

**ANNUAL
REPORT 2021**



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 **CAMP COSMOS**
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SUMMER 2021 !!!

Camp Cosmos was back and better than ever for summer 2021! After having cancelled our in-person summer session in 2020, it was a blessing to be able to open back up at Saint James United Church this past summer. Through hard work and vigilance from our staff and campers (and quite a bit of good luck), we are happy to report that we ran for our entire 6 week summer session without any positive cases of COVID-19! Although Camp Cosmos saw a capacity that was reduced by half in order to better ensure a safe camp for all of our members, we were still able to reopen all of our programs and participate in some super awesome activities. Opting to prioritize outdoor play and spending time with one another, the campers had beach days, barbecues, boat trips, nature hikes, and scavenger hunts, among other new and well-loved camp activities. Camp Cosmos partnered with the Montreal City Mission on the Camp Cosmos Impact Project, which highlights how many of our community members have been with us for the long haul. Testimonies from some of our former campers, now staff members and Leaders in Training, showed us how Camp Cosmos is able to bring a community together and continue to be a support to its members as they grow. It is our hope for 2022 to be back at full capacity in our Downtown chapter!

ATHLETICS & WELLBEING PROGRAM:

We had another very successful summer of moving our bodies and connecting with our minds! Our Athletics and Wellbeing Coordinator, Sprout, made it her mission to underline fun and inclusivity as the goals of the program this year. Sometimes, organized sports can feel intimidating and overly competitive. So, Sprout introduced some new and interesting sports to the kids, such as disc golf, as well as some old favorites, like soccer and volleyball, all while playing with the goal of fun in mind. Campers participated in activities that promote sharing and mindfulness, while being accepting of differences and similarities. Mostly, after such a period of time without gathering at summer camp, we just wanted to play games, do crafts, and make memories together. Kids of all ages did interesting, do-it-yourself activities that they could repeat at home if desired, collaborative games, and workshops- making slime and modelling clay were some of the campers' favorites. This year the staff familiarized themselves with Heath At Every Size principles so we could truly create an Athletics & Wellbeing program that is fun and accessible for EVERY BODY- this was super successful and we will use the help of the HAES framework to design our program next year, too!



ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM:

As always, our Environmental Program was a favorite among our campers and staff. This summer we continued to make use of a waste tracking system, and each week the age group that had composted and recycled the most non-garbage items by Friday was rewarded with choosing their Friday Freezie colours! We brought back the super fun boat making competitions that allow us to reuse recycled materials in creative and interesting ways, just like we used to. Seed planting, scavenger hunts, and trips to Sentier Urbain gardens reminded us of how important it is for us to continue to learn about and respect the environment we live in. This year's program coordinator, Lac Louise, taught campers of all ages of how fun and important it can be to eagerly take on the smaller day-to-day sustainable actions, and how impactful it can be to have ongoing conversations about the reality of climate change in our communities.

INTERCULTURAL PROGRAM:



The Intercultural Program at Camp Cosmos is where we can come together as groups to appreciate our cultural differences and similarities. This year's program coordinator, Cheesecake, started the summer out by having each camper create their own passport- the campers collected stamps in their passports for each outing they went on with their age group. Exploring Chinatown and the Old Port, scavenger hunting, and rowing boats on the Lachine Canal got campers to fill up their passport pages with stamps and memories. Workshops from Red Urban Project for all of our age groups allowed the kids, both newcomers and those who have been here for a while, to learn a bit of the history of the Indigenous folks whose unceded land we reside on. They taught the campers how to create some traditional crafts among other activities, such as music and storytelling, which the kids enjoyed thoroughly!

ACCESSIBILITY PROGRAM:

Although our Accessibility Program was at an all-time low due to a reduced capacity, we were thrilled to welcome back 3 returning campers and Shadows to Camp Cosmos this summer. The program was small but mighty! Our dynamic team of Shadows and our Accessibility Director, Clover, facilitated the inclusion of all campers in our activities and programs, and made sure the kids in the program had a fun and relaxing time with their friends at camp. Having kids of differing levels of ability and disability properly integrated at camp fosters tolerance and understanding in the group as a whole. Everyone, regardless of ability or disability, has similarities and differences, and everyone has exceptional needs that they deserve to have met while at camp. Through our Accessibility Program, we can ensure that we are able to meet the needs of our all of our campers the best we can, while creating an environment where kids can feel a sense of acceptance towards themselves and their peers.



YOUTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM:

The Youth Leadership Program saw quite a few new and returning Leaders in Training, and we were happy to welcome some longtime campers onto the team! This year's group of dynamic teens worked super hard to plan an escape room for the kids, and this was a huge hit with all of our campers. The participants were able to rotate the camp age-groups they accompanied on a week to week basis in order to experience working with kids of all ages, and to explore what their strengths are on the job. The Director of this program, Arizona, organized several fun and educational workshops for the teens, including welcoming back the folks at Red Urban Project, and career development sessions.

CAMP COSMOS IMPACT PROJECT & RETURNING STAFF

After 7 years, Camp Cosmos returned to Saint James United Church for summer 2021! It was a pleasure being so close by the Montreal City Mission, and near so many of the fun places we love to visit in the heart of downtown. This summer, 10 of our staff and team members were people who have 'graduated' with Camp Cosmos over the years so to speak- some have been with us for many years and have worked their way up from camper to Leader in Training, or Leader in Training to staff member!

JC (he/him) was a CIT with us for 4 summers before he became a Counselor in 2019! He has stayed with us ever since and is very well loved by the campers and staff he works with each summer. JC is known for his warmth and kindness.

Paprika (she/her) was a Shadow in Training before becoming a full fledged Shadow! She has worked consistently with the same camper for the past 2 camp seasons, and she always seems to become good friends with all of the kids no matter which age group she works with.

Jinx (she/her) joined us as a Shadow for the first time this summer after having spent time in our Youth Leadership Program in 2018. This year she and her camper had an awesome time, we can't wait to see the pair in action again next year.

Twilight (she/her), a longtime camper who volunteered with us in 2019, joined our team of LITs in 2021! She is very kind and patient with the younger kids at camp, who always seem to be over the moon to see her.

Noname (he/him) was on our team again! After having been a camper in 2018, he joined our Youth Leadership program in 2019 and has stayed with us since- he is known for his calm and gentle presence at camp.

Doctor (they/them), who has been a longtime camper with us since they were 5 years old, became a LIT for the first time this year! Doctor always makes sure that we are prepared and ready to handle any situation that may come our way, and we can't wait to have them back on our team next summer.

Marco (he/him), who was a longtime camper with us, became a CIT in 2019 and was happy to be back at camp with us this summer. He is patient and flexible, and he clicks really well with kids of all ages.

Fruit (he/him) and Techno (he/him) were our volunteers this summer. Both longtime campers, it'll be amazing to see how next summer goes with the both of them on our team as LITs! Their help this year was appreciated so much

Ginger (she/her), who has been Director since 2019, started out as a CIT at Camp Cosmos in 2010. Being back at Saint James United Church, just like camp was over a decade ago, was a reminder of how far she has come with the support of the community!



CAMP COSMOS BY THE NUMBERS

CC by the numbers	2018	2019	2020	2021
Campers	158	140	0	43
Counselors	15	11	0	3
Shadows	10	9	0	3
Leaders in Training	6	10	0	6
Campers with Disabilities	16	10	0	3
Languages spoken	26	26	0	12

Languages spoken: Arabic, Tigrinya, Tamil, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Chinese, Persian, Farsi, Italian, Portuguese, English, and French.

Although our numbers may seem small compared to summers past, they reflect our efforts to create an environment where we can adapt to changing norms together. This is a reflection of the modifications we have carefully made in efforts to keep our community safe. It is our hope next year that public health measures will allow us to be back at full capacity in our Downtown chapter, and to reopen our West Island camp as soon as we can, so that we can focus on growing our camps once again!



THANK YOU!

From all of us at Camp Cosmos, we want to extend our gratitude to our donors and funding partners- thanks to you, we have had far fewer barriers in reopening Camp Cosmos, and we get to keep on doing what we love: providing accessible, high-quality childcare, and a memorable summer for all.

Special thanks to:

Fondation des Canadiens pour l'enfance

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United Church of Canada

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Saint James United Church

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All of our donors!

