




# ANNUAL REPORT

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Camp Cosmos 





# CAMP COSMOS SUMMER 2023 AN OVERVIEW

**6** Weeks of Camp

**15** Languages Spoken at Camp

**27** Campers from newly-arrived & returning Ukrainian Families

**87** Registered Campers

**6** Campers registered in the Accessibility Program

**5** 1:1 Shadows / Integration for special needs children

Celebrating 51 years of transformative experiences, the Camp Cosmos Annual Report shines a light on yet another incredible summer. As a steadfast presence in Montreal, we've upheld our commitment to providing a nurturing haven for children of diverse backgrounds, fostering growth, learning, and joyful play throughout the decades. For the past two we have been welcoming Ukrainian refugee children - 27 this season - with newcomers and familiar faces enriching our community. Our location transitioned to the Saint James United Church, infusing fresh energy into our camp's legacy. Guided by our dedicated Environmental and Intercultural Coordinators, our campers embarked on captivating citywide adventures that expanded their horizons and nurtured their connections. We extend heartfelt gratitude to our extraordinary staff members whose dedication crafted a summer brimming with laughter and exploration. With their support, we offered various refugee, immigrant and families on low-income with an unforgettable season filled with joy and opportunities to uncover the vibrant heart of Montreal.

# YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Camp Cosmos' Youth Leadership Program flourished this year, embracing 5 dynamic Leaders in Training (LITs) who became indispensable to our summer experience. Witnessing their transformation into confident leaders was truly inspiring as they embraced responsibility and initiative. Under the dedicated guidance of Assistant Director JC, our LITs blossomed, forming deep connections with campers and fostering a sense of attachment that brought joy to all. Their journey was marked by laughter and shared experiences, making their growth even more remarkable. We take immense pride in their progress, envisioning a future where these newfound skills will empower them to catalyse positive change within their own communities.



## ACCESSIBILITY PROGRAM

The arrival of our new Accessibility Coordinator, Melody, this year marked an expansive stride for Camp Cosmos' Accessibility program since COVID-19. By bolstering our shadow staff and extending a heartfelt welcome to more special needs children, we amplified a pivotal facet of our mission. Embracing six new members into the program, we wholeheartedly endeavoured to tailor their experiences to individual needs, ensuring a summer filled with laughter and cherished moments. Our commitment to summer childcare for diverse families remains unwavering, entwined with our values of anti-oppression, social justice, and youth empowerment. A meaningful chapter unfolded as we embraced Ukrainian families once again this year, bridging language barriers and fostering an invaluable exchange of experiences.



## ST. JAMES MUSIC / DANCE PROGRAM

With the invaluable collaboration of St. James United Church and the expertise of dance instructor Yazan Sawalha, Camp Cosmos seamlessly integrated a captivating music and dance program. Enriching the weekly schedule for our 7-8 age group, and occasionally involving other age groups, campers delved into diverse cultural dances and music. Yazan's skillful choreography and teaching provided an engaging platform for our campers' exploration and learning.





# INTERCULTURAL PROGRAM



This year at Camp Cosmos, under the dedicated guidance of our intercultural coordinator, Couscous we embarked on an extraordinary journey of cultural exploration. Couscous' remarkable leadership and vision brought together a variety of experiences that enriched the lives of our young participants. Throughout the program, our campers had the opportunity to delve into the vibrant cultural landscape of Montreal, engaging in a variety of workshops that touched on vital topics such as bullying prevention, Indigenous communities, Moroccan culture, languages from around the world, and the creation of passports that celebrated their unique backgrounds. Furthermore, Couscous' efforts instilled a sense of unity and belonging by encouraging discussions on multiculturalism, diversity, and body positivity, effectively breaking down stereotypes and fostering a truly inclusive environment. This year's intercultural program at Camp Cosmos has not only created lasting friendships but also sowed the seeds of understanding and acceptance in our diverse community.



# ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM

Under the guidance of our dedicated Environmental Coordinators, Baguette and Rainbow, this year's Environmental program empowered campers with practical ways to care for the planet. Through engaging indoor and outdoor activities, from farm visits at Santropol Roulant to recycling workshops, they learned about the environmental impact of animals, gardening, climate change, and ecosystems. Notably, the cellphilm project sparked creativity as campers crafted videos on environmental solutions. Baguette and Rainbow's leadership nurtured a deep understanding of eco-conscious living, leaving campers inspired to make sustainable choices.



# AMAZING KIDS AT CAMP PROGRAM

FOR NEWLY-ARRIVED & RETURNING UKRAINIAN FAMILIES AS WELL AS OTHER REFUGEE CHILDREN



In the year 2022, a remarkable chapter unfolded as this special program took its first steps. The community's yearning for accessible summer activities grew and an overwhelming positive response to this program led us to, once a again, welcome 27 newly-arrived and returning Ukrainian families!

Through this endeavour, we extended a heartfelt invitation to our Ukrainian, and other refugee campers, providing them not only with enriching experiences but also the chance to forge genuine connections and new friendships. During these cherished moments, they discovered more than a program – they found a haven to embrace their journey of acclimatizing to life in Canada, as each shared adventure and shared laughter wove threads of familiarity and belonging.

These families were able to attend camp at little to no cost ensuring that their summer was free from financial worry.

We eagerly anticipate extending our support to these wonderful campers and families through upcoming future post-camp projects.

AN IMMENSE EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE GOES OUT TO TAISSIIA BAIROVA FOR HER UNWAVERING SUPPORT AND TRANSLATION HELP THROUGHOUT THE SUMMER!





# THANK YOU!

WE EXTEND OUR SINCEREST GRATITUDE TO THE INVALUABLE ORGANIZATIONS, FUNDING PARTNERS, COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS, AND GENEROUS DONORS WHOSE UNWAVERING SUPPORT AND PARTNERSHIP HAVE BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN MAKING THIS SUMMER AT CAMP COSMOS TRULY EXCEPTIONAL.

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