



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Faculty of Education

CAMP OUT!



2023 YEAR IN REVIEW | UBC CAMPOUT! | NOT-SO-LITTLE TRANSFORMATIONS

UBC CampOUT! welcomes the most youth in camp history

Thanks to generous donors and community support, **CampOUT!** 2023 had the highest number of participants ever! Seventy 2SLGBTQIA+ youth aged 14-21—including those from Indigenous, rural and under-resourced communities—came together from across BC and the Yukon to participate in a four-day immersive and transformative summer camp experience on Chá7elkwech (Gambier Island), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) territory.

We extend our deepest gratitude to donors and community volunteers who played a pivotal role in supporting **CampOUT!** Your generous contributions are critical to ensuring **CampOUT!** remains accessible to everyone, and that 2SLGBTQIA+ youth can experience enriching outdoor educational experiences that cultivate leadership, self-discovery, belonging, lasting friendships and intergenerational support networks.

As we continue to grapple with the surge of disinformation leading to homophobic and anti-trans hate directed at children, youth, parents, caregivers and educators, spaces like **CampOUT!** that affirm 2SLGBTQIA+ youth and help them feel valued are more important than ever. Your continued support is integral to sustaining this journey of empowerment and has made a tangible difference in the lives of 2SLGBTQIA+ youth, inspiring them to lead change within themselves and others through hope, confidence, acceptance and thoughtful engagement.

“I feel more confident about being myself, and I want to be my true self despite what norms society may inflict.”

“I always struggled with accepting who I am, but getting to spend just a couple days with people like me definitely had a big impact.”

“For once, I was able to be loud and proud, something I can’t always do!”



Celebrating transformations

CampOUT! is proudly housed in UBC’s Faculty of Education, situated within the traditional shared territories of the x̱m̱əθḵw̱əy̱əm (Musqueam) Peoples. It is supported by leadership, mentorship and research-driven sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) inclusive education. **CampOUT!**’s year-round work involves outreach, education, program development, fundraising and community partnership development.

In 2023, 70 youth and 29 leaders came together to participate in **CampOUT!** 2023. Camp is led by a camp director, a camp elder, community mentors including sexual health educators who guide and facilitate programming, as well as a care team comprised of mental health workers, a nurse and a lifeguard.

During **CampOUT!**’s Leadership Training Weekend, the cabin leader team created the theme, “Little Transformations!” for **CampOUT!** 2023, recognizing that change happens in many ways. Together we embarked on a collective exploration as queer, trans and Two-Spirit individuals while celebrating the small ways we are transforming and coming into being in every new moment. This journey was filled with inspiration, resources and a unique network of support among 2SLGBTQIA+ youth, leaving a lasting impact in small yet not-so-little transformative ways!

“There’s so much that goes into camp, including in-depth cabin leader training, parent/caregiver day and staff who bring camp to life. Funding is needed for all of this, and we truly wouldn’t be able to offer this amazing camp experience without support from donors and community volunteers.”

LISA LOUTZENHEISER
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AT UBC
AND ACADEMIC DIRECTOR OF
CAMP OUT!

CampOUT! program highlights

LEADERSHIP AND ALLYSHIP WORKSHOPS

For 2SLGBTQIA+ youth, **CampOUT!** provides a safe and affirming space to cultivate leadership potential. The following leadership workshops fostered critical engagement, teamwork and adaptability among campers, empowering them to navigate challenges and preparing them for dynamic roles in their communities.

- **Camp Camp: Drag 101, the meaning of camp and the queer outdoors:** A series of workshops that combine drag performance, the concept of “camp” and queer nature themes. Campers learned the basics of drag through persona creation, gender illusions and performance.
- **Taking care of communities, taking care of ourselves:** This workshop taught queer and trans youth how to work as a community to support and keep each other safe. Youth learned about setting boundaries, making safety plans when going out and basic harm reduction strategies.
- **Changemaker chats:** This workshop inspired participants to articulate their values, interests and passions and helped them recognize how to use their unique strengths to practice different ways of leading. Together, campers learned how each person can influence change to make our world a more joyful and caring place.

“I gained more confidence with my identity. By making genuine connections with other people, I’ve been able to really see how beautiful I am and how I can use my strengths to help other people.”

“I feel that I’ve become more equipped to be a leader in my queer community.”

“I really enjoyed the changemakers workshop. I got to learn about what values really drive my interests and passions in advocacy.”



WELLNESS

CampOUT! engaged youth in informative sessions on sexual health, wellness and relationships. These were presented in inclusive ways so that youth could thrive emotionally, physically and mentally. **CampOUT!** provided an opportunity for campers to connect with Indigenous ceremonies and cultural practices, fostering a sense of belonging and understanding. Campers were grateful to have spaces offered to authentically explore sexualities, and gender identities and expressions.

“Being around other queer and trans people and caring for them and loving them as they are, taught me how to love my own queerness and my own transness. I feel so seen here and feel more able to be myself without shame and with joy instead.”

ARTS

Community volunteers guided campers in arts-based activities to foster creative expression and equip campers with valuable skills and personal development.

- **CampOUT!**'s string theorist led knitting workshops, and campers enjoyed learning this creative, meditative, versatile and portable skill.
- Campers practiced visual narrative storytelling with a professional comic artist.
- **CampOUT!**'s librarian engaged youth in creating a unique and meaningful personal affirmation generator.
- Campers explored the history and craft of drag through a series of sessions that made 2023's **CampOUT!** Community Celebration the most spectacular and well-dressed to date!

“Both the drag and sexual health workshops helped me. The drag made me think more about my self-expression and how I wanted to show myself.”

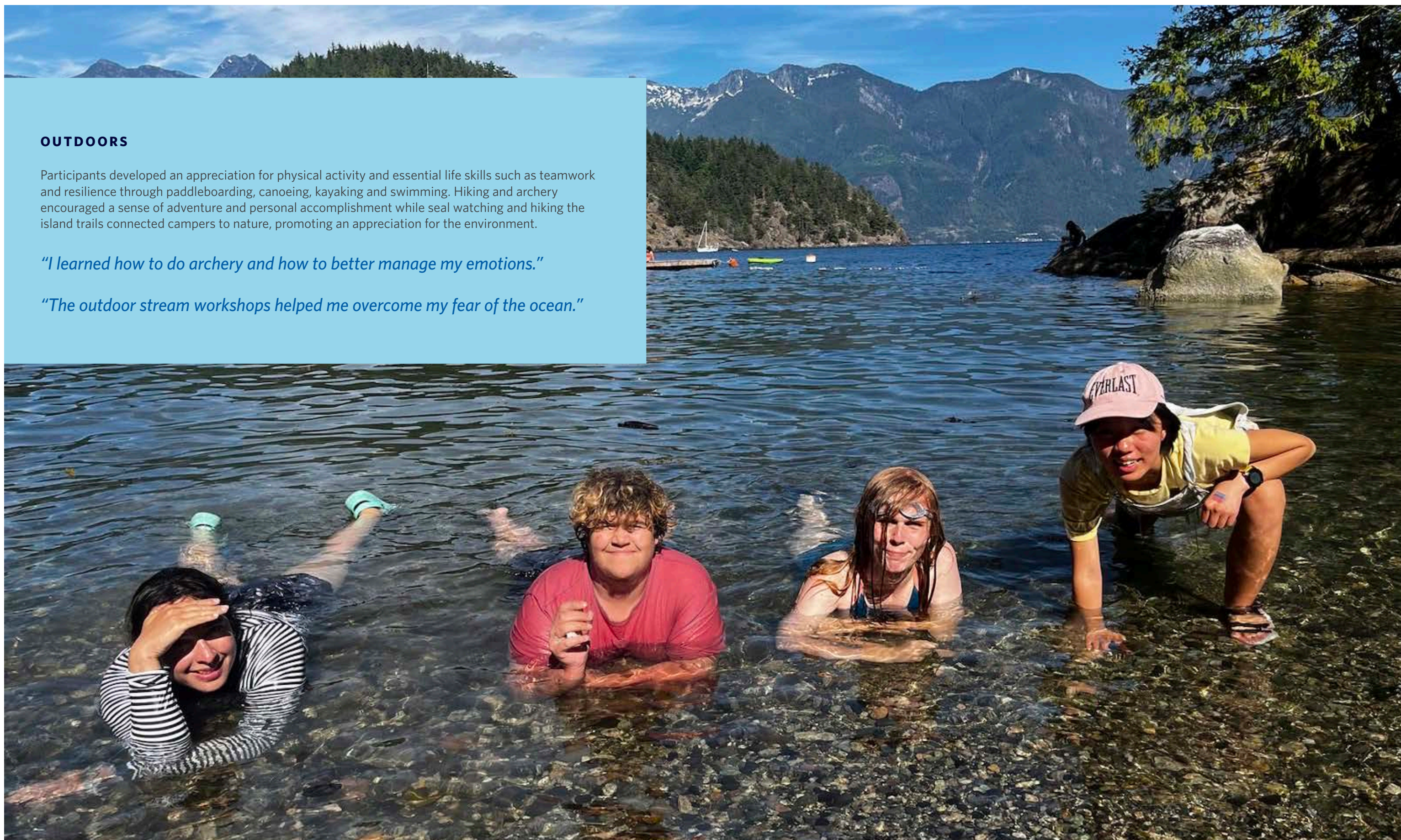


OUTDOORS

Participants developed an appreciation for physical activity and essential life skills such as teamwork and resilience through paddleboarding, canoeing, kayaking and swimming. Hiking and archery encouraged a sense of adventure and personal accomplishment while seal watching and hiking the island trails connected campers to nature, promoting an appreciation for the environment.

"I learned how to do archery and how to better manage my emotions."

"The outdoor stream workshops helped me overcome my fear of the ocean."





CAMPOUT! COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

On the final night, campers got creative by showcasing their camp highlights through performance, self-expression, stories, skits and other cabin group presentations. The Community Celebration ended with music and dancing!

“Hola! My name is Daniel Gallardo, my pronouns are they/them and I identify as a non-binary mestizx from Mexico. I immigrated to these unceded Coast Salish territories four years ago to work on social justice education. I joined CampOUT! to be part of a queer community that is cultivating spaces of belonging, empowerment and joy for 2SLGBTQIA+ youth. I left camp with my heart, body, mind and soul completely filled with the most beautiful and fabulous memories of queer kinship. Words aren’t enough to explain the TRANSformative intergenerational love felt at CampOUT!”

DANIEL
UBC PHD STUDENT, ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MATH TEACHER, DRAG ARTIST, CAMPOUT! VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY MENTOR



More about UBC CampOUT!

UBC CAMPOUT! IS A SUMMER LEADERSHIP CAMP FOR QUEER, TRANS AND TWO-SPIRIT YOUTH AGES 14-21.

Our organizational focus is to develop the strengths participants bring with them to camp, as well as increase leadership skills and promote mental health and wellness of 2SLGBTQIA+ youth. We accomplish this by providing a no-cost program (other than an initial deposit), which directly responds to the needs of this community and the barriers 2SLGBTQIA+ youth face in accessing medical care, housing, education, intergenerational support and employment. Every gift received directly supports our strengths-based leadership program.

By connecting youth with 2SLGBTQIA+ competent health care clinicians, health literacy resources, education, housing and community resources, participants gain the skills, supports, knowledge and community they need to navigate the challenges of young adulthood. They become engaged community members who increase public awareness around how we can work together to reduce and eliminate harms experienced by marginalized people, all while developing friendships and networks of love and support.

“I was taught how to be more comfortable in my own gender and my skin.”

“I now feel more confident, free and kind. I want to do more stuff for the community.”

“I just really hope this camp keeps going. Thank you.”

“Thank you for everything that happens because of this wonderful, amazing, beautiful space.”

“A big thank you for making this possible.”

“This has absolutely changed my life for the better.”

Gifts to CampOUT! in 2023



\$139,506 was donated in total to **CampOUT!**



Six foundations and charitable organizations awarded grants to ensure the camp remains financially accessible.



105 community members contributed to **CampOUT!** through UBC Giving Day in April.



Nearly **100** community leaders and supporters attended the 13th Annual Evening in Support of **CampOUT!** on June 8th, 2023, and shared their time and talent to ensure the 2023 camp was fully funded.



Thank you to our community of allies!

Since 2009, over 700 donors have created space for 2SLGBTQIA+ youth to experience joy and learning in a safe environment. Thank you! Your generous giving plays a crucial role in enabling 2SLGBTQIA+ youth to access and register for camp. By supporting this initiative, you empower them to apply without worrying about financial constraints.

CampOUT! also has a growing number of committed monthly donors. Monthly contributions directly translate into sustained support for a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment where 2SLGBTQIA+ youth can thrive and experience a sense of belonging, empowerment and community. Your generosity contributes to a brighter and more inclusive future for 2SLGBTQIA+ youth.

"I feel more hopeful about my future as a queer person. Seeing older queer people who are very open and feel positive about their identities has given me a better perspective of my own life and opportunities."



Thank you for being part of UBC CampOUT!

From everyone on the **CampOUT!** team, we would like to extend a warm thank you to all our donors, members of the Community Advisory Committee and camp leaders — camp wouldn't be possible without you!

A special thank you to Scotiabank, 100 Gay Men for a Cause, Vancity, Tegan and Sara Foundation, Face the World Foundation, CLICK (Contributing to the Lives of Inner City Kids), Gilmore Park United Church, The Hamber Foundation, Kiwanis Club of Vancouver, Mountain Equipment Co-Op (MEC), Trinity-Grace United Church, Collings Johnston Inc, Joel Smith and Darcy Greiner, Janna Superstein, Kenneth Hamlin, Stephen Roberts, Kevin Mazzone, The Lazy Gourmet, Saeedeh Salem, Le Vieux Pin and La Stella Wineries for generously supporting CampOUT!

Scan the QR code to learn more about **CampOUT!** and how you can get involved.

Together, we are making a difference in the lives of 2SLGBTQIA+ youth.



FACE THE WORLD
FOUNDATION



T E G A N
A N D
S A R A
F O U N D
A T I O N