



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Faculty of Education

CAMP OUT!



2022 YEAR IN REVIEW | UBC CAMPOUT! | TOGETHER AGAIN

UBC CampOUT! returns in-person

CampOUT! has become the robust, well supported, community engaged camp we envisioned 13 years ago. Since the program's inception, and through the generosity of donors, **CampOUT!** has helped over 900 people thrive. Although the pandemic presented some setbacks, being together in person again this year was a wonderful experience, and we look forward to offering dynamic camp experiences for many years to come. **Thank you** for helping make **CampOUT!** a reality this year—we are so grateful for your continued support!

We held our first in-person, post-pandemic camp in 2022. Since we missed two years of camp for our usual campers aged 14-21, we chose to honour those who would have aged out and invited a slightly older cohort to camp for the summer of 2022. Queer, trans and Two-Spirit (2SLGBTQIA+) youth aged 16-23 joined us from diverse communities across British Columbia. Excitement amongst campers was palpable—everyone was thrilled to have the opportunity to be together in a safe space with an exceptional support network in place.

A return to in-person was approved by UBC and included safety protocols such as a smaller number of campers and staff, an adaption of programming to outdoor spaces, mask-wearing and vaccine requirements. COVID measures, the logistics of reopening camp for campers and staff and the commitment to an older cohort resulted in a smaller-than-usual camp. Our hope is that camp will return to its full capacity in 2023. Over four days, campers participated in various workshops centered on leadership, arts, outdoor activities and wellness. A huge “thank you” to our committed donors and supporters who helped us re-open CampOUT! live and in-person in 2022!

“I think the teachings about how to take care of ourselves and each other were powerful in reminding me how important it is to be together in community, especially in light of the pandemic.”





Holding each other up

Our camp theme was created around a Halkomelem word gifted to **CampOUT!** in 2020 by Jeremy Jones, Sulsillum. The word—*Cecuwatul* (tse-tsuw-ah-tul)—means “helping one another/holding each other up.” We carried this theme forward into 2022, which seemed fitting as we re-opened for the first time in three years. 2SLGBTQIA+ communities struggled to thrive during the pandemic. This word is both an offering and an invitation for camp participants to come together and work towards wellness, education and social justice.



Preparing for camp: Leadership training

Ahead of camp, our leadership team—mostly returning leaders with diverse expertise and lived experience—came together on Gambier Island to attend Cabin Leader Training. Cabin Leaders were 19-28 years old and received training on camp protocols, safety, crisis prevention and response, interpersonal and group leadership skills and creative facilitation.

Leadership orientation saw Cabin Leaders, the Care Team, and community mentors come together in June at Kiwassa Neighbourhood House in East Vancouver. This orientation allowed the team to spend time in a shared space in preparation for camp and supported collaborative program planning. The program was grounded in traditional Snaw-naw-as and Nuuchanulth teachings led by Indigenous knowledge keepers and Elders.

We thank Kiwassa Neighbourhood House for generously hosting us!



Who we are

32 2SLGBTQIA+ campers attended our reduced size camp

9 health professionals made up our Care Team

9 cabin leaders offered direct support to campers and led free-time activities, community-building sessions and campfire songs

8 community mentors volunteered their time to provide engaging workshops and to support cabin leaders

2 UBC staff (camp director and camp assistant) provided leadership and administrative support

Setting the scene: Making CampOUT! a welcoming space

When campers first arrive, we want them to know they are somewhere special. To make this happen, the intergenerational leadership team comes a day early and transforms a traditional camp setting into a gender and sexuality-affirming space. Arriving in a welcoming, inspiring, safe and beautiful space is key to setting the tone for how we will be together in community. Building community spaces includes:

- Gendered washroom signs are removed and allocated by cabin rather than gender.
- A free store is curated to offer a wide range of gender style inspiration and resources for participants who are curious about finding clothing that resonates with them.
- “Happy note envelopes” are hung up for each participant and are filled throughout camp with affirmations, quotes and art.
- Furniture is organized to ensure there are comfortable seating options for all bodies.
- A craft area, tenting area and chill-out zones are established adjacent to group program spaces to ensure campers have access to many creative outlets and other resources.

In addition, a key part of making **CampOUT!** supportive of all campers is the creation of a “Care Cabin,” completed by the Care Team. This is a health and wellness resource for camp participants where they can find snacks, sexual health and harm reduction resources, toiletries and a friendly nurse or counsellor.

“I gained a general sense of peace and confidence; I feel that I can lead both myself and others”



2022 CampOUT! programming

This year, many campers arrived in Vancouver a day early. We provided airport pick-ups, meals and chaperoned lodging at UBC. On June 30, campers and camp staff travelled by chartered water taxi to Chá7elkwnech, Gambier Island, to spend four days with each other in nature. Over the course of camp, participants were offered rich choices to learn, play, connect and celebrate through various workshops and sessions focusing on five main themes:

- Leadership and allyship
- Arts
- Outdoors and land-based activities and learning
- Wellness
- Personal development and community building camp-wide sessions



LEADERSHIP AND ALLYSHIP

Workshops ranged from learning about harm reduction to practicing communication and team building activities. Everyone also participated in spaces that supported learning, connecting and skill development for practicing anti-racism in our queer and trans communities.



ARTS

Arts workshops invited campers to let go of perfection and embrace messiness and silliness in their lives. We also explored astrology with meditation, conversation and art to open campers' minds and bodies to the language of the planets. There were opportunities to write and draw quietly, and other chances to learn how to twist balloons into fun shapes and creatures.

"[Camp] really helped me realize how much growth I've had since I last attended, and that doing a leadership role at camp is something that interests me."



OUTDOOR AND LAND-BASED

Campers participated in paddle boarding, nature walks and archery. A highlight for many was tenting, which was offered in recognition that for many youths this was their first time away from home in over two years and sharing cabin space with others might be overwhelming. The first night we had one camper interested in tenting and seven youth had learned to set up a tent and rain shelter by the end of camp! We plan to continue offering this opportunity to support youth in developing more camping skills and confidence.



WELLNESS

These sessions explored bannock making, learning how to express feelings and a trans community space. It also included gender and sexuality-inclusive sexual health education, which has been offered camp-wide since 2010 thanks to our wonderful partnership with YouthCO Society.



CAMP-WIDE THEME SESSIONS

Our camp-wide theme sessions supported opportunities for personal and community development by exploring the theme *cecuwatul* on familial, interpersonal and community levels. In addition, we facilitated interactive games, led creative arts-based activities and celebrated being part of queer, trans and Two-Spirit communities through joyful song and dance.

For many of our campers, the cultural offerings of our Indigenous leaders were considered among the most useful and change-sparking elements of camp. The youth and leaders demonstrated openness and a commitment to working towards honourable reconciliation across their diverse locations and experiences. We are grateful to the Indigenous leaders and Elders who volunteer and partner with us. They guide our work and play which supports our shared goals of increasing acceptance, health and wellness within the diversity of queer, trans and Two-Spirit youth communities.

The **CampOUT!** Community Celebration was an opportunity for campers to “come out” as creative and courageous by sharing some of their unique skills, abilities, jokes, stories, poetry, drag performances, musical creations, song writing skills and other forms of entertainment. As always, our campers amazed us with their talents and it was a night to remember!

On the last night of camp, we held a **CampOUT!** dance, which went on far longer than anticipated because everyone was having such a great time! Many youths didn’t experience prom or school dances because of the pandemic, so this was an opportunity for them to connect with their peers and dance the night away.

More about UBC CampOUT!

CAMP-OUT! IS AN ANNUAL LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM THAT BRINGS 2SLGBTQIA+ YOUTH BETWEEN THE AGES OF 14-21 TOGETHER IN AN OUTDOOR SUMMER CAMP ENVIRONMENT.

A 2021 study done in Canadian schools found over 60 percent of 2SLGBTQIA+ students felt unsafe being their authentic selves, which impacted their sense of safety, well-being and belonging. **CampOUT!** exists to change this. Through strong intergenerational leadership support, campers are encouraged to take risks and explore their comfort zones through land-based activities, arts, wellness practices and social justice learning. As a result, participants build leadership skills and gain self-esteem and independence while gaining new perspectives.

UBC's Faculty of Education is committed to bold and daring research and teaching. The Faculty's initiatives and programming respond to changing contexts and challenges, overcome barriers to education, sustain diverse learning and enhance community engagement support and administration. **CampOUT!** brings together the Faculty's mandates for anti-racism, Indigenous education and inclusive education by offering financially accessible, relational, anti-racist, land-based, social justice, education and recreation.

Following the UN rights for Indigenous Peoples, the UBC strategic plan, and the UBC Indigenous strategic plan, **CampOUT!** fosters partnerships and builds relationships with Indigenous peoples and communities. We explicitly recruit and welcome Indigenous, racialized and disabled campers, cabin leaders and community mentors, offer culturally appropriate and supportive programming, and foster dialogue among our communities and partners.

The Faculty of Education is **CampOUT!**'s institutional home, with additional support from the UBC Office of the VP, Students and *alumni UBC*. In 2022, **CampOUT!** was selected as the Faculty's UBC Giving Day program, in which over \$15,000 was raised online to support our camp. While the Faculty provides continuing UBC infrastructure and administrative support, **the majority of operational funding for the camp comes from community and corporate donors.**

2022 CampOUT! fundraising and thinking ahead

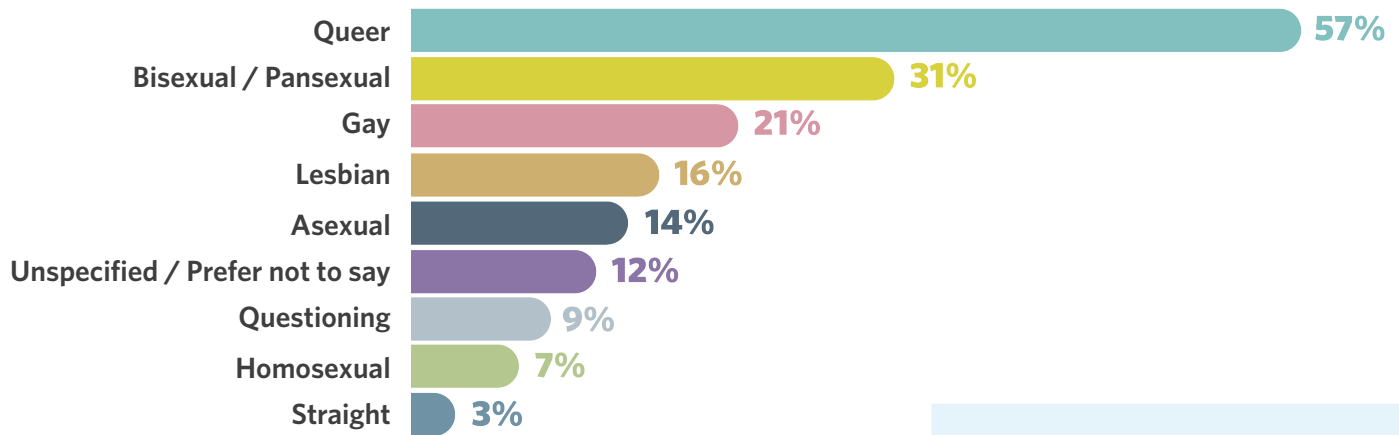
It costs approximately \$160,000 to run the camp, train camp leaders and offer resources throughout the year. There are no fees to attend **CampOUT!** other than a \$75 spot-holding fee, and no camper is ever turned away for lack of funds. Unfortunately, in 2022 we couldn't hold our annual Fundraising Gala due to the pandemic. However, we are excited that plans are in place to reintroduce this event in 2023! The gala is critical to the success of **CampOUT!** and we hope to see many friendly faces next year.



"I loved how judgment-free everyone was and how everyone made me feel safe to be my authentic self when I can't at home."

Who attended CampOUT! in 2022?

SEXUALITY AND ROMANTIC ATTRACTION*

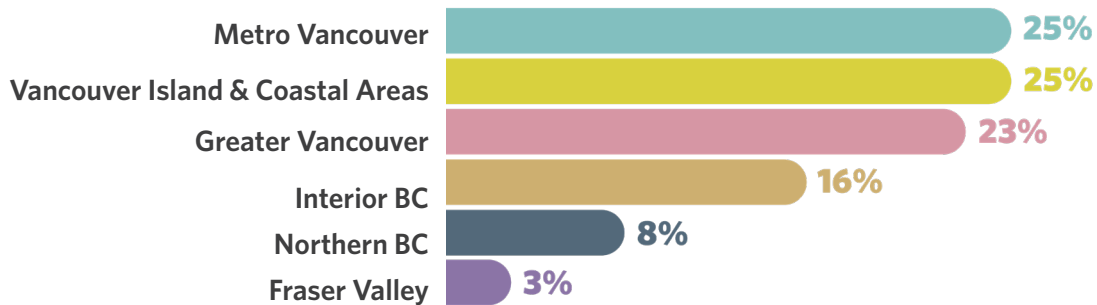


*Participants used a combination of words to best describe their sexuality and romantic attraction.

SELF-DESCRIBED:

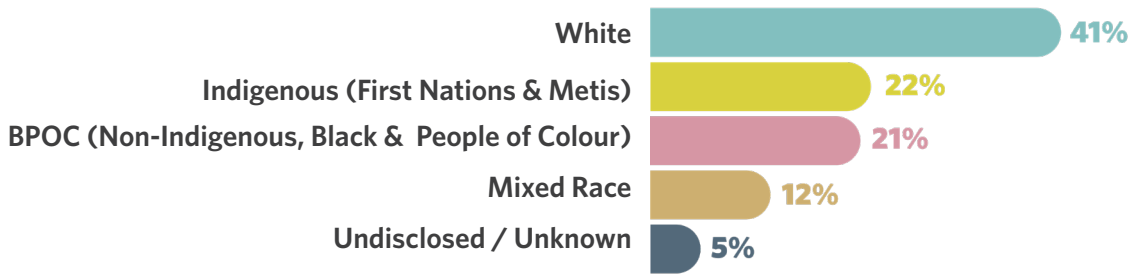
Asexual Spectrum:	2%
Aromantic:	2%
Indigqueer:	2%
Sexuality Fluid:	2%

REGIONS



"I loved the dance, the safety I felt all the time, even when using the washroom, the free store, and the long skirt I got from there and danced in, the amazing people, AKA everyone, how much we understood each other and feeling so safe that I barely noticed any of my usual insecurities."

RACE AND ETHNICITY



GENDER IDENTITIES

Campers and Leaders self-identified their gender identities prior to camp. Here are the words they chose. Many participants used combinations of these words to best describe their gender.



"Thank you for this amazing experience; I don't know if I've ever felt more like myself or happier with the way I am."



Thank you for being part of UBC CampOUT!

OUR INFRASTRUCTURAL HOME & SUPPORTING UNITS

UBC Faculty of Education
 VP, Students UBC
alumni UBC

FUNDING ORGANIZATIONS

Scotiabank
 100 Gay Men for A Cause - YVR
 Tegan and Sara Foundation
 Face the World Foundation
 Gilmore Park United Church
 CLICK
 Kiwanis Club of Vancouver
 UBC Centre for Community Engagement
 UBC Work Learn Program

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

BC Teachers Federation
 Indian Residential School Survivor's Society
 Kiwassa Neighbourhood House
 Out in Schools
 PeerNet BC
 Qmunity
 TransCare BC - Provincial Health Services Authority
 UBC Arts
 UBC Equity and Inclusion
 YouthCO

A special thank you



We would like to extend a special thank you to **Ivan Leonce (left)** and **Jeremy Jones (right)** who have both been integral to the success of **CampOUT!** Ivan first attended **CampOUT!** as a camper in 2013 and now works with YouthCO to co-facilitate camp-wide programming and helps us scaffold supports for camp youth in community beyond camp. Jeremy first attended **CampOUT!** as a volunteer in 2014 and now works with the Indian Residential Schools Survivors Society of BC and gives us the opportunity to hold space for ceremony, learning and healing at camp. We're so grateful to Jeremy and Ivan for their rich collaboration and thought-partnering over the past few years!

Thank you to our many outstanding donors, members of the Community Advisory Committee, brilliant camp leaders and, of course, our amazing campers! Together we are supporting youth and community members to be leaders in creating inclusive spaces for wellness, belonging and meaningful change.