

## **Inclusion & Integration in Dovercourt Camps 2023**

We welcome all kids and adults into our programs. Sometimes our participants require extra support to have a great experience. Most often, this means extra love and care by our inclusion team which includes Camp Buddies, Inclusion Counselors and Leads, and 1:1 Support Workers.

We are grateful to many partners like CHEO and Youth Services Bureau for helping to make this sustainable and to funding from government grants for their support of our approach.

Although the post-pandemic rebuild years continue to bring a series of challenges, we remain dedicated to providing a high-quality camp experience to as many kids as possible.

We do not have specific camps or camp spots for children with special needs. All children are welcome to register for all of our camp programs, provided they fit the age range for that group. If a camper does not meet the age requirements but would participate more successfully with a different age group, you'll need our help with the registration process. When registering for camp, please make sure that you have indicated that your child may or will require additional support by checking on the "Inclusion Support Required" box on their account profile. This will make sure that your child's name appears on our Inclusion Team's list for follow up. From there, we will schedule a time to connect and gather more information about your child's needs and how we can help them participate.

### **Supports for Campers**

Please read carefully the descriptions on the next page to help determine which situation is closest to yours and from there, which supports Dovercourt can offer and what parents/families will need to provide. Please note that the recommended support is usually a starting place, and after a day or two, it may be decided that more or less support is required.

Please note that we expect every camper to participate with the group in camp activities for at least 50% of the day, with the goal being 60%-75% by the end of the week. If this is not the case, then a specialized program may be better suited for your child and we can help make recommendations based on your location and their interests.

Level of Support	Description/Criteria	Recommended Support	Resources	Next Steps
1	<i>Your child can follow along with the group for the most part (at least 60% of the day) but may need help with certain tasks, understanding instructions, additional time during transitions, or needing a break from the group to go for a walk, or a body break.</i>	Camp Buddy or Low Ratio (shared care)	Dovercourt covers the additional cost for camp buddies or extra counselors.	Register for camp, and make sure your child's account indicates additional support.
2	<i>Your child participates with the group for the majority of the camp activities (at least 60% of the day) but requires 1:1 attention. There may be physical, emotional, or social challenges that require direct attention for the duration of the camp day. Your child may require more frequent body/sensory breaks, modified program plans, or help with regulation and appropriate social behaviours.</i>	One to one support; individual attention throughout the day.	Dovercourt will recruit and train camp staff, cover the cost of their training, and subsidize part of their wages but most of the expense is passed onto the family. Fees for 1:1 workers range from \$200-\$800 depending on the situation and staff availability. These workers are high school or university students and are <b>not</b> trained for, or insured for, personal care such as <b>diapering or toileting</b> . In certain circumstances, your camp fees can be partially subsidized by Dovercourt to reduce the overall cost per family..	Register for camp, and make sure your child's account indicates additional support. There will be an additional fee for Inclusion Support and the amount will be determined on a case-by-case basis, but will range from \$200-\$800/week.
3	<i>Your child participates with the group for the majority of the camp activities but requires highly specialized 1:1 attention. If your child requires personal care (including diapering, toileting, feeding, or other medical intervention) then <b>they must be accompanied by a personal care worker, at the expense of the family.</b></i>	Personal Support Worker	This person will <b>not</b> be employed by Dovercourt and your child must be accompanied by them for the duration of the camp day (including Pre- or Post- Camp). Dovercourt will not recruit or cover any of the workers' wages. Fees for 1:1 workers are to be arranged and agreed upon between the family and the worker directly. In certain circumstances, your camp fees can be partially subsidized by Dovercourt to reduce the overall cost per family.	Register for camp, and make sure your child's account indicates additional support. Hire worker to attend with your child (perhaps an EA or family friend). Workers are compensated by the family directly.

The following factors may help determine which level of support is most appropriate.

### **1. The camp program**

*Campers in Kinder Theme, and other 4-5yr old groups will remain on-site at Dovercourt for the whole week. Transitions are short and following the same routine every day. Groups are small (15-24 kids) and each group has 3-4 camp counselors, with inclusion staff in addition to that. All camps will have some swim times, which means lots of transition time. Grade 1 theme camps and older groups (including 5-6yr old groups) will be travelling off-site, either walking or busing each day. Specialty camps like Pottery, Robotics, etc, will require longer stretches of focused instruction (2-3 hours at a time with short breaks).*

### **2. Staff qualifications**

*The 1:1 workers hired and trained by Dovercourt will mostly be high school students, hand picked for their caring nature and friendly demeanor. They are not trained or experienced in personal care (toileting, diapering, washing, feeding, etc) and are not expected to do these things. They are paid just above minimum wage and the goal is that both child and worker benefit greatly by forming a new (or long-term) personal connection. Many of them return in summer camps and we do our best to keep consistency in our match-making.*

### **3. Cost**

*While we were fortunate to benefit from significant amounts of federal, municipal, and provincial (and other) funding over the past 3 years, we are back to figuring out how to be self-sustaining. Dovercourt is a not-for-profit charity and is in the early stages of post-pandemic rebuilding. Prior to 2020, we were not able to fund workers nearly as much as we were in 2020, 2021, and 2022 due to wage subsidy programs. This year we are doing what we can to minimize the impact on families with campers who require more support. We will continue to operate on a case-by-case basis but with hundreds of campers requiring more support for many weeks, the cost of wages will be mostly passed on to families. We encourage families to seek direct funding opportunities through various agencies.*

### **4. Time spent in camp**

*It is important that the campers stay with their groups for most of the day. While some may need frequent walks or breaks, the purpose of our inclusion and integration program is to get kids participating in camps. If you don't foresee your child spending most of the day with the group and participating in the activities then perhaps we can help direct you to a better care option (referrals for babysitters, or specialized camp programs).*

### **5. Support in school**

*While camp is so much better than school, there are still many similarities so if your child requires a certain level of care at school then it's likely they'll need the same at camp, at least as a starting point.*

### Next Steps

**If you know** the level of support your child will require based on the information above, please let us know by email, and we will be in touch with you as soon as we can with confirmation, details, fees, etc.

**If you're not** sure what supports your child might need, that's okay and we will schedule a phone call to discuss. We will be available for calls if you provide 3 dates and a time throughout the day that you are available. Please reach out to [inclusion@dovercourt.org](mailto:inclusion@dovercourt.org)

**If something changes** or after a conversation you decide that it's not the best time or camp for your child, please let us know. Although our regular cancellation policy is 21 days before the start of the program to receive a refund, in some cases we may decide that the situation warrants a credit or refund for funds to be used in a different program or for other supports.