

# March Break Day Camp

## Information Guide



### About Camp

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The Riverwood Conservancy's March Break Day Camp is a unique and dynamic, full-day nature camp children who have completed grades 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6. Our approach encourages growth in children's well-being, confidence, creativity and love of nature. We are intentional about building a fun, inclusive and supportive camp community.

In addition to planned activities, campers will choose from a variety of activities and equipment to create daily adventures in Riverwood's 150 acres, numerous trails & terrains, and diverse habitats.

Campers' well-being, learning and fun are supported by a 6:1 camper to staff/volunteer ratio allowing kids to go at their own pace. Campers will not be separated by age but will be permitted to group together based on shared interests.

## About Us

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The Camp Team is made up of staff and trained TRC volunteers. Staff members are:

**Liz Jankowski**, Camp Director and OCT teacher with years of teaching and camp experience delivering programs at Riverwood, outdoor schools, botanical gardens, and conservation authorities. Expert joke-teller and lover of puns.

**Erin Farrow**, experienced OCT Teacher and Elementary Program Leader at TRC with experience teaching in public and private schools, at Peel Field Centers, and as past camp director at Mentor College.

**Kerry Furneaux**, Therapeutic Garden Coordinator at TRC has delivered Therapeutic Horticulture programs to people of all abilities for over 5 years. She has also delivered camp and education programs at the Toronto Botanical Gardens.

Staff are skilled naturalists and/or gardeners and bring a child-centered, inquiry-based approach to programs and dedication to health and safety.

**The Riverwood Conservancy (TRC)** is a volunteer and member-based charity that provides programs and services focused on environmental education, conservation, gardening, and horticulture. We invite individuals and families to explore this natural space in the heart of Mississauga and take advantage of our range of programs and activities.

Founded in 1985 as the Mississauga Garden Council, today The Riverwood Conservancy works with like-minded groups and individuals to enable people of all cultures, ages, and abilities to respectfully connect with nature and learn about the importance of protecting and experiencing the beauty of Riverwood.

**Our Vision:** A community that lives in harmony with nature.

**Our Mission:** The Riverwood Conservancy is the charity that provides programs and direction for Riverwood – the 150-acre, urban nature preserve situated on the shores of the Credit River in Mississauga. Working together with like-minded groups and individuals, our mission is to enable people of all cultures, ages, and abilities to respectfully connect with nature and learn about the importance of protecting, conserving and restoring natural spaces for the well-being of future generations – all while experiencing the beauty of the Riverwood gardens.

### **Our Values:**

**Respect** — We are a kind and caring organization that respects nature, the environment, and all people.

**Welcoming** — We enjoy meeting new people, hearing new ideas, and sharing the beauty of Riverwood.

**Leadership** — We are passionate in building awareness and offering opportunities for learning and discovery.

**Participation** — We provide opportunities for growth and a path for the future through community participation.

**Integrity** — We take our responsibilities very seriously and are transparent in our communications, interactions and intentions.

## Dates and Times for 2026

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March 16-20, 2026. Registration is limited to 16 participants.

**Time:** Camp runs from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm each day

### PLEASE NOTE:

**We will not provide pre- or post-camp care. If parents are late picking up their child(ren), an additional fee of \$5 will be charged for every five minutes up to 30 minutes, and \$10 for every five minutes thereafter.**

## Daily Schedule

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In the event of inclement weather, activities will take place inside Chappell House. The camp's schedule is adjusted for the needs of the group and weather conditions of the day. Your camper's day might look like this:

**9:00 am** | Arrival and Choose Your Own Activity (e.g. maker-space, board games, reading corner)

**9:45 am** | Campers go over the day's plan with their counsellors

**10:00 am** | Campers help collect materials and fuel up for adventure with their snack

**10:30 am** | Outdoor adventures

**12:15 pm** | Lunch indoors at Chappell House

**12:45 pm** | Choose Your Own Activity connected to the morning adventures (e.g. nature journalling, structure building, microscopy, field guide research)

**1:00 pm** | Outdoor games (e.g. animal interaction simulations, nature exploration, environmental skill building)

**2:00 pm** | Surprise guest of the day, or songs, skits, and games

**3:00 pm** | Review and reflect on the day's plan

**3:30 pm** | Parent pickup

## Camp Program

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Campers help to set part of our daily plan for adventure by selecting options from a daily menu of topics, locations, exploration tools, and challenge levels.

See our examples below for what campers might expect to do or see on any given day at camp.

Topics	Location	Tools	Speed
<input type="checkbox"/> Beaver builders <input type="checkbox"/> Dragonflies <input type="checkbox"/> Pond music <input type="checkbox"/> DIY journal supplies <input type="checkbox"/> How to find wildlife	<input type="checkbox"/> Garden <input type="checkbox"/> Meadow <input type="checkbox"/> Pond <input type="checkbox"/> Riverbank <input type="checkbox"/> Forest	<input type="checkbox"/> Binoculars <input type="checkbox"/> Hand lens <input type="checkbox"/> Dip nets <input type="checkbox"/> iPad for sound recording <input type="checkbox"/> Digital camera	<input type="checkbox"/> Sloth <input type="checkbox"/> Fox <input type="checkbox"/> Falcon

Camp staff will support putting the campers' plan into action.

On our daily adventure hike, campers can learn outdoor skills and build knowledge of nature that interests them.



**Adventure backpacks** will be provided for every child to use while at camp. These support camper safety with high visibility markings and camper name tags, are coded for allergies, visually support group cohesion, and allow children to choose and bring tools for each day's adventures. For example, a camper might select binoculars, an insect collection container, markers for colouring, and a spray bottle to keep cool for the day.

Campers will have the opportunity to join in or watch group games, challenges, sing camp songs, and try craft projects indoors and outdoors.

## Preparing for Camp: Behavioral Expectations

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It is the goal of Camp at Riverwood to provide a healthy, safe, secure, inclusive and positive environment for all participants. Campers will be expected to uphold the Camp Riverwood Code of Conduct. **Please review it with your child before they come to camp.**

### Code of Conduct

- We are all responsible for our actions.
- We will care for and respect ourselves and those around us.
- We will respect and treat others fairly, regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, creed, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, family status or disability.
- We must listen to Camp Staff, TRC staff and TRC volunteers when instructions are given for safety.
- We will use appropriate and respectful language. No profanity, offensive language or name-calling is allowed.
- We will respect equipment, facilities, and grounds.

### When a camp participant does not follow the Code of Conduct, we may take the following steps:

1. Staff will redirect the child to more appropriate behavior.
2. The child will be reminded of the Code of Conduct, and a discussion will take place.
3. The Camp Director will be notified of the problem and will meet with the child.
4. If the behavior persists, a parent will be notified of the problem.
5. If a problem persists and a child continues to disrupt the Camp program, TRC reserves the right to suspend or remove the child from camp.

The following are not acceptable and may result in the immediate and indefinite **suspension of a camper**:

- Behaviors that endanger the health and safety of campers, staff, volunteers and Riverwood visitors.
- Physical aggression including hitting, kicking, pulling, fighting, spitting, etc.
- Stealing or damaging TRC, Riverwood or personal property.
- Leaving the camp program without permission.
- Continuous disruption of the program with consistent disrespect.
- Refusing to follow the behavior guidelines.
- Bullying, either in person or through technology, such as texting or taking photos without permission.

### Important Notes:

- We cannot dedicate the full attention of a staff member to one camper. If a child requires individual supervision because of their behavior or other issues, our ability to care for the rest of the campers will be compromised. Parents or guardians will be notified and required to pick up their child.
- If a camper is sent home, they must be picked up from camp **within 60 minutes of notification**.
- If a camper is sent home, there will be no refund of registration fees.
- Campers will engage in play including touching soil, climbing logs, and traversing uneven ground. Staff will coach them to take these risks safely.

## Camper Health

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The Riverwood Conservancy has Health and Safety Policies that align with Provincial, Regional and Municipal regulations. These are updated as guidelines regulations change. Here are some ways we will ensure campers' health and safety:

### **Staff screening, camper ratios**

- Staff and volunteers all receive training and have a current Vulnerable Sector Police Record Check and/or Offense Declaration.
- With staff and volunteers, Camp will follow a 6:1 ratio with 1 camp team member to 6 campers.

**Do not bring your child to camp if they show signs/symptoms of COVID-19, symptoms listed below or any communicable disease not listed:**

- |                           |                               |            |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|------------|
| • Pink Eye                | • Fifth Disease               | • Rash     |
| • Strep Throat            | • Hand, Foot, & Mouth Disease | • Vomiting |
| • Chicken Pox (Varicella) | • Flu                         | Diarrhea   |
| • Lice                    | • Fever                       |            |

### **Camper Illness**

- If a camper feels unwell at camp, staff will separate the camper from the group and call parents/guardians immediately.
- Sick campers must be picked up as soon as possible.

## Health and Safety: How to Prepare for the Outdoors



### What to Wear

Please dress children properly for winter weather every day to avoid discomfort or cold-related injury. Please refer to Sick Kids' [Dressing for the Cold](#). The following clean DRY items are required each day for camp:

- Warm, winter boots (not rain boots) and clean dry socks
- Snow pants
- Winter coat
- Warm hat
- **2 pairs** warm mittens
- Extra socks

## Pesky Plants and Pests

Riverwood, like all outdoor areas, has some pests and plants that should be avoided. While Camp staff are trained to recognise and avoid these risks, exposure is still possible. Please follow the tips below to prevent, insect bites and stings, and rashes from plants while in the outdoors:

- Come to camp clean and fragrance free. Insects are attracted to fragrances.
- Campers should not touch any plants without permission from Camp program staff. Plants like poison ivy can cause an itchy rash.
- Be tick smart. Wash clothing at the end of each day. Check body for ticks daily. If you find one, remove it with tweezers, place it in a bag, and seek medical attention if a rash develops. Ticks can pass on diseases to people including Lyme Disease. For further information, please visit [ontario.ca/page/outdoor-health](http://ontario.ca/page/outdoor-health) and [peelregion.ca/health/protecting-your-health/mosquitoes-ticks-bed-bugs](http://peelregion.ca/health/protecting-your-health/mosquitoes-ticks-bed-bugs)

## Leave Valuables at Home

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Please leave valuables like special toys, jewellery, cell phones or other electronic devices at home. These can be damaged or lost in the woods. We are not responsible for valuables brought to camp.

## Food Allergy Safety

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Products that contain or may contain peanuts or tree nuts are not permitted at camp. Children attending Camp have life-threatening allergies to these products. Having or consuming them near these children exposes them to serious health risks.

Please read food labels carefully to avoid sending foods that **may contain nuts/traces of nuts** with your child.

### To avoid sending peanut/nut related products:

- Read labels to see if peanut/nut products are present. Also avoid products that have warnings such as 'may contain traces of nuts' on the package.
- Check ingredient lists each time you buy a product. Ingredients may change.
- Avoid products that do not carry an ingredients list.
- Avoid packing "**bulk foods**" - the scoop you used in the raisins may have just come from the peanut bin!
- Ensure **homemade items** do not contain nuts, nut butter or nut oil, and were not prepared with those items nearby.

Food that does not comply with our policy will be kept in your camper's lunch to enjoy at home.



## What to Bring

Please clearly label all camper's clothing and personal items.

- ☐ A bag that holds all personal items including lunch bag and water bottle
- ☐ Indoor shoes (crocs or running shoes). These can be borrowed from Camp if needed
- ☐ A change of clothes
- ☐ One extra pair of socks
- ☐ A refillable water bottle
- ☐ Food:
  - Lunch will take place at 12:15 pm each day.
  - Please pack a healthy, nut-free lunch. **Do not send food that may contain peanuts or tree nuts.** Food that does not comply with our policy will be kept in your camper's lunch to enjoy at home.
  - There will be 2 snack times.
  - We will be active all day so campers will be extra hungry!
  - There is no food for purchase on site.
  - There is no microwave or fridge available.
  - To help us model good environmental behaviour, please pack a litterless lunch.

### How to Pack a Litterless Lunch

Please keep these principles in mind when selecting lunch items:

**REDUCE** (eliminate garbage and packaging)

**REUSE** (use containers that can be washed and used multiple times)

**RECYCLE** (we have recycling on site, but cannot recycle juice boxes)

**COMPOST** (we can compost fruit and vegetable scraps only)



## EPI-PENS/Puffers/Inhalers

Campers who have been prescribed an EpiPen, puffer or inhaler for severe allergies, **MUST bring and carry it with them** each day of the program. Please ensure the medication has not expired. Campers who arrive without their prescribed medication, or with expired medication, cannot be admitted to camp.

EpiPens, puffers and inhalers must be carried in a **fanny pack** worn by the camper at all times. Please label the fanny pack with your child's first and last name. For safety reasons, epi-pens should not be carried in pockets or loose bags (which can be lost).

If your child is prone to anaphylaxis and may need an EpiPen administered in an emergency, we require that you complete and submit an [Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan](#). Please email the completed form to [info@theriverwoodconservancy.org](mailto:info@theriverwoodconservancy.org) or submit it to the counsellor when you drop off your child.

## Early Camper Pick-Up or Late Drop-Off

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To pick up your child early or notify us of a late drop-off please call 905-279-5878.

To facilitate early pick up from camp we require advance notice: campers may be far from Chappell House at the desired pick-up time.

## Absent Campers

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If your child will not be attending camp, please call 905-279-5878 before 8:30 am and leave a message. Alternatively, you can email the Camp Director at [liz.jankowski@theriverwoodconservancy.org](mailto:liz.jankowski@theriverwoodconservancy.org) in advance.

## Camper Pick-Up Authorization

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Adults must park at Visitor Parking, walk to Chappell House, and show photo ID to pick up their camper. Children cannot sign themselves into or out of camp.

Individuals authorized to pick up children must present government-issued photo I.D. to camp staff upon pick up of each camper, every day of camp. Acceptable photo identification includes a driver's license, government issued I.D., or passport.

Names listed on camper's registration forms must **match photo I.D. exactly**. For example, if the name on the registration is "Darion O'Dell", the photo I.D. must have the name "Darion O'Dell", not "Darion O'Dell-Smith".

To add additional names to the authorized pick-up list for your child, please notify Camp staff by email at [liz.jankowski@theriverwoodconservancy.org](mailto:liz.jankowski@theriverwoodconservancy.org).

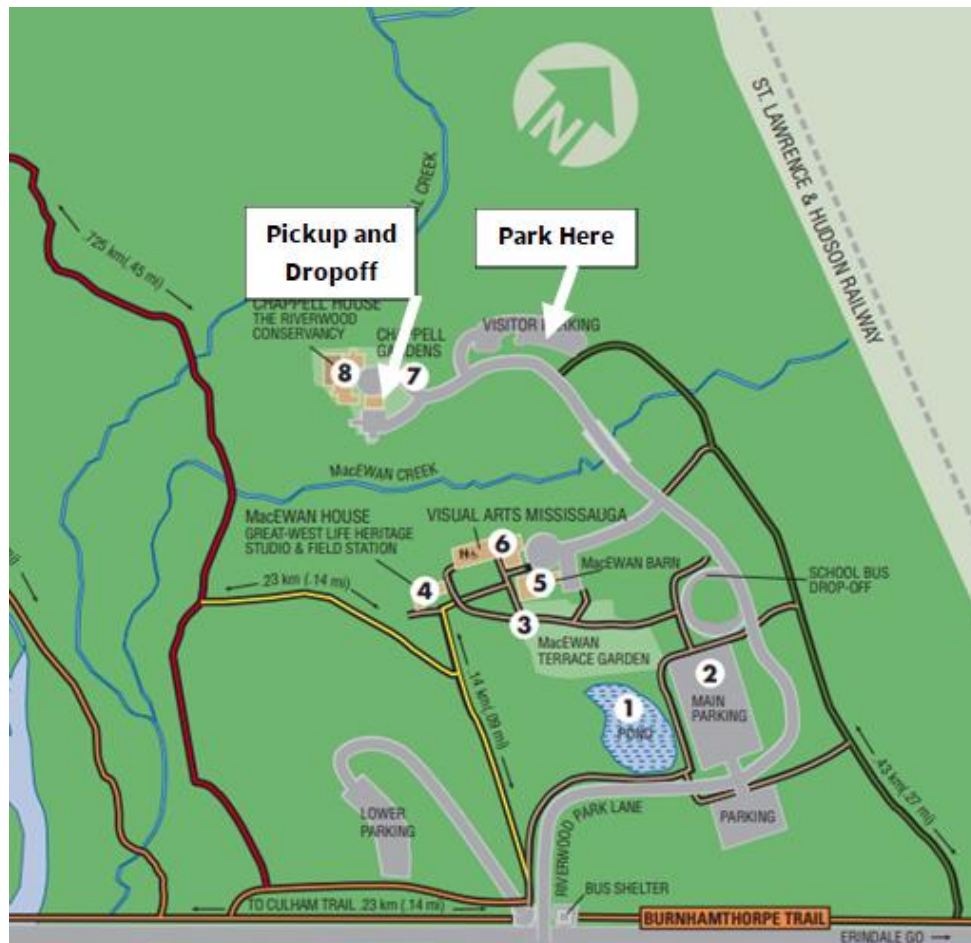
## Drop-off and Pickup

### Morning Drop off

- Park in the Visitor Parking near Chappell House (4300 Riverwood Park Lane).
- Drop off will be at the Chappell House front entrance
- Campers must be accompanied by an adult until they are checked in.
- Please feel free to drop-off no more than 5 minutes early so programming can start on-time.

### Afternoon Pick up

- Park in the Visitor's Parking Lot at the very end of Riverwood Park Lane by Chappell House.
- Walk to the Chappell House front entrance (4300 Riverwood Park Lane). Please arrive by 3:30 pm.
- Children will be released only to adults listed as parents/guardians or emergency contacts.
- Adults must present valid government-issued identification for The Riverwood Conservancy to release the child into their care.
- Written permission from a parent/guardian on paper or email is needed to release children to any other adult.



## Frequently Asked Questions

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*What is the supervision ratio at camp?*

We are pleased to offer 6:1 supervision between campers and the camp team. It consists of Camp Staff and volunteers of The Riverwood Conservancy, all of whom have passed a stringent screening protocol and have up-to-date Vulnerable Sector Police References.

*What do you do during a hazardous weather like extreme cold, heat, high wind or thunderstorms?*

Safety of our campers is always the top priority. Program is adjusted to the weather conditions of the day but in the event of extreme weather, camp activities will take place inside Chappell House.

*What if I am late dropping off my child?*

If you are late, please bring your child to The Riverwood Conservancy's Main Office located at Chappell House (4300 Riverwood Park Lane). Staff will contact the Camp Director who can send a Camp Leader or Volunteer to pick up your child.

*What if I am late to pick up my child?*

Your child will be supervised in Chappell House. Please note we are strictly unable to provide care beyond 4:00 pm; kindly make alternate pick-up arrangements with your emergency contacts listed on the registration form if you are unable to pick up your camper by 4 pm. Note that late fees will be charged after 3:30 pm.

*Who do I contact if I need to speak with my child or camp staff during camp hours?*

Between 9:00 am and 3:30 pm, please call The Riverwood Conservancy's main office at 905-279-5878. They will help you get in touch with your child or camp staff or confirm details if you or your emergency contact needs to pick up your child early.

For other inquiries, please contact TRC staff through [info@theriverwoodconservancy.org](mailto:info@theriverwoodconservancy.org), or the Camp Director at [liz.jankowski@theriverwoodconservancy.org](mailto:liz.jankowski@theriverwoodconservancy.org).