

Coueurs de Bois one month program

This trip is a first taste of what it is like to be part of an extended canoe trip. On this trip your child will embark on a 17 day adventure through the Northern Ontario wilderness. Everyday your child will be packing up camp and moving through their journey by paddling on remote lakes and portaging through beautiful landscapes. All meals are prepared before this trip departs and then assembled each day by the group. Some examples of meals are pancakes, hummus, pizza and of course delicious desserts! Though the route and food are predictable the weather is not. It is extremely important that when coming up to camp your child is prepared for weather extremes, this means rain and sun. Please remember that campers carry their own gear into camp when they arrive at our parking lot, we do help with some of the heavier loads (for those arriving by bus) but it is a 1km portage into camp. If you are driving your campers to camp, you and your child will be carrying the load into camp.

Notes on clothing

Investing in gear at this age is a tough call. It is always good to have the best when out in the wilderness. However, we understand that while children are growing clothes have a short lifespan. Therefore, we recommend you buy mid price range items.

Rain suit - Your rain jacket must be waterproof. Breathable is highly recommended, though not imperative. Rain pants are usually worn during the day when raining and at night to keep dry while on the camp site if it is raining. Campers could conceivably be in their rain gear all day and evening depending on the weather. Breathability for the rain pants is recommended though not highly. Rubber rain pants are sufficient.

Shirts, Pants, Sweaters, Long Johns - Cotton on trip is cumbersome and at times dangerous. When wet it uses the body's heat to dry itself causing the person wearing it to become colder. Thus we ask that your child does not bring cotton on trip. We recommend that your child bring clothes made of quick dry or wicking materials. These clothes dry fast and keep your child warm. Good materials to look out for are fleece for sweaters, merino wool or polypropylene for long johns and shirts, and quick dry material for shorts and pants. These rules about cotton apply to socks as well. Wool and Smart Wool are good sock material, please no cotton socks for canoe trip. It is important to remember that there will be varied summer weather and temperatures, so you must prepare for both possibilities.

Notes on gear

Sleeping bag - Though down sleeping bags pack smaller, we believe that it is more practical for this age group to purchase a synthetic bag. It is cheaper, and dries faster.

Sleeping pad - Sleeping pads should be tested out at the store for comfort, length etc. Ensolite pads are cheaper but less comfortable. While Thermarest style pads are more comfortable and keep the body warmer they are more expensive. We recommend that, if your child will be returning to camp for a few summers, to invest in a Thermarest.

Backpack – While clothes are quickly grown out of at this age, a good backpack can last a long time. Invest in something sturdy rather than with many “bells and whistles”. The backpack should be able to hold all of the items on the **Essentials for Canoe Trip** lists (sleeping bag and pad optional). This is around the 65 L range of pack. Size, durability, and comfort are the biggest priorities. Remember campers carry their personal packs on portages, it should be comfortable. Dry Bags and backpacks are normally measured in liters hence the 65L (liter) reference above.

Dry bags - The dry bag **will go inside your child’s personal backpack** and keep their things dry if their pack gets wet. There are many different dry bags on the market. The only essential thing to keep in mind is that the bag should say that it is waterproof. After that your personal budget is the main criteria in what dry bag you purchase.

Paddle - This paddle should be made from wood (more comfortable and warmer on your hands in cold weather than aluminum), and can be fitted at the retailer where purchased. If you have a paddle of your own, for a rough fit the handle of a paddle when vertical should nestle in your child’s armpit or the grip end should be at about chin height – take a moment in the store and paddle a few strokes to see what feels right to your child. Paddles can also be rented at camp.

PFD (life jacket) - It is imperative that the PFD is in good condition and has good floatation. The proper size and floatation can be determined where purchased.

Essential Clothing Items – For Canoe Trip

- 2 pairs of shoes – one very sturdy for day that will be wet most of the time – and one lighter pair for evening dry wear.
- 1 rain jacket – must be waterproof, breathable is recommended
- 1 pair of rain pants – must be waterproof, breathable is recommended
- 2 T-shirts
- 2 long sleeved shirts – one quick dry material – one light polypropylene
- 2 sweaters – one for light day use, one for warmth in evening – both must be wool or fleece NO COTTON
- 1 pair of quick dry/ light weight pants – NO JEANS or SWEAT PANTS
- 1 pair of quick dry/ light weight shorts (or bathing suit bottoms)
- 2 pair of long johns-marina wool or polypropylene – NO COTTON
- 1 pair fleece pants
- 7 pairs of socks – 4 pairs smart wool for day, 3 pairs wool or smart wool for night/evening
- 9 pairs of underwear – quick dry/polypropylene if possible
- 2 sports bras
- 1 bathing suit
- 1 sun hat - if child is prone to losing things bring two!
- 1 toque – wool or fleece
- mitts or gloves

Essential Gear- For Canoe Trip

- 1 sleeping bag – a temperature rating as low as -7 Celsius is recommended
- 2 water proof dry bags – one 20-30 L for sleeping bag- one 30-40L for personal belongings (to be able to fit in your personal pack when filled)
- 1 sleeping pad (especially great when your campsite is on the Canadian Shield)
- 1 personal ground sheet – for under tent
- 1 personal backpack – all of your child’s clothing essentials will go in a dry bag and then in this personal backpack (sleeping bag and pad can be stored elsewhere) – roughly 65-70 L
- 1 flashlight and extra batteries – headlamp is recommended
- 1 bug jacket – (a ball cap is recommended to wear under bug jacket – to keep face mesh away from the face) – bugs seem to be lasting a little longer into the summer and can vary greatly depending on weather and location
- 1 pair of sunglasses and attachment string
- 1 lifejacket (Personal Flotation Device)
- 2 whistles
- 1 flat water paddle
- mug
- water bottle

Essential Toiletries

- toothbrush and toothpaste
- sunscreen – waterproof
- lip chap - with SPF
- insect repellent
- sanitary products

Optional Items for Canoe Trip

- sandals - sturdy Teva or Choko – no leather ie. Birkenstocks
- fishing gear
- reading, writing material
- quick dry small towel
- camera and waterproof case
- needle and thread
- musical instrument
- playing cards
- Swiss army knife (small blade)

Essential In-Camp Items

- 2 t-shirts – tank tops
- 2 long sleeve shirts – can be cotton
- 1 pair of pants
- 1 pair of shorts
- 8 pairs of underwear
- 7 pairs of socks (can be cotton)
- 1 towel
- small pillow
- sheet for bunk
- pictures, etc.
- bathing suit