



# CAMP HOWL

*Let them howl.*

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## Handbook for Parents & Caregivers

Everything you need to know about Camp Howl

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Vancouver, BC · Summer 2026

## Who We Are

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Camp Howl is a nature-based outdoor day camp in Stanley Park for children ages 5–8. We keep groups small — 12 children maximum with a 1:6 staff-to-child ratio — because every child deserves to be known by name.

Our days are spent exploring the forests around the Rose Garden, Aquarium trails, and Lumbermen's Arch: hiking, building forts, studying insects, playing wide games, and making art from what the forest provides.

Camp Howl is owned and operated by Martha Tejada Lopez, an ECEA-certified early childhood educator with direct experience in outdoor children's programming in Stanley Park.

## Our Philosophy

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We believe the best days of childhood don't happen on a screen. They happen in a forest, in a puddle, with a stick and a friend and nobody telling you to hurry up.

Camp Howl is play-based, nature-led, and child-centred. We follow the children's curiosity. If they want to spend 30 minutes watching ants, we watch ants. If they want to build the world's biggest stick fort, we build. The forest is the curriculum.

## Program Details

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<b>Ages</b>	5–8
<b>Group size</b>	12 children maximum
<b>Staff ratio</b>	1:6 (two adults on-site at all times)
<b>Hours</b>	9:00 AM – 1:00 PM
<b>Season</b>	8 weeks: early July through late August
<b>Location</b>	Rose Garden, Pipeline Rd, Stanley Park
<b>Pricing</b>	\$145/wk (2-day) to \$325/wk (5-day)

## A Typical Day

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<b>9:00 AM</b>	Drop-off at Rose Garden. Hi-vis vests on. Welcome circle. Land acknowledgment. Daily plan.
<b>9:15 AM</b>	Morning adventure — forest hike along Aquarium trails.
<b>10:15 AM</b>	Snack break (parent-provided). Water refill.
<b>10:30 AM</b>	Group games at Lumbermen's Arch — capture the flag, nature art, relay races.
<b>11:30 AM</b>	Free play — bug catching, stick play, mud, imagination.
<b>12:00 PM</b>	Lunch (parent-provided). Stories.
<b>12:30 PM</b>	Closing circle. Nature show-and-tell. Tomorrow preview.
<b>1:00 PM</b>	Pickup at Rose Garden. Authorized pickup check.

## Drop-Off & Pickup

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Drop-off: Rose Garden lawn, Pipeline Rd (next to Stanley Park Pavilion). Please arrive between 8:50–9:00 AM.

Pickup: Same location at 1:00 PM. Only adults listed on the authorized pickup form may collect your child. Photo ID may be checked.

Late pickup: Please call us immediately if you will be late. A \$10 late fee applies after 1:15 PM.

## What to Bring

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- Small backpack your child can carry
- Packed lunch and two snacks in reusable containers
- Full water bottle
- Sunscreen applied before arrival
- Hat (sun or rain depending on weather)
- Closed-toe shoes they can get dirty (rain boots on wet days)
- Rain jacket and rain pants (we play in the rain)
- Spare set of clothing including socks
- Whistle attached to jacket (for safety)
- Bug spray (optional)

Please label everything with your child's name. We are not responsible for lost items.

## What NOT to Bring

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- Electronic devices, phones, or tablets
- Toys from home
- Valuables or jewellery
- Candy or gum

## What to Wear

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Dress your child in layers they can get dirty. We play in mud, rain, and forest. Assume everything will come home brown.

### Sunny days

- Breathable shirt, shorts or pants, sun hat, closed-toe shoes

### Rainy days

- Rain jacket, rain pants, waterproof boots, warm socks, fleece layer underneath

### Cool days

- Layers: thermal base, fleece mid-layer, outer shell, warm hat, gloves

Where to find outdoor gear: MEC, SportChek, Outdoor School Shop, Puddlegear, Active Baby.

## Snacks & Lunch

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Parents provide all food. Camp Howl does not serve food. We provide sealed drinking water.

- Pack a balanced lunch with carbs, protein, and fat for lasting energy
- Pack two snacks (morning and lunch)
- Use reusable, litter-free containers

- Make sure your child can open and close their own containers
- Pack an extra snack on cold or rainy days

We maintain a nut-aware environment. There is no BC law requiring us to be nut-free, but we take allergies seriously.

- All allergies are disclosed at registration and reviewed by both staff before day one
- Children may NOT share food with each other — this is a strict rule, no exceptions
- If a child has a severe allergy (e.g., anaphylaxis), we notify other families and ask them to avoid the allergen in packed lunches
- EpiPen and inhaler protocols are in place — staff are trained to administer
- All food is stored sealed during the day to avoid attracting wildlife

## Weather Policy

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Camp Howl operates rain or shine. Rain is not a cancellation — it's an adventure.

We cancel only for:

- Lightning in the area
- Dangerous winds (>80 km/h)
- Poor air quality (AQI > 150 or AQHI 7–10)
- Government advisories to avoid being outdoors

Cancellations are communicated by 7:30 AM via text/WhatsApp. Makeup days will be offered.

If your child is not dressed appropriately for the weather (not enough layers, no rain gear), we may ask you to pick them up early.

## Communication

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We use a WhatsApp group for daily photos, updates, and quick communication. You'll be invited before the season starts.

For non-urgent matters: [hello@camphowl.ca](mailto:hello@camphowl.ca)

For urgent matters during camp hours: Martha's cell (provided at registration)

You will receive a brief daily summary with photos of what the group did.

## Toileting

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We have access to public washrooms at the Stanley Park Pavilion (opens 8:30 AM) and along our route at Lumbermen's Arch and the Aquarium area.

In an emergency when washrooms are not immediately accessible, an educator may help your child find a private spot for a "nature pee" if the child is comfortable.

We recommend children be potty-trained. However, we are happy to support children still in the process.

## Gradual Entry

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Starting camp can be a big transition. If your child needs a parent present for the first day or two, you are welcome to stay for the first hour. Please allow staff to lead activities and avoid directing other children.

## Safety Policies

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Safety is our top priority. Both on-site adults are first aid certified and carry a first aid kit at all times.

### Daily safety practices

- Weather check and site assessment before every session
- Head count every 15 minutes and at every transition
- Buddy system for all trail walks
- One adult at front and one at back of group when moving
- Clear boundaries set at every location

## First Aid

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Both adults hold WorkSafeBC-approved first aid certification. The lead educator carries the first aid kit at all times.

- Minor bumps, scratches, or bruises: we'll let you know at pickup
- Medical emergency requiring intervention: we contact you or your emergency contacts immediately
- If hospital transfer is needed and no emergency contact is available, a staff member accompanies your child

Nearest hospital: St. Paul's Hospital, 1081 Burrard St (12 min drive). Emergency: call 911.

## Allergies & Medical Conditions

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Please disclose all allergies, medical conditions, and medications on the registration form. Both staff review every child's medical information before day one.

If your child carries an EpiPen or inhaler, please provide one for the first aid kit. We will follow your written action plan.

## Wildlife Encounters

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Stanley Park is home to coyotes, raccoons, geese, and other wildlife. We take this seriously.

- Staff carry whistles and know the coyote response protocol
- Children are briefed on wildlife safety on day one
- We keep food sealed and never feed wildlife
- We maintain distance and observe animals from afar
- Wildlife encounters become teaching moments about respect and coexistence

To reduce tick risk, we encourage long sleeves and pants tucked into socks, especially in spring and early summer. Families are responsible for daily tick checks after camp.

## Missing Child Protocol

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In the unlikely event a child cannot be located:

- All activity stops immediately. Group is gathered.
- Staff call the child's name and search the immediate area
- If not found within 3–5 minutes: call 911 and contact parents
- Park rangers are notified
- All children wear Camp Howl hi-vis safety vests during the program for visibility and quick headcounts
- Children are taught what to do if lost: stay put, blow whistle, call for help

## Earthquake & Emergency Disasters

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In the event of an earthquake while outdoors:

- Drop, cover, hold on — protect heads and necks
- Move away from trees, buildings, and anything that could fall
- Gather the group in a clear open area
- Check for injuries and administer first aid
- Contact parents once safe to do so
- Rally point: Rose Garden / Pavilion parking area

## Land Acknowledgment

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Camp Howl operates on the unceded traditional territories of the Musqueam (xʷməθkʷəyəm), Squamish (Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh), and Tsleil-Waututh (əlílwətaʔη) Nations. We are grateful to live, work, and play on this land, and we weave this acknowledgment into our daily program.

## Contact

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Martha Tejada Lopez — Owner & Lead Educator

Email: [hello@camphowl.ca](mailto:hello@camphowl.ca)

Website: [camphowl.ca](http://camphowl.ca)

Emergency phone: provided at registration

*Thank you for trusting Camp Howl with your child.  
Let them howl.*