

Access Fund Request application

Access Fund Request 2023-003

Received from:

Karen Rennie, Art Culture and Heritage Director
Rob McAulay, Recreation Services Director

Department:

Community Services

Facility:

City-operated day camps (facilities vary by program)

Deadline for your request or project:

June 2023 – pilot project for the summer of 2023

Total cost of the accessibility upgrade/enhancement:

\$15,000

- \$1000.00 for training
- Up to \$14,000 for 2023 summer camp subsidy pilot program

This request is in compliance with the City of Peterborough purchasing by-law:

Yes

Expected date of project completion:

September 1, 2023

Reason for request

Project title: Short term solutions to make 2023 day camp programs more inclusive.

The City of Peterborough offers various day camp programs throughout the year, including sports camps, arts camps and museum camps. Camp locations and group size vary to suit each program. Camp registration is a competitive market and most City camps are filled within hours of opening registration.

Appendix A

The City recently received feedback from a resident and a local school board about systemic barriers related to registering and attending day camp programs. Community Services is working with various staff, including the Accessibility Compliance Specialist and Diversity and Equity and Inclusion Advisor, to investigate long term solutions to make day camp programs more inclusive for children with disabilities. Community Services is also aiming to implement incremental changes and a pilot program for the upcoming 2023 summer day camp programs, as part of an effort to minimize systemic barriers in the short term.

Community Services is requesting \$15,000 for a one-time implementation of the following short term solutions to the 2023 summer camp season:

1. Specialized inclusive training for 2023 summer camp staff, June 2023: \$1,000

City staff intend to engage with a training consultant that specializes in inclusive education and support for children with disabilities to deliver specialized inclusive training for camp staff. The training program will highlight the role of educator vs educational assistant and provide tips on how to manage behaviour, modify camp programming, support children with a range of special needs and assist with curriculum planning. The goal of training is to help staff implement strategies that support campers with disabilities to participate and engage in camp programs. Training will also help the City implement a positive, safe and caring camp environment.

The City intends to partner with Social Services staff to deliver the bulk of the training and use the \$1000.00 for specialized components of the training by an external training consultant.

2. 2023 summer camp subsidy pilot program: upset limit of \$14,000

A camper with a disability sometimes requires one-to-one support to participate in a City camp program. When staff are made aware of the need, families are advised to provide a support person at their own expense to accompany the child at camp. There is no fee for the support person to attend camp with the child they are caring for. Staff are sometimes not made aware of the need for one-to-one support until the first day of camp. In these instances, families sometimes have to unregister a child from the camp program due to not securing a support worker and/or the financial burden to hire a support worker.

Due to general demand in the community for registered childcare providers, the anticipated rate to hire workers for the summer season is \$25.00/ hour. A full 8-hour day camp that runs from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. would cost approximately \$840.00 per week for 8 hours of support per day. The actual number of support hours needed would depend on the specific camp hours and family needs.

The following represents anticipated support needs:

Appendix A

- Museum: 1 childcare provider for 3 weeks, 7 hours/day = \$2,625.00 (3 weeks x 5 days x 7 hours x \$25)
- Art Gallery: 1 childcare provider for 3 weeks, 4 hours/day = \$1,500.00 (3 weeks x 5 days x 4 hours x \$25)
- Recreation 1 childcare provider for 4 weeks, 8 hours/day = \$4,000.00 (4 weeks x 5 days x 8 hours x \$25)

Sub-Total: \$8,125.00

MERCs mandatory employer related costs: \$1,218.75 (\$8,125.00 x 15%)

Total: \$9,343.75

City staff intend to implement a 2023 summer camp subsidy pilot program to help families cover the costs of support workers and help children with one-to-one needs attend and participate in camp programs. Although anticipated costs are \$9,343.75 per the table above, it is not fully known what the demand for one-to-one support will be until program registration closes. Community Services is requesting an upset limit of \$14,000 to cover the potential for 1 additional childcare provider for 4 weeks at 8 hours/day for the pilot program and will reimburse the AAC with unused funds.

It is essential that a registered childcare provider perform this role, as staff are not permitted to complete many tasks required of a support worker. In many cases, the family has support services in place for the child at the school they attend, but do not have a private support person available for activities outside of school.

Staff will review the 2023 subsidy pilot program at the conclusion of the 2023 summer camp season and investigate potential for a permanent subsidy program to help families cover the cost of one-to-one support workers moving forward.

Staff will continue to integrate children with disabilities into regular camps where possible and explore long term solutions to further build inclusion into regular camps and expand capacity for specialized camps to meet the needs of the community.

Some potential long-term solutions include:

- Explore partnerships with Fleming College Educational Support program;
- Connect families with organizations that support children with disabilities;
- Establish a centralized resource list on the City website;
- Explore potential for trained educational assistants employed by the school boards to assist with one-to-one support needs at City camps;
- Develop camp standards that outlines the accommodation process;

Appendix A

- Review timing to launch camp registration period with consideration to support worker funding opportunities; and
- Consider holding a certain number of spots for families of children with disabilities.