene purposes.

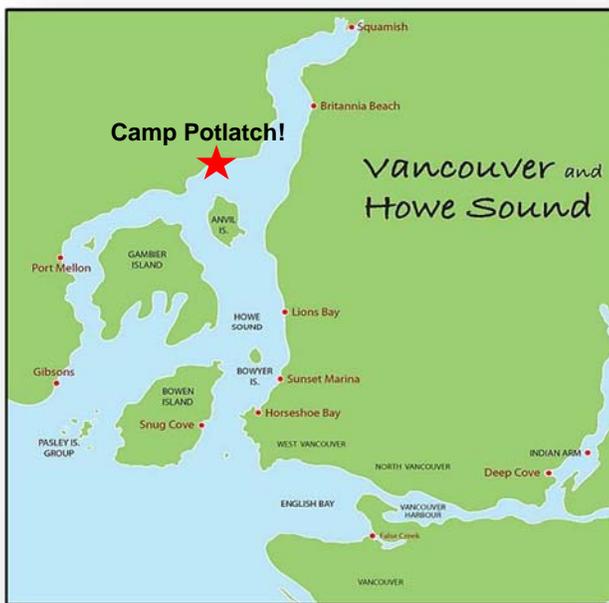


Lost & Found Procedures

Camp Potlatch makes every effort to return “lost & found” items to their rightful owner before each camper departs site. Items that are not reclaimed at camp will be sent back to the Camp Office (7595 Victoria Drive) and held for a limited length of time. After the last session, lost and found items will be donated to charity. If you are searching for lost items please call our camp office at 604-324-2267 to arrange to pick them up

Transportation

Camp is located on the northern part of Howe Sound and is only accessible by boat. For over 70 years, campers (1,000 of them last year alone) have arrived via boat on the shores of Camp Potlatch. We have partnered with **Vancouver Cruises** again this year to continue this tradition. Vancouver Cruises operates out of False Creek (Plaza of Nations Marina) in Vancouver, and has several large boats able to accommodate hundreds of passengers per vessel. Check out their website at www.vancouvercruises.com. Campers and staff will be travelling to camp on the Abitibi vessel.



As in years past, we'll be continuing to provide parents with the option of dropping off and picking up at our Club locations, or directly at the Plaza of Nations.

Parents have the choice of dropping off and picking up their camper from 3 different Clubs across the Lower Mainland. Campers will then be bussed to Plaza of Nations Marina where they will board the boat, and be shuttled directly to Camp Potlatch. The boat ride to camp takes approximately two and a half hours, during which campers will have time to meet their cabin groups, staff members, and engage in fun get-to-know-you activities.

Parents must indicate which location and who will be dropping off and picking up their camper on the attached Transportation Form. **Campers will only be released to the individual identified on the Transportation Form.** Spots at each Club location are limited so please submit your Transportation Form as soon as possible.

*Please arrive **30 minutes before** departure time to ensure your camper is properly checked in.

Missing the Bus / Boat

Unfortunately, we cannot wait for participants who are running late (even by 5 minutes!). If you miss the bus or boat, please contact our Camp Office at **604-290-2267** or our Camp Coordinator at **778-991-4207** to discuss alternative transportation options.

Pick-up Information

Due to unforeseen circumstances (i.e., weather, traffic, construction), there may be times throughout the summer when the arrival times may be delayed. In the case that we arrive early, campers will be supervised by Camp Potlatch staff at the Boys and Girls Club location. Every effort will be made on behalf of Camp Potlatch to contact parents and inform them if we will be late, however due to time restraints and volume of calls this may not always be possible. We appreciate your understanding and patience if this situation should arise.



Start of Session – Going to Camp

Fraserview Club

7595 Victoria Drive, Vancouver
Depart at **8:15am**

North Burnaby Club

518 S. Howard Avenue, Burnaby
Depart at **8:15am**

Surrey Club

Old Yale Road Elementary School
10135 132 Street, Surrey
Depart at **7:45am**

Plaza of Nations Marina

750 Pacific Blvd Dock B, Vancouver
Depart at **9:30am**



***Please remember to arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled departure time!**

End of Camp – Returning from Camp

Sessions ending on a Saturday

Main Camp Sessions: 1, 3, 5, 7
Leadership Out-Trip 1 – Girls
Leadership Camp 2-1 (Haida)

Fraserview Club

Pick-up at **4:15 pm**

North Burnaby Club

Pick-up at **4:15 pm**

Surrey Club

Pick-up at **4:45 pm**

Plaza of Nations Marina

Pick-up at **3:30 pm**

Sessions ending on a Thursday

Main Camp Sessions: 2, 3B (2wk), 4, 5B (2wk), 6, 8
Leadership Out-Trip 1 – Boys
Leadership Out-Trip 2
Leadership Camp 1 (Nootka)
Leadership Camp 2-2 (Haida)

Fraserview Club

Pick-up at **2:15 pm**

North Burnaby Club

Pick-up at **2:15 pm**

Surrey Club

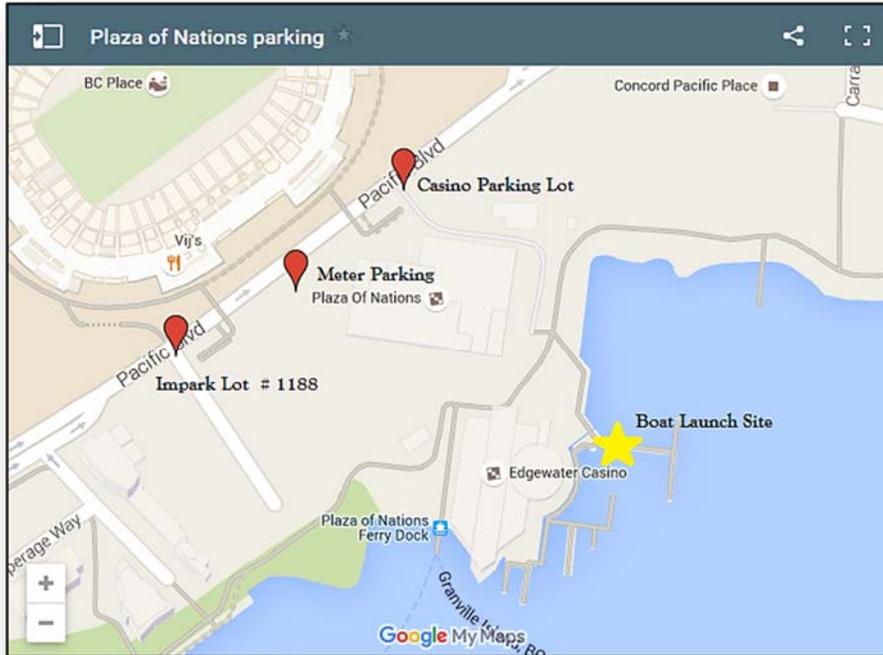
Pick-up at **2:45 pm**

Plaza of Nations Marina

Pick-up at **1:30 pm**



Parking at the Plaza of Nations Marina



Ample parking is available around the marina. **The closest parking to the marina is Impark Lot 1188**, the surface parking lot at the Plaza of Nations. The entrance to the parking lot is on Pacific Boulevard just off the exit ramp from the Cambie Street Bridge.

Hourly meter parking is also available at the front of the Plaza of Nations complex and along Pacific Boulevard, and several other paid parking lots are located around Rogers Arena. Please refer to the map above for the location of entrances to the parking areas.

Camp Schedule

Please highlight the drop-off and pick-up days for your camper's Camp Potlatch Session:

Main Camp \$ 515	Leadership Out-Trip 1 & 2	Leadership Camp 1 \$650	Leadership Camp 2 \$850
Session 1: July 9 – 14		LC1-1 (G): July 9 – 19	LC 2-1 Coed: July 9 – July 28
Session 2: July 14 – 19			
Session 3: July 23 – 28		LC1-2 (B): July 23 – Aug 2	
3B: July 23 – Aug 2 \$650	LOT 2 Coed: July 23 – Aug 2 \$675		
Session 4: July 28 – August 2			LC 2- 2 Coed: July 28 – Aug 16
Session 5: August 6 – 11		LC1-3 (G): August 6 – 16	
5B: August 6 – 16 \$650			
Session 6: August 11 – 16			
Session 7: August 20 – 25	LOT1-1(G): Aug 20 – 25 \$535	LC1-4A(B): Aug 20 – 30	
Session 8: August 25 – 30	LOT1-2(B): Aug 25 – 30 \$535	LC1-4B (G): Aug 20 – 30	

Please write down on a calendar the first and last day of your camper's camp session.



Main Camp Packing List

Please **label everything** prior to arriving to camp, including your child's luggage. We recommend iron-on or sewn-in labels for clothing and magic marker for everything else. Include your child's first and last name. We recommend packing items in a large duffel bag or hiking pack. All campers are required carry their luggage to and from the cabin on arrival and departure days. Avoid packing your camper's belongings in garbage bags as they easily tear and cause items to fall out.

Camp clothes often get super dirty – we encourage campers to bring old clothes and recommend checking out second-hand stores to limit new purchases.

Equipment:

- Sleeping bag
- Pillow
- Flashlight
- Extra batteries
- Backpack
- Sunglasses
- Insect repellent
- Water bottle
- Sunscreen (SPF 30+)
- Laundry bag

Clothing:

- Rain gear: raincoat, splash pant, rubber boots
- 5 t-shirts
- 2 pairs of pants
- 3 pairs of shorts
- 1 long-sleeved shirt
- 1 warm sweater
- Pajamas
- 6 pairs of underwear
- 6 pairs of socks
- 1 Swimsuit
- 2 pairs of shoes (sneakers & sandals)

Toiletries:

- Toothbrush & toothpaste
- Soap
- 2 large towels (1 for shower, 1 for beach)
- Shampoo
- Comb/brush
- Feminine hygiene products
- Deodorant
- Lip Balm

Optional Items:

- 1 twin-sized fitted sheet
- Camera
- Journal
- Fishing gear
- Sturdy hiking boots
- Stuffed animal

Please Leave at Home:

- Food*
- Cell phones
- Knives or weapons
- Money
- Alcohol/drugs/cigarettes
- Electronic devices
- Fireworks
- Matches/lighters
- Perfumes or aerosol deodorants
- Items of personal or material value

**Please do not pack food or snacks of any kind. We are a nut-aware facility and any food sent to camp poses a risk to campers with allergies and will attract unwanted pests into cabins.*

What does my camper bring on the overnight out-trip?

Backpack big enough to hold:
Sleeping bag
Pajamas
1 pair of socks & underwear
Warm sweater
Toothbrush & toothpaste
Sunscreen & insect repellent
Water bottle
Garbage bag to help waterproof the inside of the backpack



Leadership Camp Packing List

Please **label everything** prior to arriving to camp, including your child's luggage. We recommend iron-on or sewn-in labels for clothing and magic marker for everything else. Include your child's first and last name. All leadership camps are located an approximate 10-15 minute hike from Main Camp and campers are required carry their luggage to and from these locations on arrival and departure days. All Potlatch Leadership Camps include a significant out-trip component. It's for these reasons we recommend campers pack items in a hiking pack.

Camp clothes often get super dirty – we encourage campers to bring old clothes and recommend checking out second-hand stores to limit new purchases.

Recommended Gear While at Camp:

Equipment:

- Sleeping bag & pillow
- Water bottle
- Flashlight & extra batteries
- Sunglasses & Sunscreen (SPF 30+)
- Laundry bag
- Backpack
- Shampoo
- Comb/brush
- Feminine hygiene products
- Deodorant
- Lip Balm with SPF

Clothing:

- Rain gear: raincoat, pants & rubber boots
- 8-10 T-shirts
- 2-3 pairs of pants
- 4-6 pairs of shorts
- 2-3 Long-sleeved shirts
- 2-3 Warm sweaters
- 2-3 pairs of pajamas
- Socks & underwear
- 2 swimsuits
- 1 pair of sturdy hiking boots with ankle support
- 1 pair of sneakers
- 1 pair of sandals

Toiletries:

- Toothbrush & toothpaste
- Soap
- 2-3 large towels

Optional Items:

- Camera
- Journal
- Fishing Gear

Please Leave at Home:

- Food*
- Cell phones
- Knives or weapons
- Money
- Alcohol/drugs/cigarettes
- Electronic devices
- Fireworks
- Matches/lighters
- Perfumes or aerosol deodorants
- Items of personal or material value

**Please do not pack food or snacks of any kind. We are a nut-aware facility and any food sent to camp poses a risk to campers with allergies and will attract unwanted pests into cabins/tents.*

Recommended Gear While on Trip:

- 30-50 litre pack
- 20-30 litre watertight dry bag big enough to hold sleeping bag (for paddling trips)
- Lightweight sleeping bag
- Moisture-wicking T-shirt that covers shoulders
- Quick-dry shorts
- Fleece/wool sweater & pants
- Crocs/sandals for night-time lounging
- Wool socks
- Long-johns

