



**A lakefront centre for experiential learning**





# When sight loss happens, everything changes

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Sight loss can happen at any age, and when it does – whether to a baby, teenager, working-age adult or senior – everything changes. Life’s everyday tasks propose new challenges: making sense of your surroundings, and finding new ways of living and functioning independently in a visual world. New techniques must be learned for everything: from reading and eating, to traveling independently to enjoying the outdoors.

In 1960, CNIB collaborated with the Lions Family of Ontario and the Canadian Council for the Blind to purchase a 12.5-acre property on Lake Joseph in Muskoka, Ontario. Today, CNIB’s Lake Joseph Centre (“Lake Joe”) is a fully accessible lakefront facility, offering a unique blend of recreation and skills development in a safe, guide-dog friendly, inclusive environment.

Lake Joe brings the magic of summer camp into the lives of people who are blind or partially sighted. Here, people with sight loss and their families can enjoy the same summer pursuits as other Canadians: canoeing, kayaking, waterskiing, swimming, sailing and fishing – as well as access to intensive courses teaching necessary life skills, from cooking to mobility.

Lake Joe is a place where a kid can be a kid. There’s something quintessentially Canadian about the experience of summer camping. Campfires, swimming and forging new friendships create a shared experience and lasting memories.

Each year, over 600 children, families and adults attend Lake Joe programs, not only for the recreational activities, but also for the skills training, confidence building and support offered by a community that understands living with sight loss.

## Programming offered at Lake Joe includes:

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### Family Program:

Acknowledging the wide-ranging impact of sight loss on the entire family, this program offers recreational opportunities and support services for all members of the family. Parents and kids can enjoy recreational activities together, as well as art programming, relaxation and other group activities.

### Young Adult Program:

Young adults, aged 18 to 24, come together to mix and mingle with their peers and enjoy time away. Guests experience a combination of structured and elective programming, with the opportunity to relax and enjoy all Lake Joe has to offer.

### Adult Program:

Adults with sight loss experience a week of community-building, peer support and training on assistive devices, braille and new technologies for adaptive living. Our adult program helps to counter isolation and depression that is commonly associated with sight loss. Adults can also enjoy a variety of recreational programming at Lake Joe, including swimming, canoeing, pontoon boat rides, tandem biking, and healthy living workshops.

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## Camp Abilities:

This goal-based program is aimed at athletic development at the Paralympic level, with one-on-one coaching to guide participants to their performance goals. Specialities include cycling, running, swimming, canoeing, kayaking and sailing.

## SCORE:

SCORE (Skills, Confidence and Opportunities through Recreation and Education) offers intensive rehabilitation programs for students in Grades 7 through 10 with a focus on personal management, social competence, and play and leisure, encouraging healthy lifestyles and planning for the future.

# Help us strengthen the impact of Lake Joe

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The combination of supportive, highly trained staff, inclusive activities and barrier-free buildings make CNIB's Lake Joseph Centre unique in Canada. However, this highly specialized facility customized for children and families with sight loss can't happen without funding: one week at Lake Joe can range from \$1,300 to \$2,500 per person (depending on their individual needs), and \$5,000 per family. Due to the high costs of one-on-one support for such offerings as Paralympic-level athletic coaching or braille mentoring, these costs rise each year. Most of the children and families who can greatly benefit from time spent at Lake Joe are unable to afford the cost of a week at camp. They pay what they can, and we subsidize the rest through the generosity of our donors.

Our goal is to offer the life-changing Lake Joe experience to as many people who are blind and partially sighted as possible. With your help, we can do just that and make the dream of a life-altering camp experience in beautiful Muskoka a reality for these children and their families.



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**Today, we are asking you to consider supporting, enhancing and strengthening the impact of CNIB's Lake Joseph Centre.**

Right now, Lake Joe is available only in the summer. We would love to be able to make Lake Joe available all year round. With your generous support, we can take the steps needed to bring the camp to life for other seasons, helping blind and partially sighted Canadians enjoy outdoor activities throughout the year.

CNIB Ontario is seeking to raise \$1,350,000 for Lake Joe facilities and camper bursaries over the next three years. This is a significant but necessary undertaking if the facility is to grow to its full potential and meet the needs of Ontarians living with sight loss and their families.

We are also looking to raise funds to support our Lake Joe Endowment Fund, an investment fund established by CNIB that helps us fund capital projects, facility repairs and bursaries to help people with sight loss experience Lake Joe. Your support of this important fund will help provide a permanent, reliable income that will be invested back in the charitable purposes of the Lake Joe facility.

We are turning to you – our friends and donors – to rally together with us to make the potential of this special place, and all it has to offer Ontarians with sight loss, a reality.

**Your support  
will help  
us provide  
bursaries  
to campers  
for the next  
three years.**





# Invest in our facilities

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Much of Lake Joe's waterfront equipment needs updating for both health and safety, as well as environmental reasons. Tactile signage, pathway lighting, games and audio CDs are all needed to make the experience accessible and enjoyable for clients. More than \$20,000 worth of health and wellness equipment such as first aid materials, oxygen tanks and diabetic health supplies are required to keep our clients safe, comfortable and happy.

Major investments are required in the property's physical plant:

- Each year, our capital equipment and projects cost is in excess of \$200,000 to cover critical upgrades to the grounds and property, recreational items, indoor and outdoor equipment and health and wellness needs.

With your help, we can refresh and rejuvenate CNIB's Lake Joseph Centre so it can continue to be enjoyed by future generations of Canadians living with sight loss, and their families.

**Because it is  
an inclusive,  
accessible  
facility,  
campers at  
Lake Joe feel  
comfortable  
coming out  
of their shells.**



CAMP ABILITIES



CAMP ABILITIES



TEAM MUSCLES

TEAM MUSCLES  
2  
TRAVIS

MONSTERS INC  
3  
CAMP ABILITIES  
TUCSON, AZ

GOLDE

Team 1  
Camp Abilities



# Help us bring more people to Lake Joe

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For those who attend the camps, the experience can be transformative. But for many, the cost is prohibitive – even when it is subsidized by CNIB. And we know that more than 180,000 people – including 8,800 children – are coping with sight loss right now in this province. We need your help to reach them and give them the chance to come to Lake Joe.

With your help, we will offer an additional \$250,000 in bursaries every year to people from across Canada to one of the many programs offered at Lake Joe. For example, the estimated cost for two people, (one client and one mentor/instructor/coach), to attend one of our programs for one week is \$2,500. An additional \$250,000 would allow us to offer participation in Lake Joe programs to 100 kids and mentors each year for the next three years. Funds could also be dedicated to equipment upgrades for these camps, or to supporting children attending the family camps.

Our vision for Lake Joe includes full bursaries for any child or family who is blind or partially sighted who wishes to attend the camp, transportation funds to assist those who are coming from elsewhere in Canada, and resources to provide assistance or on-site equipment for those who are medically fragile.

**Your support can help people who are blind and partially sighted feel less isolated and more included.**

You can also help by supporting Lake Joe's Endowment Fund. For more information on the Fund, and how to support it, please call us at 1.800.563.2642

**74% of children with sight loss do not play sports because they are not adapted to be accessible.**



# We need your support

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Please support CNIB's Lake Joseph Centre. With your gift, you will join the thousands of Canadians who help fund CNIB's many national initiatives for the sight loss community.

**To make your donation, please contact:**

CNIB  
1929 Bayview Avenue  
Toronto, ON M4G 3E8  
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cnib.ca  
1.800.563.2642



JOURNEY 156  
Donated by  
Chinook Valley Lions Club



“It took me only a few minutes to be amazed by this camp. We were greeted with welcome banners and cheering from the counsellors! The energy we felt was indescribable.”

-Mother of CNIB camper

“At camp, children learn to problem-solve, make social adjustments to new and different people, learn responsibility, and gain new skills to increase their self-esteem.”

-Peter Scales, Ph.D., noted author/educator and Senior Fellow,  
The Search Institute

“It’s good to spend time at Lake Joe because not many people have complete vision loss like I do. Camp Abilities is a fun place to be.  
**It’s good to know you are not alone.”**

-Gabrielle, 16

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