



Camp Lifting Leaves Feedback and Recommendations Report

Introduction	2
Demographics	3
Feedback – Areas of Strength	4
Feedback – Areas for Growth.....	5
Closing Remarks.....	6

Introduction

What a great year this was to hold the second ever session of Camp Lifting Leaves! This fall program means that the conditions were not your typical summer camp session but spirits were high and the wonderful energy from the participants, chaperones, and staff made up for what we were lacking in warm weather. The season brought us incredible beauty as the leaves fell around us and fun building shelters, that some of us even slept in!

Awareness and participation in this program continues to grow, and we are so happy to report that we doubled in size this year. We are limited by the weather so we won't continue to grow at this rate, but it is so meaningful to welcome more folks into the Camp Lifting Leaves and Ten Oaks Project communities.

We also learned many things about camps in general as well as the hopes and expectations of our participants, chaperones, and our volunteer staff for Camp Lifting Leaves. We heard them appreciate many things, and also provide recommendations for how we can make camp even more magical. We value this feedback with all our hearts. Fundamentally, we are an organization that is built around people – their hopes, their abilities, and their uniqueness. Ten Oaks, as its core, is motivated by the needs folks from 2SLGBTQ+ families, identities, and communities. Moreover, we are an organization built on the strength of our community and we would not exist without the valuable contributions of our campers, volunteers and staff. This report is based on all the feedback we received through our camp evaluation forms filled out by our campers, chaperones, and volunteer staff. We are happy to share this report with our communities to stand by our commitment to continual learning and to ensure transparency in our programming development and improvement.

We hope to see you at Camp Lifting Leaves 2020!

Olivia Fogel
Programs Manager

Demographics

This year we hosted 32 campers, 10 chaperones, and 11 volunteer staff. This bigger, but still intimate group size created a beautiful environment to build relationships, try new things, and have fun!

In our participant and volunteer registration forms, we ask for a bit of demographic information to make sure our programming is reflective of our diverse communities. It is completely optional to provide this information and the numbers below are based only on the folks who chose to respond.

Black, Indigenous and People of Colour: 44%
Gay, lesbian, bi, queer, etc. (i.e. not straight): 75%
Trans and Non-binary: 20%
Queerspawn: 33%

Recommendation:

In the past few years, across all programs, we've seen gaps in representation when it comes to BIPOC, transfeminine, and queerspawn folks at Ten Oaks Project programs. It is recommended that we also gather specific data around transfeminine identities. It is recommended that we continue the practice of gathering demographics data as an option to avoid enforcing coming-out culture.

It is also recommended that the program management continue to prioritize BIPOC and transfeminine folks on the waitlists.

Feedback – Areas of Strength

Our standard feedback forms for campers and volunteers include variety of questions around programming, food, location, volunteers, training, bunking arrangements and more. We hope that by including prompting questions, our campers and volunteers will be reminded of aspects of camps they enjoyed the most as well as the gaps in services. Below are some of the most popular aspects of Camp Lifting Leaves.

Camp Atmosphere and other General Feedback:

- This length of camp was a better fit for the goals of the program
- One of the best things about camp was the community that it brought together
- Camp was a safer space for 2SLGBTQ+ youth and spending time with other 2SLGBTQ+ youth was valuable
- The borrowed clothing system works well for this program and makes running it in the fall more sustainable

Bunking Arrangements:

- Overall, the bunking arrangements worked well for most folks
- Folks reported being warm enough in the insulated cabins

Kitchen:

- The food and snacks were well liked by our campers
- Folks appreciated the dietary accommodations made by the kitchen staff

Location:

- Overall, the location worked well for camp
- We held the program two weeks earlier in the fall this year, which allowed for much nicer weather, beautiful leaves, and activities involving the leaves as well

Programming:

- Overall, the programming at camp worked very well
- Folks enjoyed the waterfront, archery, wall climbing, arts and crafts the most
- Everyone participated in arts and crafts and was able to take home a souvenir from the weekend
- Centred spaces gave opportunity for very rewarding discussion for campers, it may be beneficial to hold more next time
- Participants described feeling safe to challenge themselves and try new things

Staff:

- Folks appreciated the volunteer staff as well as RKY Camp staff and the services they provided
- The Ten Oaks staff and Chaperones worked well together, and often worked in partnership to support youth
- Chaperones indicated they felt pretty well prepared for the program and their role

Feedback – Areas for Growth

Based on the feedback provided by our families and volunteers, the following is recommended by the Programs Manager to be implemented in the year 2018 and beyond, dependant on Ten Oaks' staff capacity and budget.

Camp Atmosphere and other General Feedback:

- Some folks found the cooler weather to be challenging
- Requests were made to provide a more detailed packing list, as well as descriptions of sleeping and shower facilities
- Chaperones found that participants did not have socks or shoes that were warm enough, so providing socks in the borrowed clothing library may help

Bunking Arrangements:

- The cabins were quite full due to our increased numbers, so some participants wished they had a bit more room to spread out
- The ladders in the cabins can be challenging to use in the dark
- Some folks who were sleeping right beside the heaters found managing the temperature at night to be tricky because it could get too hot

Kitchen:

- Some requests were made for less pork based meals

Programming:

- Many folks identified that even being in such a social environment was challenging at times
- Some of the younger campers felt that the discussion based programs were more geared towards older campers which made them more boring and less useful
- Some volunteers recommended having some discussion groups with participants and no chaperones to potentially allow the participants to share more freely
-

Closing Remarks

Whether you were one of the responders of our survey, someone who attended or hopes to attend one of our programs, or a past, present or future staff members, we appreciate the time you took to read this feedback and recommendations report in its' entirety.

The Ten Oaks Project is a small non-profit run by a team of two full-time staff. To ensure that our staff has the time and capacity to run our growing programs and community events, are able to keep a healthy work-life balance and avoid getting emotionally or physically burnt out, we have implemented a new feedback processes. The feedback process can be reviewed in detail at this link. Please note that the Camp Lifting Leaves feedback process has now been closed, and we look forward to connecting and hearing from you after the 2020 session. We would like to thank all of our camper families, staff, volunteer staff, and RKY management and staff for making intentional magic happen at Camp Lifting Leaves.