

Mish Adventures Camp Report 2014



CAMP STATS:

- 13** The number of Youth at our Junior Leadership Training week at Muskoka Woods
- 21** The number of Youth who volunteered at camp as Junior Leaders during kids camp.
- 35** The total number of youth who participated in our week of youth camp.
- 66** The average daily number of kids and junior leaders at camp each day.
- 95** The Total number of kids who participated during our 2 weeks of Kids Camp
- 116** The Total number of kids and youth who participated in Mish Adventures this July.



“Watching the growth of these young people over the last two years has been both fulfilling for me as a person, and has deepened our relationship with the community, allowing us to vision together about how we could be a more integral part of youth leadership development in Mishkeegogamang.”

- *Matt LeBlanc*
iEmergence Director

Our Strength is in Friendship

As the 8th year of camp again wraps up, it is striking to our team how much camp is really about friendship. We could never run camp as we do for the young people of this vibrant community without the friendships that have grown over time. We are beyond thankful for the relationships we have formed in Mishkeegogamang and look forward to developing many more. We would like to say a special thank you to the people of Mish for your friendly hospitality, your helping hands, your creative energy, and the partnerships you have formed with us to make camp a place that strengthens and guides your youth in the good ways of your people. We look forward to the coming years where camp continues to be a place where the gifts of your young people boldly emerges amidst the backdrop of the strength of our friendship to dream and work together.



Youth Leaders have become a vital asset of the camp program. Becoming leaders of confidence, compassion, and character, we have watched them grow in their gifts to bless those around them. Mishkeegogamang has a bright future ahead with such amazing and talented young people. ***Thank you for sharing your gifts with us!***

Young Leaders Grow in a Circle of Courage

This summer we focused our time with the youth in both Muskoka Woods and Mish with curriculum called “The Circle of Courage.” Developed by Martin Brokenleg through consistent themes that emerge in indigenous communities around the world, it emphasis four areas in positive youth development.

The first theme, **Belonging**, encourages youth to “be related to everyone and everything you know in some way,” exploring how a place of love and community is formed.

Mastery promotes the achievement of goals and skills, prizing the knowledge you could learn from or offer to others.

Independence, highlights the need to take responsibilities for one’s decisions because they affect the whole community.

Lastly **Generosity** encourages the acts of contributing to others, through words, gifts, goods, or helping hands.

MASTERY

GENEROSITY

BELONGING

INDEPENDENCE



“To face my fears and overcome them,” and to “see yourself for the beauty within you and not what others say about you” were two responses from youth reflecting on what the Circle of Courage had taught them this year during camp.

MUSKOKA WOODS

We were thrilled to have Destani Skunk and Jeff Loon accompany the youth as chaperones to our Muskoka Woods Youth Leadership Week. It was an incredible week of skill testing and team building feats that showcased the inner strength of these young leaders. The connections youth make about their own capabilities as individuals and teams is an invaluable part of the program, and we are grateful and excited for the ways this partnership may continue into the future.



The group of youth leaders and staff at Muskoka Woods

Kids Camp

“It’s hard to get out of bed some mornings, but it’s easy when I get to go to MishAdventures,” said one of the kids participating in the program. Kid’s camp was again an energetic time full of exciting theme days, smiling young people, and some hard work by phenomenal junior leaders and staff. Whether baking, making tie-dye shirts, playing sports, taking swimming lessons, planting seeds, going on scavenger hunts, participating in group games, or a camp favourite: slip n’ sliding down the school’s hill - - a good time was had by all. This year we packed the 2 weeks full of exciting days like: Beach Day, Happy Birthday Day, Olympic Day, Wacky Day, and to end off Kids camp, a Carnival extended to parents and the community. Most telling of the kid’s experience this summer is the question we all heard as they boarded the bus the last day: *“When is camp next year?”*



The addition of the community fire truck made the slip n’ slide an even bigger success!

YOUTH WEEK

Gathering each morning for smudge and prayer, and a conversation on the themes flowing from the Circle of Courage, important discussions are woven into fun events and relationship focused days. It's a good sign when youth week begins to feel like hanging out with friends who are honest about the struggles in their lives. Beach Day and a Hunger Games Day were the backdrop to some of the weeks activities and when asked what the week had taught her, a young teen responded, "to face my fears and overcome them." Our staff is grateful to have gotten to know such a phenomenal group of young people.

Youth Canoe Trip

The youth were excited to get out on the water in their canoes for a day out on the land. Hosted by Robbie Bottle we were grateful and excited to partner with him to see young people connect in important ways with the land of their people. We look forward to planning with community members a 3 day canoe trip for next year!



Director Matt LeBlanc and junior leaders Therien Loon and Jerriann Loon get a surprise soak!

First Annual Community Carnival

It has become an annual tradition to wrap up camp and our time in Mish with a Carnival. Our team was excited this year to extend an invitation to this celebration to the community as well. Featuring games, shows, activities and food, the carnival was enhanced with the addition of a Dunk Tank created by a crew from the maintenance and machinery shop. It was definitely a splash with the kids, we had a hard time pulling them away, even for piñatas full of candy!

We are excited to plan ways to grow this event through partnership with other community organizations to making the day a good time for everyone.



Jeff Loon sitting atop the Dunk Tank, rethinking its construction, as his partner Destani Skunk winds up to throw at the Mish Adventures Community Carnival.

Envisioning the Future

Dinner & Sharing WITH Chief & Council

We were grateful for an evening to share a meal, visions, and stories with Chief Connie Gray-McKay and council members Maryanne Panacheese and David Masakeyash. Karen Ward shared the changes and growth she has seen come out of the eight years of the Mish Adventures program as the group watched a slideshow of the earlier years of the program. Giggling at the photos of current youth leaders in pig-tails and wide-eyed grins at young ages, Karen shared from her heart everything she has learned and been gifted from the community itself.

From there Matt LeBlanc discussed his excitement about a program based on partnership that would allow Mish Adventures to continue to be a resource for young people throughout the year, and a support for holistic community development in general. The visions for the future of camp are rooted in a model of mutuality, as councilour David reminded our team: “Friends help each other.”

As a team we are excited by the potential to implement a few summer job positions by hiring youth as full staff.

“I remember coming to the school for the first time and meeting some of the kids... Now, eight years later, it is me who has been so blessed by the friendship of this community and all the things I have learned from you all.

- Karen Ward, *Indigenous Pathways*



Karen, Jacob, and Matt



The Staff, L to R: Phil Drost, Ryan Koornneef, Isaac Junkin, Matt LeBlanc, Stacey Voorberg, Kurry Dueck, Mandy Gelderman, (Front): Heather Kooiman, Marshall Paterson, Deanna Zantingh, Kaija Skalesky, Amanda Poulter, Christina DeVries, Michelle Rumford. Absent: Karen Ward

A Shift in Leadership

As the camp moves forward and seeks to continue to be a resource to the community year round and in various other ways, it was confirmed that Karen Ward will hand over the decisions to running Mish Adventures to a Leadership Team of 4: Matt LeBlanc, Heather Kooiman, Christina DeVries, & Deanna Zantingh. Karen is excited to have more time to focus on relationships while still offering the team her valued leadership and wisdom.