

Integration & Inclusion Summer Day Camps

“Supporting the effective inclusion and integration of special needs children into Dovercourt Recreation Centre Summer Day Camp programs”

Dovercourt Recreation Centre is an established recreation service provider in the City of Ottawa and offers a variety of Summer Day Camp programs for children and youth and actively practices inclusion.

The Integration and Inclusion program caters to children and youth with mild to moderate needs. Following an assessment and consultation meeting with the client and family, specific information is provided to all staff members involved in the program and a review of activities and events will take place. Modification or adaptation will be incorporated as required.

Dovercourt’s Theme Camps have been targeted to incorporate inclusion and integration program. Each camp will be overstaffed in excess of the standard staff to client ratio, and, each staff member will have received training in “Moving to Inclusion”. The Camp Director for each camp will be responsible for ensuring all children, including those in the Integration & Inclusion Program, are engaged in the planned activities.

Program Goals

- To promote optimal physical, cognitive, communicative, and psychosocial development and independence in special needs children and youth.
- Ensure a coordinated, effective, integrated system of services and supports for special needs children, youth and their families.

Desired Outcomes

1. Personal benefits to special needs child/youth:
 - Learning
 - Improved health of special needs child/youth
 - Improved physical, cognitive, psychosocial development and independence.
 - Safety in program
2. Stress-free experience for parents/guardians of camp registrants (parents of special needs child/youth as well as parents/guardians for other camp participants):
 - Confidence that every participant will have a positive, safe, ‘normalized’ camp experience
 - Confidence that staff to participant ratio adequate.

Who Can Participate?

Children with any mental and physical challenges are welcome to participate. The assessment helps determine the ability of the child or youth to succeed in the program. The first goal of the assessment is to ensure the Integration Model will work with the specific child or youth. Some children and youth will require the additional support of a 1 to 1 worker rather than simply the assistance of additional camp staff. The second goal of the assessment is to initiate the conversation with the family with respect to individual needs and effective methods that are already being used in integration with other programs or at school.

The Process

1. **Register for the Theme Camp of Your Choice.** We encourage all participants regardless of whether they have been assessed to register for the program of their choice. Dovercourt's camps are popular and spaces are limited. Spaces for special needs clients are not reserved and all registrations are done on a first come, first served basis. Should the assessment process indicate that the program is not appropriate; a full refund will be issued immediately.
2. **Contact Dovercourt's Special Needs Coordinator** to inform them of your registration and to secure an appointment to conduct the assessment. At the appointment, a parent/guardian and the child/youth should be present.
3. If the assessment shows that the Integration Model should be a good fit for the child/youth, Dovercourt's staff will make note of the weeks and will follow up with the parent closer to the camp date to ensure camp staff have all the relevant information to ensure the child/youth succeeds in the program.

What if the Assessment shows that the Integration Model is not a good fit?

If the child/youth is determined to not be a good fit for the Integration and Inclusion Program but the support of a 1 to 1 worker would improve the likelihood of success, then the parents have the option of securing a 1 to 1 worker and still register for the camp program of their choice. Funding for 1 to 1 workers is the responsibility of the parent. The Special Needs Coordinator is able to provide contacts to services which may have funding and/or workers.

To register for camps

Registration can be done in person, by telephone or online.

To make an appointment for Assessment contact:

Stacey Gattinger, Program Supervisor
Dovercourt Recreation Centre, sgattinger@dovercourt.org

This program is operated with assistance and support of the City of Ottawa, Parks and Recreation Branch, Special Needs Unit.