



## TOWNSHIP OF EDWARDSBURGH CARDINAL INFORMATION ITEM

**Committee:** Committee of the Whole – Community Development

**Date:** October 7, 2024

**Department:** Recreation

**Topic:** Summer Day Camp Year End Report

### **Background:**

This year's summer camp was another success, with both the Cardinal and Johnstown locations hosting well-attended sessions. Each location offered four two-week sessions, providing a total of eight weeks of engaging activities for local children. In Johnstown, all four sessions had high numbers, accommodating 39 campers per session, for a total of 156 campers and 63 different families. Cardinal also saw strong participation, with 40 campers in sessions 1, 3, and 4 and 20 campers in session 2, bringing Cardinal's total to 120 campers and 49 different families.

### **Successes**

Overall, this summer's camp was a great success. The themed sessions (Sports, Survivor, Arts and Crafts, and Everyday Hero) were well received by both campers and staff, featuring a variety of engaging games, activities, and creative projects. The Survivor theme during Session 2 was particularly popular, with campers enjoying daily team challenges that promoted teamwork and friendly competition.

Campers also benefited from swimming lessons, free swim sessions, and the Johnstown Junior Lifeguarding program at the Johnstown pool. Johnstown campers enjoyed using the new pickleball courts, new basketball net and baseball fields. Cardinal campers made excellent use of the arena, baseball field and basketball court throughout all eight weeks. Additionally, the Fire Department visited both camps in the final week to provide fire safety education. A standout moment was when the campers had the opportunity to be sprayed by the fire hose, which was a fun and memorable experience.

### **Camp Challenges**

A notable challenge this summer was the camper demographic. At the Johnstown camp, the majority of participants were aged 5 to 7, making up 51.87% of the camp population. Children aged 8 to 10 comprised 38.13%, while those aged 11 to 12 made up just 10%. Similarly, at the Cardinal camp, the 5 to 7 age group was the largest, representing 54.28% of the campers. The 8 to 10 age group accounted for 40%, and the 11 to 12 age group represented only 5.72%.

Given this distribution, it is recommended to adjust the camp age range to focus on children aged 5 to 10. This change would better align with the demographics and allow for a more targeted and engaging camp experience. Resources could be reallocated to enhance programs for this core age group, ensuring the camp meets the needs and interests of the majority of participants.

## **Staff**

Staff were hired in early spring to ensure all required training could be completed before summer began. Each team member underwent training in customer service excellence, allergy awareness, concussion awareness, and WHMIS. Staff also participated in two collaborative training sessions with the pool staff: one full-day and one evening session. The evening session included hands-on scenarios with the Fire Department to enhance preparedness.

**Staff Successes:** The Township employed 16 camp staff members this summer, including 10 full-time and 6 part-time. This staffing structure proved beneficial, providing flexibility to cover the more than half of our staff who required over 7 days off. The additional part-time staff also offered crucial support in managing campers with behavioral challenges, leading to smoother operations and better individual attention.

**Staffing Challenges:** Once the summer began, one challenge was that not all staff were able to commit to a full 40-hour workweek for the entire 8-week duration.

## **Leaders in Training**

Leaders in Training (LITs) are volunteer students that were a valuable component of this year's summer camp. They played a key role during free swim sessions, helping to meet pool admission standards. LITs also assisted in leading camp activities for those who chose not to participate in free swim, ensuring a well-rounded and engaging experience for all campers.

## Considerations for Summer 2025

Staffing: Continue hiring 16 camp staff, keeping in mind that not all staff will be available for a full 40-hour workweek.

Training: Provide additional training for managing children with behavioral challenges.

Equipment: Invest in more outdoor equipment.

Age Range: Adjust the camp age range to 5 to 10 or 11 years old to better align with the younger camper demographic.



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Recreation Coordinator



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Facilities Manager