



**ONTARIO CAMPS
ASSOCIATION**

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MEDIA RELEASE

OCA Organizes Provincial Letter Campaign Saturday, May 8; Campers, Staff and Friends of Camp Share Their Hopes For Camp This Summer

Toronto, May 6, 2021 – The Ontario Camps Association (OCA) invites campers and their families, camp staff, alumni and all friends of camp across the province to demonstrate to the government what camp means to the people who love it the most – our campers, our families, our communities.

On May 8, thousands of Ontarians will send personal emails to Premier Ford, members of his cabinet and local MPPs urging government leaders to allow summer camps and outdoor education programs to operate this summer, if COVID-19-related health conditions in Ontario permit.

This campaign is organized by the Ontario Camps Association (OCA) on behalf of its nearly 400 Member camps and outdoor education centres and the nearly one million children who attend an OCA Accredited camp program each year. At OCA, we know first hand that camp and outdoor education has a magical way of opening campers' eyes to all kinds of possibilities. Our diverse membership of camps and outdoor education centres speaks to the plethora of possible experiences available to Ontarians every summer.

We are a community of communities – but from those many voices comes a singular request: help us plan for camp in 2021. Our plan for camp *includes the idea that any camp ready, willing and able to open and operate responsibly has the tools to do just that.* But in order to open responsibly, they need time to plan. They need time to prepare. They need permission to open.

Saturday's *Camp Letter Writing Day* will show support for the OCA's detailed *plan for camp*, and the industry's unwavering belief that, for a Ontario's youth, a return to camp; a return to nature; a return to physical activity and a return to human connections is needed now, more than ever before.

"Saturday, May 8 is camp letter writing day," says OCA President, Heather Davidson. "Like campers do at camps across Ontario every summer, participants will sit, reflect, and write down their camp stories and how they feel about camp. We hope that Premier Ford takes these letters to heart and takes the necessary steps to permit camps to open this summer, allowing for the magic of camp and a summer of possibilities after the trauma of COVID-19."

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The OCA is a voluntary, non-profit organization that draws its membership from camps, individuals and like-minded organizations and agencies, all devoted to maintaining high standards for organized camping, and to sharing information and ideas that maintain these standards.

To learn more about OCA please visit our website at ontariocampsassociation.ca

Please contact:

Joy Levy
Executive Director
Ontario Camps Association
70 Martin Ross Avenue
Toronto, ON M3J 2L4
Phone: 416-485-0425
Toll Free: 1-844-485-0425
www.ontariocamps.ca