

## WHY SHOULD KIDS GO ON A SCHOOL TOUR?

Children are currently under huge physical, emotional, social and physiological stress. With isolation, overreliance on screens, lack of sports and play and prevailing fears, experts are reporting an increase in behavioural, academic and emotional problems including anxiety, low grades and depression.



School tours are the ideal nurturing environment to help address these issues. Camp programs and activities are designed to support the emotional, physical and social development of children. Studies have demonstrated that a child's psychological well-being and emotional balance will be greater after participation in a school tour. Many people rate school tours as being the highlight of their formative years. Education experts agree that school camps should be an integral part of every student's learning experience. A good school tour will:

### 1. Build Self-Confidence

Our choice of careers, relationships and other important life decisions are heavily influenced by how we see ourselves. Fear and doubt is affecting all our minds right now and is leading to lower self-confidence and self-esteem. Children in their formative years are most vulnerable to these negative effects. Self-esteem is learned through taking action and earning results. Camps provide numerous structured opportunities for children to succeed both independently and as a team. Counselors provide encouragement, acceptance, support, a 'can do' attitude which are calculated to enhance their confidence and feelings of well-being. A wide variety of activities provide a many opportunities for students to experience a sense of achievement. Whether by catching a fish, dancing on stage or learning to spin poi, every child will develop higher levels of self confidence in a non-competitive camp environment. Camps empower children to change the conversations in their minds so that they can be their best self despite the uncertainties around them. Students will leave with a new sense of self worth having been empowered to value themselves.

### 2. Promote Resiliency

Children are quick to pick up on anxiety and they will emulate the feelings of others. At this time of worldwide panic, there can be no more crucial time for our kids to develop resiliency. To be resilient means to get up and push forward after an inevitable setback. Homes are safe cocoons but they provide little opportunity for children to overcome obstacles and develop resiliency, one of life's most essential skills. Camps provide the ideal environment where children can face challenges, practice overcoming obstacles, try new things and develop a sense of resiliency. We encourage determination, patience and a drive to succeed. We teach the value of effort and help kids believe in themselves. A child might not stand up the first time they try to surf, but they learn not to give up and keep trying.

Once they succeed, they will feel stronger and more resilient than they did before. Away from parents, children are often more willing to try something new and learning new things, which in turn, teaches positive outlets to cope with life struggles.

### **3. Ignite Creativity**

Children have so little time for free play with their days jam-packed with school, travel, homework, sport and extra murals. While they do have some structure, camps are more relaxed and provide time and freedom for spontaneous play. There are countless benefits to unstructured play. It's how children express their thoughts and emotions, make friends, resolve conflicts, build negotiating skills and relieve stress. But most importantly, it's how children explore their imagination and develop their creative thinking skills. Creativity is the cornerstone to success and progress. It inspires people to make a difference to the world around them. The natural environment of camp will stimulate student's creative wild side as we encourage their creative minds to run free.

### **4. Develop Social Skills**

One of the most important life lessons is the ability to interact well with others. Social skills are built through opportunities to interact with peers in different settings. This important skill must be learned during the crucial formative years. During this pandemic children have been deprived of opportunities to practice and develop social skills. Camps allow children to practice decision-making, improve their communication and develop their social skills in a relaxed setting. Children will strengthen established relationships as they try new activities and overcome challenges. They will develop new friendships with children of similar interests in a fun and relaxed setting, free of pressure and media distraction.

### **5. Provide Individual Support**

Many childhood problems originate from a sense of isolation and lack of attention. At Sugar Bay, our high student: counselor ratio and 24-hour supervision mean that children receive a lot more individual attention than at school. Our carefully selected, trained and supervised counselors are equipped to convey teachable moments in a variety of settings whilst developing and building upon personal competencies. Children thrive when they receive personal support in a nurturing, safe and positive environment. They get to know, and form new relationships with dynamic, energetic, enthusiastic and caring role models.

### **6. Foster Team Work**

Teamwork matters because it helps develop communication skills, emotional intelligence and leadership skills. Social distancing and isolation allow little room for children to develop these skills. No matter what your child's interests are, whether it be sports or arts and crafts, a camp program will engage them in activities that involve team cooperation. They will develop their decision making, leadership and communication skills as they work in teams to solve problems. Supporting their peers while overcoming personal challenges, cleaning their cabin, or building a raft helps them learn to value teamwork as a solution, rather than think they need to handle tasks on their own.



## 7. Improve Teacher-Student Relationships

Children who don't respect their teachers often struggle to apply themselves to work. Strong inter-generational relationships form between students and teachers when they are outside of the classroom in a camp setting. They develop a deeper sense of respect for each other and this leads to a greater willingness to apply themselves to their work. Teachers report that, after camps, children are more focused, willing and concentrate better and their grades improve.

## 8. Be Technology Free

Children are currently spending more than eight hours a day in front of a screen. Too much media time reduces time spent sleeping and reading and has a negative impact on performance in school. Camp helps children connect to the joy of life beyond the screen by providing endless opportunities to engage their minds in ways they'll enjoy. Regardless of what your child's interests are, they will learn and socially interact in a healthy real-world setting. Time away from the screen is vital to a child's brain, body, spirit and future, and could benefit us all.

## 9. Encourage a connection with nature

Speaking of time away from technology, kids also need nature in their lives. Too much time indoors dulls the senses and deprive children of simple pleasures in life. Camps provide a huge range of outdoor activities in a safe natural environment. The benefits are endless and the rewards are life changing. Nature stimulates all the senses. When a child is outdoors, they get to see, touch, hear, smell and sometimes even taste nature. Sensory development makes life richer, fuller and all-around more pleasurable. Nature helps children experience the magic and wonder of childhood, and it gets them thinking about life's greatest mysteries.

## 10. Inspire A Sense Of Adventure

One of the biggest benefits of summer camp is it takes children out of their comfort zone and pushes them to try new things, as well as explore their already established interests. They will leave camp with a stronger sense of identity and a better idea of what they love, which may help them choose a career path in the future.

## 11. Promote Active Lifestyles And Improved Fitness And Health

Being active is vital for physical, mental and emotional health. It helps maintain a healthy weight which in turn boosts confidence and helps manage stress. Even before lockdown, only one in three children were physically active every day. Without physical activity in childhood, one is less likely to carry good exercise habits into adulthood. Camps encourage healthy eating and physical activity by giving them opportunities to participate in a variety of fun new physical activities at any skill level. Children have the freedom to choose their activities which encourages participation and involvement. They thrive in being able to run, skip, jump, climb, laugh, play and breathe fresh air while benefiting from a healthy dose of natural Vitamin D. No digital devices. No overwhelming social media. Just good clean fun.

## 12. Teach Children To Respect Differences

With so much uncertainty in the world, people are showing less tolerance for others. Camps encourage an appreciation for individual differences by nurturing an environment that encourages respect and consideration for others. Children discover that to accomplish a common goal or to live and play in harmony with others, they must respect and work with differences. While engaged in a variety of activities, children will gain exposure to different viewpoints and opinions. They will learn to accept not everyone has the same perspective or beliefs and they get to find out more about children with different backgrounds or interests.

## 13. Develop good routines and habits

Although kids will enjoy the freedom to choose activities, campers follow a schedule and routine, which provide a sense of security and structure. When a child feels safe and secure, they feel free to explore their interests, to play, to laugh and to express themselves. Structure also teaches responsibility and self-control. Children get into a routine that encourages a decent night of sleep and healthy eating. Many follow these habits after camp and into adulthood.





## 14. Gives Children A Connection To Their Community

Children will feel a greater connection to their community through camp activities like singing, dancing or playing sports. They realise the importance of interaction and connections to the world around them. Children with a greater sense of community are more inclined to make a positive impact on the world around them when they grow up. They know they can make a difference that matters. Also, community involvement gives children a sense of belonging. Belonging combats loneliness and improves overall well-being for us all.

## 15. Promote Independence

Independence is vital to becoming a self-sufficient adult. With more and more time spent in the home, children are at risk of becoming too dependent on their parents. We need to encourage children to explore by giving them a safe environment where they can make decisions independently. Camp nurtures all these elements. Children will take responsibility, manage decisions and develop their own sense of self as they explore new interests and discover their own strengths. They learn to trust their inner voice instead of depending on a parent to tell them what to do. For some children, this may be their first time away from home. They may feel very anxious about leaving their safety-net. The safe and nurturing environment of the camp is the ideal stepping stone for them. Our staff is experienced in dealing with homesickness and take care to guide them in their transition to independence. Most children exceed their expectations and return home with a new sense of independence having learned to care for themselves, each other and their environment.

School tours, while fun and exciting, are much more than just a fun break. Camps are a key part of a child's education and transition to adulthood and the competencies they they learn at camp will have long lasting impact in their lives. Camps provide the ideal safe, secure and nurturing environment where children can step out of their comfort zone and experience different styles and types of learning. Children thrive on camp, where they develop a sense of autonomy and gain social, emotional and cognitive skills that last a lifetime. Over 75% of schools integrate school tours into their yearly curriculum as they realise that camps create stronger and happier kids. School tours must be a part of every student's educational journey. Attendance should be encouraged at all costs particularly in the face of widespread emotional and physical Covid-19 collateral damage.