



Staff Information

Thank you for your interest in a staff position at **CAMP TAMAKWA**.

A summer on staff at Camp Tamakwa is a uniquely rewarding experience. It offers the opportunity to combine working with children, spending your summer in the beautiful Algonquin outdoors, and meeting people from across the continent and around the world. As a staff member at Tamakwa, you will have the time of your life. This is not your ordinary city job; rather it is a setting in which you will work closely with people of like mind and interest where the end product is fun.

Tamakwa is a magnet for talented, creative people from all over North America and beyond. Unlike a conventional 9 to 5 job, you will not only work alongside fellow staff, but you get to know them, enjoy the kids and the activities with them, laugh with them, and share good times with them in ways that few other opportunities in life allow. Camp is a place where you have the opportunity to be yourself and offer unique talents for the benefit of others.

Besides the immense gratification, you will also gain self confidence. You'll become more resourceful and build leadership skills, activity skills, communication skills, and people skills. You will create bonds with campers and staff that will stay with you all your life. Over the years, many staff have forged their greatest lifelong friendships. In fact, many of them have since sent their own children to Tamakwa to give them the same special experience they remember.

You will have the opportunity to live in a beautiful environment. There is no better way to understand and appreciate nature than to work and play within it. This, together with human growth, is what summer camp is all about.

Every position at Tamakwa has a specific job profile, but the basic job is the cabin counselor. As a counselor, you are the supervisor -- "big sister or brother" -- of a small group of campers. Typically, you live with the kids, accompany them to activities, help lead them on canoe trips and other outings, supervise them at meals, and generally look out for their well-being. You touch their lives and in a way, a bit of you rubs off on them. You are the person they will remember most from their summer at Tamakwa. You are THE role model for these impressionable young people: motivating them, keeping harmony among them, teaching new skills to them, humouring them, and helping them build self confidence.

Please surf our website to get a feel for who we are and what kind of summer may be in store for you as a staff member. You can read our latest camp updates and our most recent newsletters in order to get a glimpse into Tamakwa's deep traditions, history, and camp spirit.

The dates of employment for most positions for the summer run from mid-June til late-August, including a week of staff training. Spring and Fall work options may also be available. Having a break from the action is important to your morale, state of mind and is lots of fun. Staff members have six days off: that's once a week, except the first and last weeks of camp.

See below to read about a typical day at Tamakwa.

If you're not sure you can afford to take a summer camp position, then see below to read a fantastic article.

If you're interested in applying for a position with us, please [click here](#) to complete our online application. Please be sure to send us a copy of your resume. Be sure to include reference information. The most useful reference is always from a camp or other situation in which you have worked supervising children. Camp Tamakwa is committed to employment equality and encourages all qualified candidates to apply. If you require an accommodation at any point during the hiring/employment process, please let us know as we will work with you to meet your needs. All responses will be handled confidentially.

Check our website to see our available staff positions.

A TYPICAL DAY FOR STAFF

While there are many non-typical days in a summer at Tamakwa, below is the general schedule of what staff members can expect during a typical day at camp.

8:00am - GOOD MORNING / WAKE-UP BELL

8:15 - 15 MINUTE BELL FOR BREAKFAST

-tables are set

8:30 - BREAKFAST

-morning announcements

-musical meditation

9:00 - FLAG RAISING / ANTHEM SINGING

-camper awards are announced by Activity Leaders

-camp wide send off for departing canoe trips

-cabin clean-up and prepare for 1st period

-Activity Leader and Head Staff daily meeting at the Main Camp
Fireplace

10:00 - 1st ACTIVITY PERIOD

-individual choice

11:00 - 2nd ACTIVITY PERIOD

-individual choice

12:00pm - 15 MINUTE BELL FOR LUNCH

-tables are set

12:15 - LUNCH

-sometimes served buffet-style in Main Camp

(AKA "Shore Lunch")

-afternoon announcements

1:00 - REST HOUR

-mail is handed out

2:25 - 3rd ACTIVITY PERIOD

-individual choice

3:25 - TOOTSIE FROOTSIE

-“everybody gets” fruit break

-camp wide welcome for returning canoe trips

3:35 - 4th ACTIVITY

-block schedule / cabin activity

4:25 - 5th ACTIVITY

-block schedule / cabin activity

5:15 - GENERAL SWIM

-free play activities

5:45 - HALF HOUR BELL FOR DINNER

6:00 - 15 MINUTE BELL FOR DINNER

-tables are set

6:15 - DINNER

-evening announcements

6:45 - FLAG LOWERING & TUCK

7:00 - TWILIGHT TIME

-free play activities

-prepare for evening program

7:45 - BELL FOR EVENING PROGRAM

-campers and counsellors to go to section meeting places then
proceed to evening program location
once everyone is accounted for
-evening programs rotate between a camp wide evening program,
smaller section nights or cabin night

9:00/9:15 - EVENING PROGRAM ENDS

-often cabin / section campfire time

-camper snack

9:30 - 10:30 - CAMPER BEDTIME

-lights out vary by section/age

10:30 - STAFF REC BEGINS

-Night Duty begins, 5 staff per night

-staff snack served in the dining hall every night

-staff programming a few times each week

12:30am - STAFF REC ENDS

-one staff from each camper cabin must return to their cabin by this
time to relieve Night Duty

A few notes:

-Junior Counselors work at their activity placements for all 5 periods

-Senior Counselors work at their activity placement for periods 1,2 and 3, but rotate to various activities with their campers for periods 4 and 5

-each section has Instructional Swim every day and periods rotate each week, but Junior Tamakwans (boys and girls ages 7-9) always have swimming during 3rd period

YES, YOU CAN AFFORD A SUMMER JOB AT CAMP

by David Bale

Former Senior Director, Camp Tamakwa

“No, I can’t work in a summer camp....I need to make some money for school.”

I can’t tell you how many times camp directors hear that at university job fairs. There’s no question about it, the harsh financial realities of tuition, books, housing, and pizza are compelling. We’ve all been there. But a summer job in a children’s camp is much more than simply an unaffordable luxury for hard-working career-bound students. Before you judge a camp job by its dollars, consider the immeasurable rewards. Some of them are even necessities for your future beyond university.

Let’s get the financial issue out of the way first. Sure, a job in the city will pay more than the average camp job, but consider how much you will spend by living in the city. One former camp counselor did just that. After calculating the most basic expenses of summer life in the city - food, rent, a reasonable amount of recreating, and the forgotten loonies frivolously thrown here and there - he found that his savings from a summer job in Toronto were not significantly greater than his take home pay from a previous summer at an overnight children’s camp. There you have no expenses.

Summer camps offer a number of positions, the most common being the cabin counselor. As a counselor, you are the supervisor - “big sister or brother” - of a small group of campers. Typically, you live with the kids, accompany them to the various sports and creative activities, help lead them on canoe trips and other outings, supervise them at meals, and generally look out for their well-being. You are THE role model for these impressionable young people: motivating them, keeping harmony

among them, energizing them, teaching new skills to them, humoring them (and more often, *them* humoring *you*), and building self-confidence in them. You touch their lives; in a way, a bit of you rubs off on them.

This is just one of the non-monetary rewards. You will also become more resourceful. You will build your own self-confidence, not to mention leadership skills, communication skills, and your people skills in general. Existing communally day-in and day-out with the same couple hundred

people all inhabiting a small patch of land for the same purpose is quite an achievement in itself. Some of those people will give you a real lesson in tolerance. And some of them will become your most enduring friends.

The easy sell is the part about the environment. At camp, the occasional moose, beaver and Northern Lights are just part of the normal workplace ambience. For all the lip service paid to its preciousness, there is no better way to understand and appreciate nature than to work and play within it. This, together with human growth, is what camping is all about.

There’s a scene in the film “City Slickers” where Billy Crystal and his urban

cowpoke buddies are laughing triumphantly, having just moved their cattle herd across a river. Compared with their robotic lives in the city, this - they were beaming - is a real meaningful life achievement. Farfetched as that moment is to most of the cinema audience, it strikes close to home for anyone who has ever worked in a children’s summer camp. Not that cattle are typically raised in a summer camp, but confidence and self-esteem are. And as meaningful life achievements go, the satisfaction from helping a child conquer a fear or learn a new skill at camp is right up there with cattle driving. Either one will give you a summer that will stay with you the rest of your life, but camp smells a little better.

