



**Camp Lifting Leaves  
Feedback and Recommendations Report**

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## Introduction

What a great year this was to hold our very first session of Camp Lifting Leaves! Holding camp in November meant 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 sun shine.

We also learned many things about family camps in general as well as the hopes and expectations of our families 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 families 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 2019!

Olivia Fogel  
Programs Manager

## Demographics

This year we hosted 16 campers, 7 chaperones, and 9 volunteer staff. The 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:** 50%

**Gay, lesbian, bi, queer, etc. (i.e. not straight):** 69%

**Trans and Non-binary:** 38%

**Queerspawn:** 50%

### **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:**

- The overall experience of camp was positive and folks appreciated that this camp was planned and held this year
- The camp felt too short, and folks felt a longer camp would be even better
- One of the best things about camp was the community that it brought together
- Camp was a safer space for 2SLGBTQ+ families and spending time with other 2SLGBTQ+ families was valuable
- The group size was small, which allowed for everyone to get to know each other, the aim is to have 30 campers next fall

### **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
- The time of year is a bit challenging because of weather, but the site suits us and we are very well supported by the camp staff

### **Programming:**

- Overall, the programming at camp worked very well
- Folks enjoyed the waterfront, archery, wall climbing, arts and crafts and the campfire 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

### **Staff:**

- Folks appreciated the volunteer staff as well as RKY Camp staff and the services they provided

## 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:**

- Most folks left comments about the weather- rainy and quite cold. Unfortunately, we cannot control the weather but we were able to bring lots of spare clothing to make sure everyone could be prepared to handle the conditions
- Lots of requests to make camp longer!

### **Bunking Arrangements:**

- There were some requests to arrange cabins by age group rather than location/chaperone supervision so bed times could be consistent in each cabin. This year we were limited in our options based on numbers of campers and chaperones, but this is definitely something we can look into with more numbers next year.

### **Programming:**

- Some campers found that the amount of discussions to be challenging to sit still, one way we could help improve this would be to have some materials to use as fidgets
- Some folks identified that even being in such a social environment was challenging

## 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 3 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 2019 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.