



**BRIGADOON**  
VILLAGE



**2021**  
Impact Report

**T**he COVID-19 pandemic closed our doors for 510 days. For many kids with chronic illnesses, coming together with friends each year at Brigadoon is a lifeline – a time when campers create friendships and support networks with others who share similar experiences, joys, and struggles in their day-to-day lives. A time when kids can be kids.

## *Thanks to your support, we safely welcomed campers like Tahlia back to Brigadoon Village in 2021.*

When she was just six, Tahlia was diagnosed with idiopathic pulmonary hypertension – a rare, progressive lung disease that resulted in the development of holes in the wall separating the upper chambers of her heart. Tahlia first attended camp in 2015 and formed friendships that will forever impact her life.

“Without Brigadoon, I don’t know where I would be today. I have made lifelong friendships at camp that I will cherish forever and the connections to those friends are so special,” shares Tahlia. “They have helped me get through so much and being able to share what’s going on throughout my health journey with other kids who understand has been very helpful to my recovery.”

Tahlia’s camp experiences were interrupted in 2019 when she underwent a double lung transplant. Despite not being able to physically attend Brigadoon that year, her camp friends supported her with Zoom calls throughout her hospital stay and during the isolation of the pandemic.

## *The reopening of Brigadoon Village in 2021 was especially exciting for Tahlia who returned to camp with new lungs!*

“This year at camp I had so many proud moments, but I think the best was getting to pass the swim test for the very first time since receiving my new lungs. All my counsellors cheered me on and were so stoked to see me pass,” said Tahlia.

Thanks to you, hundreds of kids like Tahlia who are living with chronic illnesses have the chance to feel ‘normal’ and safely reconnect with friends through the magic of camp at Brigadoon Village. More than 85% of our campers rely on financial aid to attend camp – support you make possible.

“Thank you so much for supporting Brigadoon Village so I could go to camp this year. Being able to return to camp with my new lungs was amazing. Seeing those friends who I haven’t seen in two years after such a difficult time in my life was incredible and I’m so grateful for that.”

Since our doors first opened a decade ago, donors like you have allowed us to provide the life-changing experience of camp to thousands of children and youth from across Atlantic Canada. Thank you for continuing to make this possible for kids like Tahlia.

With gratitude,



**David Graham**  
CEO, Brigadoon Village



~ Tahlia Ali  
Brigadoon Camper

# 2021 Highlights

Hosting in-person camp during a pandemic meant things looked a little different this year. We followed all public health guidelines to give campers a chance to safely connect, which meant the implementation of cohorts, aka 'Cabin Bubbles'.

To ensure our campers still felt connected to all campers on-site, as well as the broader community, we developed two new activities that became part of each camp session:



## Kindness Missions

Each cabin was assigned to another cabin group at camp and was asked to think of ways they could show kindness to them. We had important conversations about the importance of kindness, the ways we can contribute to our community, and how we'd like to impact those around us.

Some of the kindness missions campers developed for their group included writing a song expressing their appreciation, making bracelets, or creating a fun scavenger hunt activity for them. Lots of cabin groups got very excited about it and branched out to share their kindness with other groups they weren't assigned to or spent their free time perfecting their kindness mission to make it great!

## Contributions to Camp

Campers were assigned one of four areas of camp that they were asked to care for and add something special to.

- 1 The New Campfire Pit**  
Campers designed ways to divide the campfire into cohorts for each group, made a sign to welcome people into the campfire and created a fun display of the lyrics of the song we sing to close each campfire.
- 2 Enchanted Forest**  
Senior campers created little fairy houses and other decorations that the younger campers could explore during their forest walks. They loved to create this magical little world for the younger ones even making up stories of the fairies who lived there.
- 3 Dave's Place**  
Our campers created some fun decorations for the walls of what will soon be 'Dave's Place', and found some fun and creative ways to thank the construction workers who have been working so hard to complete our expansion!
- 4 Garden**  
Our campers helped our Facility Manager, George, to create some plans and designs for the garden space at the front of our Dining Hall. We hope to plant lots of delicious veggies here next year that will help fuel our campers for years to come.



# 2021 Stats

**100%** of 2021 campers said they had exceptional fun this summer!

**99%** of campers made a new friend this summer.

**90%** of campers said they tried something at Brigadoon that they have never tried before.

**95%** of campers felt like they belonged at Brigadoon.

**92%** of campers' families say their camper now talks more openly about their illness or condition after attending camp.

**100%** of campers and their families would recommend Brigadoon to another family.

# 2021 Camp Programs

## VIRTUAL VILLAGE

Various Programs  
July 5<sup>th</sup> - July 8<sup>th</sup> and  
July 12<sup>th</sup> - July 15<sup>th</sup>

## CAMP BRAINIAC

Neurosurgery Conditions  
August 8<sup>th</sup> - August 13<sup>th</sup>

## CAMP CARPE DIEM

Epilepsy  
August 28<sup>th</sup> - September 1<sup>st</sup>

## CAMP JOINTOGETHER

Arthritis  
July 25<sup>th</sup> - July 30<sup>th</sup>

## CAMP BELIEVE

Parental Mental Illness  
August 15<sup>th</sup> - August 20<sup>th</sup>

## CAMP LOTS-A-WATA

Kidney Disease  
August 28<sup>th</sup> - September 1<sup>st</sup>

## CAMP TREASURE CHEST

Asthma, Anaphylaxis, Lung  
Conditions  
August 1<sup>st</sup> - August 6<sup>th</sup>

## CAMP GUTS & GLORY

IBD, Ostomy, Cecostomy  
August 15<sup>th</sup> - August 20<sup>th</sup>

## CAMP BRAVEHEART

Heart Conditions  
August 28<sup>th</sup> - September 1<sup>st</sup>

## MARITIME ADVENTURES CAMP

Bleeding Disorders  
August 8<sup>th</sup> - August 13<sup>th</sup>

## CANADIAN CANCER SOCIETY'S CAMP GOODTIMES

Living with or Beyond Cancer  
August 22<sup>nd</sup> - August 27<sup>th</sup>

**TEEN RETREAT**  
All Campers (Ages 13-18)  
September 3<sup>rd</sup> - September 5<sup>th</sup>

## CAMP SEE-YA

Blind or Visually Impaired  
August 8<sup>th</sup> - August 13<sup>th</sup>

## CAMP WHATCHA SAY

Deaf or Hard of Hearing  
August 28<sup>th</sup> - September 1<sup>st</sup>

## CAMP KEDOOOPSE

Family Bereavement  
September 10<sup>th</sup> - September 12<sup>th</sup>



# THE KIDS WE SERVE



CAMP	REGISTERED
March Break Virtual	15
Virtual Village	20
Virtual Drop-In Programs	13
Camp BELIEVE	10
Camp Brainiac	6
Camp Braveheart	10
Camp Carpe Diem	7
Camp Guts and Glory	22
Camp JoinTogether	45
Camp Lots-A-Wata	10
Camp See Ya	12
Camp Treasure Chest	34
Camp Whatcha-Say	11
CCS Camp Goodtimes	38
Maritime Adventures Camp	13
Summer Leadership	14
Teen Retreat	20
Kedooopse Family Camp	16
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>316</b>

Returning Campers 87%  
 New Campers 13%  
 Male Campers 34%  
 Female Campers 66%

PROVINCE		
Nova Scotia*	293	93%
New Brunswick	19	5%
Prince Edward Island	4	1%
Other	5	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>316</b>	

*\*Due to Covid, our numbers were affected and limited our attendance from other Canadian provinces.*

NS COUNTY BREAKDOWN	
Annapolis	5
Antigonish	8
Cape Breton	6
Colchester	14
Cumberland	8
Digby	4
Guysborough	4
Halifax	204
Hants	12
Inverness	4
Kings	14
Lunenburg	9
Pictou	14
Queens	5
Richmond	0
Shelburne	0
Victoria	2
Yarmouth	3



## Our Campers Said...

*"Being able to create the memories and friendships that are missed out on in day-to-day life for someone who has a chronic illness. I never thought I could have such a close connection to a place and these people before camp."*

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*"Having friends that have similar experiences. The relationships formed are real, with no apps or filters. The independence and confidence gained. Knowing I'm safe."*

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***"IT'S REALLY FUN. ONE OF THE MOST ENJOYABLE THINGS I LOOK FORWARD TO ALL YEAR!"***

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*"Camp day is like Christmas morning! Camp refuels my mind, body and soul. I come back energized! I love reconnecting with my Brigadoon family. ❤️ LOVE all the staff, so many beautiful people that are committed to something truly amazing! I cannot thank you enough!"*

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*"Everything!! Time to feel like I'm not alone in my pain, able to talk openly and have someone genuinely understands."*

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*"Friends, fun, and awesome food."*

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*"Relationships, safety, connections, fun, excitement."*

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*"Camp means I can be myself, free of judgement and just be able to be a kid again, be silly and have a ton of fun. Camp has allowed me to gain confidence and new friends every year I go. It has allowed me to be comfortable with my scars and what I have been through in life."*

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***"CAMP IS MY FAVOURITE THING ON THE PLANET!"***

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*"Being able to create the memories and friendships that are missed out on in day-to-day life for someone who has a chronic illness. I never thought I could have such a close connection to a place and these people before camp."*

***"BEST PLACE EVER."***



# Our Families Said...

*"She loved every minute of it. She did not stop talking about all that happened for the first two hours after I picked her up. She loved hearing everyone's stories and has kept in touch with other campers. She can't wait to go back next year."*

*"She expressed having so much fun, lots of laughter, and deep connections."*

*"It was everything and more than she was hoping for. The friendships she has made over the years have helped her grow emotionally and independently."*

## **"ONE OF HER BEST EXPERIENCES."**

*"Amazing, she looks forward to this every year! The staff outdo themselves!"*

*"Exciting, adventurous, comfortable. I believe it was exactly what she needed to know she isn't alone."*

## **"AMAZING AND VERY IMPACTFUL."**

*Super fun, they came home dirty and tired.  
That, to me, makes the best time."*

## **"LIFE-ALTERING"**

*"Fulfilling."*

*"Awesome! He had an incredible week and he felt so lucky to be selected to be able to go to this summer."*

## **"OUTSTANDING! SO NICE TO JUST BE A KID!!"**

*"Uplifting and grounding. So many amazing friendships that will last a lifetime! Counting the days till next year!"*

*"She had a great week reconnecting with friends and creating stronger friendships as well as some new ones. She had a very fun and memorable week."*



## Our Counsellors Said...



### HOW DID COVID IMPACT THE CAMPER EXPERIENCE?

"Funny enough, it didn't. For the kids, it was really just about being there. They were still able to build connections (perhaps even stronger connections) within their cabin group, still found opportunities to interact with other cabins. Especially after not having camp last year, they were mostly just happy to be here."

## #CAMPSKILLSARELIFESKILLS



# 2021 Magic Moments

## IN OUR COUNSELLORS' WORDS



*"One camper who struggled with her confidence and at the beginning of the week wasn't able to identify what she did well that day. With each day that went by, she was able to get closer and closer to identifying what she did well, what she was good at, and had a list of things at the end of the week that she was proud of herself for. At the end of the week, she wrote a nice note to her staff members, saying you made me feel like I was more than just my chronic illness."*

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*"One camper who preferred to spend her downtime alone, reading her book, and didn't spend a lot of time connecting with the other campers. By day 3, she started coming out of her room a bit more, playing Crazy 8s with everyone and making more connections. On the very last night of camp, she shared some things she was proud of for the very first time and gave herself the friendship bead for having pushed herself to make more connections for the first time in her life."*

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*"One camper who struggled to participate in the icebreaker games on day 1 and left describing the other boys in his cabin as his best friends."*

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*"One camper who was having a really hard week, struggling to participate and feeling very homesick. During sharing circles on Wednesday, she stepped up and shared her experience with her chronic illness and really strong connections with the other campers in her cabin. On Friday, she was crying because she didn't want to leave."*

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*"Helping campers to understand that their list of struggles and hardships from this past year is things they're capable of handling and a list of evidence of things that make them strong for getting through it all."*

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*"One camper who started the week apologizing a lot when he had needs or questions, not willing to speak up in group conversations, but slowly but surely contributed more and more to each conversation and eventually got up to participate in the talent show."*



Thanks to your generous support, this is how our campers describe camp in 2021!

BRIGADOON VILLAGE

EYE OPENING

AMAZING

GREAT FOOD

FUN

BEST FRIEND

EXCITING

CONFIDENCE BUILDING

MAGICAL

KIND

MEET NEW FRIENDS!

FANTASTIC

INSPIRATIONAL

SPECIAL

REWARDING

AWESOME

FAMILY

LIFE CHANGING

INCLUSIVE



***Thank you*** for offering our campers the transformational and therapeutic experience of camp. Your support is helping to change the future of our community, one kid at a time.

