



Out-of-School Programs

→ A Guide for GTA Parents ←

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Why Out-of-School Programs?



How many hours per week in average that a school child spend outside school (*i.e. discretionary time*)

- a) <30 hours
 - b) Between 30 and 50 hours
 - c) >50 hours
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- Research suggests that a large amount of unstructured, unsupervised, and unproductive time can undermine positive development of school children
 - The recurring block of out-of-school time means *discretionary opportunity, choice and flexibility*

→ The right program at the right time can thus make a significant difference in a child's life.

Out-of-School Program – WHAT



Quality programs for school aged children before or after school, during holidays, in the summer, or at other school-off days.

	Monday — Soccer
	Tuesday — Martial Art
	Wednesday — Dance
	Thursday — Art
	Friday — Piano

PA
Day

MARCH BREAK
MARCH 16-20

Summer
Camp

Before/After
School Care

HOLIDAY
CAMP

The Many Program Providers



- Childcare Providers: before/after school care, camps
- Private / independent program providers and/or schools
- Competitive program clubs
- Faith organizations
- Individual / private tutors, coaches, instructors, and trainers
- Online / remote programs (e.g. www.mychesscourse.com, free [Math Home Help](#), Frontier College – [Virtual Learning Centre](#))
- Franchise program providers

The Many Program Varieties (1)



- **Academic Enrichment:** mixed / multi-domain, history, pre-school study, archaeology, math / numeracy, science (chemistry, biology, physics, geology, science, bioengineering...), literacy (read / write, **spelling bee, debate, author...**), high school credit, science competition, urban design...
- **Language & Culture:** French, Spanish, Chinese, public speaking, ESL...
- **Applied Skills:** build & construct (design & tech, Lego projects, carpentry, robotics...), computer & internet (general user training in computer / internet / software tool / social network, **App Design**, computer programming, web design, **Xbox Game Creation, 3D printing...**)
- **Visual Arts:** multimedia, sculpture, architecture, drawing & painting, fashion design, photography & filmmaking (also television, movie), graphic design
- **Performing Arts:** **magic show**, comedy..., dance (also cheerleading), theatre & drama (also musical theatre), voice training, singing, **glee club**
- **Music:** drum / percussion, DJ, band, brass instrument, string instrument, guitar, music history, **song writing**, woodwind & **Girl Rock Camp**
- **Clubs & Adventures:** Book Club / Story, Guiding / Cadets, Outdoor / Explorers, Adventures (hiking, museum visits, trips), leagues
- **Every Day Living:** Food & Nutrition (cooking, baking...), **gardening**, Health Safety Rehabilitation, self-defence, therapy, **anti-bullying / streetproofing**, home alone, mental health...



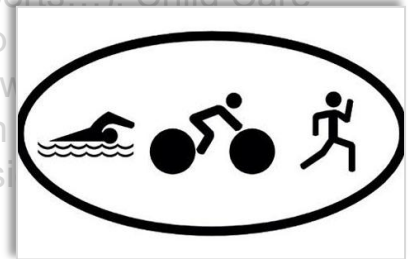
The Many Program Varieties (2)



➤ **Sports:** aquatics & water sports (also canoeing, kayaking, rowing, sailing, rafting, **pedalling**, water polo, **diving**...), lifesaving & lifeguard, skating (ice skating, figure skating, skateboard, inline skating, scooter...), ski & snowboard, hockey (ice), baseball & softball, volleyball, tennis & racket sports (also Squash, ping pong, table tennis), gym & combat sports (also archery, boxing, kickboxing, gymnastics, rhythmic gymnastics, twirling, wrestling, judo, martial arts, karate, Qi Gong, Tai Qi, Kung Fu, jujitsu, aikido, kendo, sumo, fencing, yoga, weight lifting, **trampoline**, **acrobatics**, cycle-fit...), board & card games (chess, bridge...), other sports (track & field, mountain biking, **track cycling**, ball hockey, football, golfing, climbing, mixed sports, **triathlon**, lacrosse, frisbee, dodgeball, billiards, sports, multi-sports, **geocaching** ...)



➤ **Speciality & Others:** **special needs**, mixed activities & games (e.g. multiple-activity camps, mixed play), **family / parented** (also caregiver assisted), test prep (SSAT, RCM Test, Audition Prep, ...), **private lessons** (for music, arts, academics, or sports...), Child Care / Minding (before/after/extended care, lunch option or supervision, walk or pickup), extended care, day care...), **faith**, specialty / unclassified (e.g. go-karting, travel informational workshops, mind exercise, go-green, environmental program, earth science), in (e.g. pick-up game, shinny hockey...), **in-home program**, **overnight** (also residential), **specific**

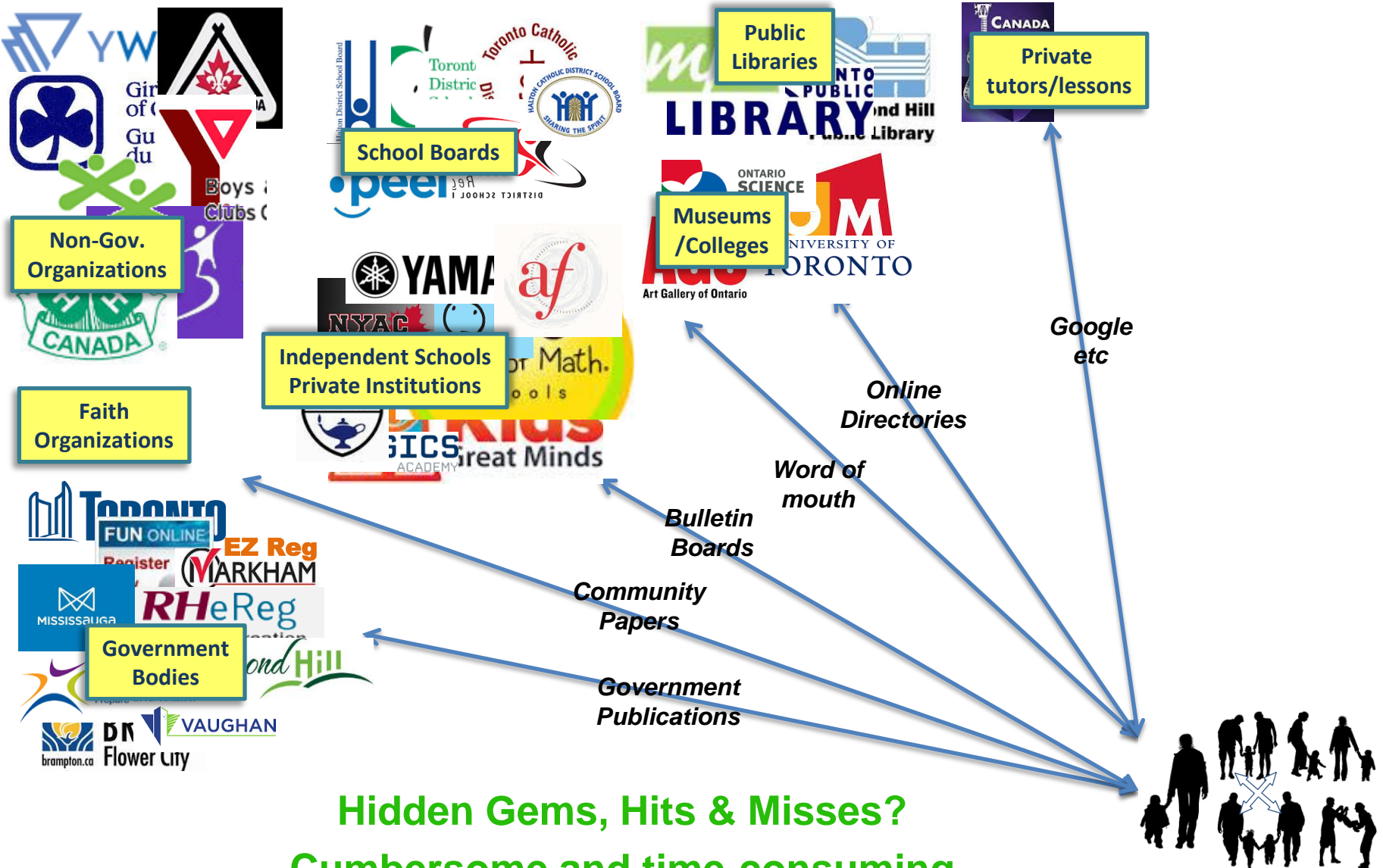


➤ **Leadership & Self-Development:** leadership, team building, conflict management, relationship building, social skills, communication, career development, personal growth, character traits ...

➤ **Work / Biz / Volunteering:** work experience, business, entrepreneurship, **babysitting**, volunteering...

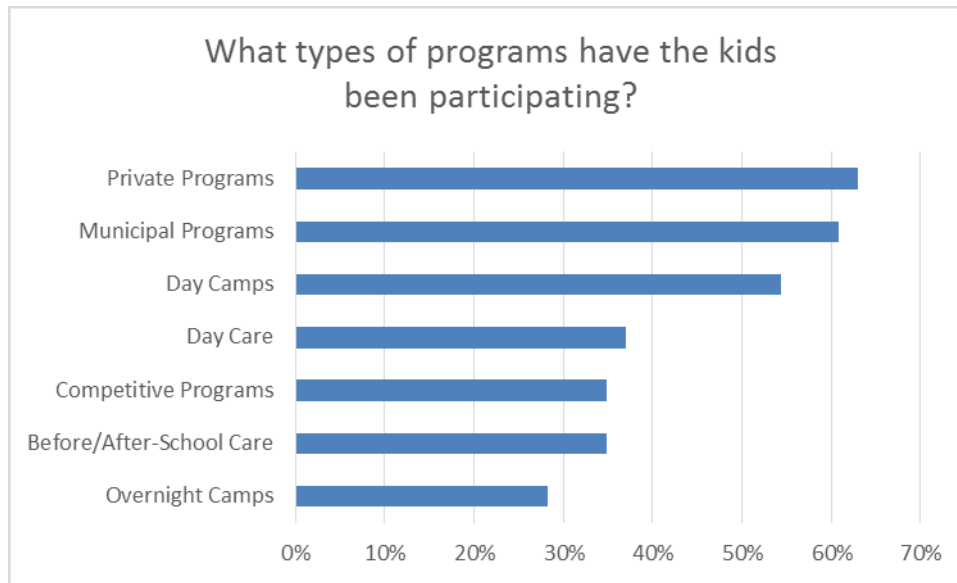


Current State

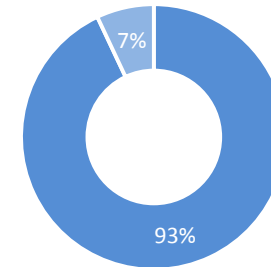


**Hidden Gems, Hits & Misses?
Cumbersome and time-consuming**

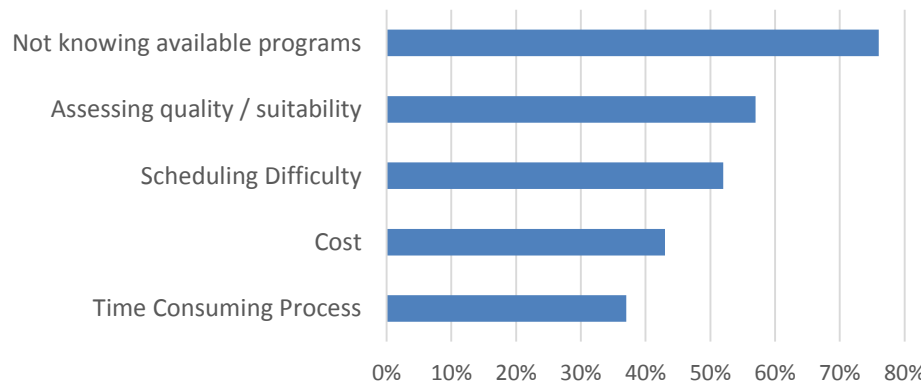
Out-of-School Programs – Parent Survey



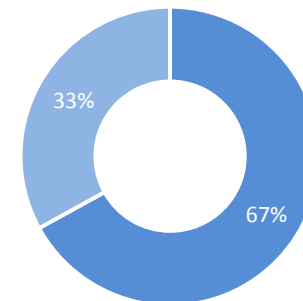
93% of parents use word-of-mouth to assess programs



Top 5 barriers for parents in regards to out-of-school programs



67% of parents would like to use online reviews to assess programs





The How-To Guide – A Fresh & True Story

11-year-old Harry is a die-hard fan of Minecraft. His mother Daisy always worries about Harry spending too much time on gaming.

One day Harry told Daisy he wants to build his own mod in Minecraft. Daisy realized this is a good opportunity to lead Harry's interest towards creative programming so she was happy to support.

Daisy tried to look for Minecraft mod creation programs from her Municipality program guide *Markham Life*, but was not able to find one. Then she tried to find a **private-run program** but was out of luck after talking to **all parents** she knew.

Daisy eventually found a U.S. website youthdigital.com offers pre-recorded mod creation program that costs **\$249**. She bought the online course for Harry. It wasn't as smooth as expected. Without any programming experience, Harry found it like wading through a road full of thorns when following the online course without any troubleshooting support.

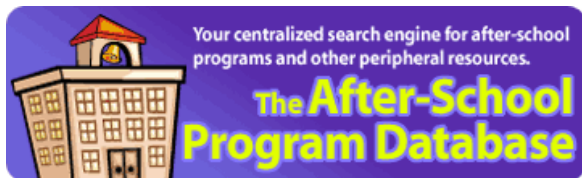
Turns out in GTA, Richmond Hill does offer an 8-session Minecraft mod creation course for kids age from age 11 to 16, it costs **\$216** for Richmond Hill residents and **\$226** for non-residents. Daisy's home in Markham is actually quite close to the Richmond Hill community center that runs the course, but she never knew there was such an option. Richmond Hill also runs Minecraft mod creation summer camps for kids from age 10 to 14, which are also open to families from GTA.



Harry, age 11



The How-To Guide – Find / Know Your Options



- Municipality publications / websites
- Network with other parents at school (e.g. parent council), neighbours, and friends
- Parent council / school trustee newsletters
- Community Center / Library bulletin boards or newsletters
- Walk around your neighbourhood AND around your office
- Google search / provider websites
- Integrated online program information services**

The How-To Guide – Assess Quality



- ❑ Word of Mouth, also talk to parents currently participating
- ❑ Check qualification and accreditation (OCA, High Five, etc)
- ❑ Interview the provider, visit the site
- ❑ Check applicable government Quality Ratings / Inspection Reports e.g.
 - [City of Toronto Quality Ratings](#) on childcare & before/after-school care
 - [Ministry of Education Licensing Inspection](#) on childcare & before/after-school care
- ❑ Check provider's website, Facebook, Twitter, Google+ (a very small number have reviews)
- ❑ [Review Programs Together](#) (by High Five)
 - "Program Checklist" allows parents to evaluate if their child's program supports healthy child development

The How-To Guide – Determine Suitability



- ❑ Values & Philosophy – appealing and agreeable to your family?
- ❑ Trial Class / Open-House
- ❑ Observe / watch a class
- ❑ Negotiate multiple try-out classes, e.g.
 - Try multiple teachers with a provider
 - Try multiple providers
 - Try 2~3 classes with one program
- ❑ Talk to and exchange with the instructor or counselor (early & frequent)
- ❑ [Review Programs Together](#) (by High Five)
 - “Program Checklist” allows parents to evaluate if their child’s program supports healthy child development
 - “Ask Your Child Questionnaire” provides questions for parents to ask their children about the experience in the program
- ❑ [Find Your Perfect Camp questionnaire](#) , [Choosing A Camp](#), [10 Questions to Ask a Camp Director](#) (by OCA)
- ❑ Test the water with **transition programs** before committing to longer overnight camps: e.g. family weekend, 3 night starter/kinder camp, mini overnights, day camp with “under nights” (camp ends after dinner and before bedtime).

The How-To Guide – Manage the Cost



- Maximize School Resources – *the out-of-school outcome inside your school*
 - ✓ Co-curricular, school clubs, lunch programs
 - ✓ Make best use of school teachers to grow your special interests
- Consider delivery options - Private, Semi-Private, Make Your Own Group, Public Group Lessons
- Free Community / Library / Municipality / NGO programs (online or offline)
- Financial Aid / Assistance / Scholarships (both public and private agencies)
 - ✓ Apply to **several** sources and to apply **early**.
- Funds for Special Needs Children
- Arts / Fitness Tax credits
- Discount: early bird, sibling, family, returning campers, resident rate, other deals
- Shopping Around and Compare

The How-To Guide – Special Needs



❑ Specialty Camps / Programs - cater specifically to the special needs of individuals in a similar situation

- ✓ Physical Disabilities, e.g. Camp Awakening, Easter Seal - Recreational Choices Fund (\$250 per child)
- ✓ Diabetes (Type-1), e.g. D-Camp
- ✓ Mentally challenged, e.g. Belwood Lodge & Camp
- ✓ Burn Survivors, e.g. Camp Bucko
- ✓ Learning Disabilities: e.g. LDATD
- ✓ City of Toronto: [Adapted / Specialized Programs](#)



❑ Integrated / Inclusive Camps / Programs

- ✓ Program resources (staff / facilities / etc) available to meet the special or high needs within an integrated setting
- ✓ Partner with 3rd party (e.g. Reach for the Rainbow, Canadian Association for Disabled Skiing)

❑ Therapeutic Recreation (chronic disease, injury, surgery...)

❑ Use your own one-on-one support

❑ Family Programs / Camps

❑ Tips

- ✓ Special needs support staff is often a limited resource – first come, first served
- ✓ More sources of funding available





Out-of-School Program
opens up pathways & skyways, shaping
the child's distinctive life journey!
Bon Voyage!

Thank you!
Merci!



Additional Resources

The How-To Guide – Resources (1)



❑ Individual online program directory & registration systems for each municipality / other government

- [Ajax Connect@Rec](#)
- [Aurora e-PLAY](#)
- [Brampton e-Registration](#)
- [Cadet Corps and Squadron Directory](#)
- [King City](#)
- [Markham EZ Reg](#)
- [Ministry of Education – Finding Licensed Child Care](#)
- [Mississauga Connect2Rec](#)
- [Mississauga Drop-In Activities](#)
- [Milton](#)
- [Newmarket Recreation Playbook](#)
- [Oakville](#)
- [Pickering Click to Reg](#)
- [Richmond Hill RHeReg](#)
- [City of Toronto FUN Online](#)
- [City of Toronto Childcare Locator](#)
- [City of Toronto Drop-in Program Map](#)
- [Vaughan RecOnline](#)
- [Whitby](#)
- ...

The How-To Guide – Resources (2)



- ❑ Individual online program directory & registration systems for major non-government organizations
 - [Boys & Girls Club of Canada – Find a Club](#)
 - [YMCA eConnect](#)
 - [TDSB Learn4Life](#)
 - [Girl Guide Unit Finder](#)
 - [Find a Scouts Group](#)
 - ...
- ❑ Integrated online program directory across multiple program providing organizations
 - Ontario Camping Association – [Find Your Perfect Camp](#): best source for suburban / remote / overnight & residential camps, limited information for day camps
 - [Toronto4Kids](#): mostly private providers, ~100 classes & programs, ~300 camp programs, structured by regions
 - [Help! We've Got Kids](#): ~100 program providers / other businesses (mostly private) with basic program or service information, and ~1400 providers / businesses with very minimal information
 - [Kidsprograms.ca](#): ~120,000 program sessions (private / public), ~8,000 program locations, 14 GTA municipalities, map-based smart search, program information in more depth
 - ...

The How-To Guide – Affordability (1)



- ❑ [Jumpstart](#): supports kids (ages 4-18) in sports and physical activity
- ❑ [City of Toronto](#): Free drop-in Programs, Community Centres Where Programs are Free, Yearly Credits (Welcome Policy) and Older Adult Discounts
- ❑ [City of Mississauga assistance programs](#)



- ❑ [ActiveAssist Brampton](#): fee subsidy to help low-income families and individuals in Brampton participate in Recreation programs
- ❑ [Vaughan Funding Assistance](#): Jumpstart, RecAssist (fee subsidy), York Region Subsidy
- ❑ Markham fee assistance (contact the Registration at 905-475-4731 or by email)
- ❑ [Richmond Hill community service subsidy programs](#)
- ❑ [Oakville Subsidy Programs](#): Recreation Connection, JumpStart
- ❑ Pickering Financial Assistance for Rec Programs (contact Sharon Milton at 905.420.4660 ext. 3601)
- ❑ Whitby Community Connection - affordable recreational & special interest programs at various schools
- ❑ [Ajax financial assistance](#)



The How-To Guide – Affordability (2)



❑ FREE programs, e.g.

- City of Toronto: free community-level coach training in celebration of the 2015 Pan Am/Parapan Am games, over 100 courses in partnership with [Coaches Association of Ontario](#)
- TDSB offers many free (or nominal fee) summer (STEM / Literacy) school and international language summer programs
- City of Markham: [Free Try-It Week](#) (during March break)
- A number of community service organizations in priority neighborhoods: [Agincourt Community Service Organization](#) (afterschool programs), [Thornccliffe Neighbourhood Office](#) (Homework Club)
- Toronto Public Library: [TD Shakespeare for Kids Library Club](#), [Leading to Reading](#), [Homework Help](#), [Toastmasters Youth Leadership](#), [Computer Training](#)
- [Frontier College Literacy Programs](#) (homework club, after-school learning, 1-to-1/small group tutoring, pre-school...)

❑ YMCA GTA: various financial assistances available for membership, camps, childcare, etc.

❑ Tax Credits: Children's Art Tax Credit, and Fitness Tax Credit

❑ [Funding / Subsidy Options for Summer Camps](#) (Ontario Camping Association)

❑ [Kids in Camp – KIC](#): applications submitted by the Camp Directors of OCA accredited camps

❑ [KidSport](#) - provides financial assistance for registration fees and equipment to kids aged 18 and under

❑ Financial assistance at Girl Guide

❑ FREE / low cost / affordable programs at various Boys & Girls Clubs (e.g. [Albion BGC](#))

❑ Scholarships / Financial Aids from program providers, e.g.

- UTS Bright Lights in the Lab summer camps
- Glenbrook Day Camp – [Hand-in-Hand Subsidy Program](#)
- U of T – Summer Math Kangaroo Camp / Summer Math Academy (Bursaries available)
- Canadian Opera Company BURSARY PROGRAM
- Pia Bouman School for Ballet and Creative Movement: 10% of our annual Budget to bursary fund
- [Great Big Theatre Company Subsidy Program](#)

