

# Coastline Challenges Program



Boys & Girls Club  
Services of Greater Victoria

# What Are We?

Coastline Challenges is a 26 day wilderness program offered to youth on probation to provide them with an alternative positive experience.



# What do we do?

- Coastline uses an expedition based model to challenge youth to move beyond habitual ways of interacting and living and to come up with healthy and positive ways to function and be.



# Program Components

- Completion of a 3 day introduction trip.
- Completion of a 9 day expedition.
- Completion of a 5 day backpacking trip.
- Completion of a 3 day solo.
- Completion of a 5 and 10 km run.
- Participation on workbooks and evening discussions.
- Completion of group tasks and jobs.
- Demonstrating skills and presenting a speech at graduation.
- Upholding program guidelines and expectations.
- A commitment to the program and group members.
- Participate in a graduation ceremony to celebrate success with friends, family and community.

# What do youth learn?

## Youth at Coastline practice:

- Problem solving while learning how to live safely as a group in the wilderness.
- Coping mechanisms while dealing with stressors such as weather, exercise, hard work, responsibility and different personalities.
- Patience and acceptance for others.
- Personal responsibility while caring for gear, themselves and others through chores and the cultivation of care.
- Life skills such as hygiene and cooking.
- Relationship skills from appropriate language and conversational skills to developing close, important and healthy relationships with others.
- Hard outdoor skills such as camp craft, backpacking, canoeing, environmental ethics and safety in the wild.

# How do we practice?

- Unique opportunities to build relationships.
- Through the context of an unknown environment.
- Using experiential education and adventure therapy principles.
- Using a strength based approach.
- Providing a very structured and positive environment.
- By giving youth opportunities to recreate their identities outside of their usual environment but in a recognized context.
- Using natural consequence and framed experiences.
- Allowing the beauty of the natural environment to speak and impact.



# A Typical Day at Coastline

- Morning wake up and pack up gear
- As a group boats are packed and loaded
- Youth help cook and clean up breakfast
- The group travels on the water for 2-3 hours
- Lunch is prepared by youth
- The group travels on the water for 2-3 hours
- Arrive at camp and unload boats
- Tarp set-up
- Breaks, games, fire preparation, workbooks and dinner preparation
- Dinner is prepared by youth
- Time for relaxing, exploration and games
- Group meets for 'open forum'
- Youth go to sleep while an instructor reads to them

# Who Are We?

- Coastline Instructors are in a unique position to act as mentors with authority.
- Groups are interdependent and must rely on each other for their experience and to have their needs met.
- Instructors are the arbitrators of resources and skills.
- Respect for self and others are base components of relationships.
- Instructors have lots of time to recognize strengths and abilities in youth and foster a caring environment where opportunities for growth are unlimited.
- Instructors have many years of experience as guides, youth workers and come with a diversity of experience and backgrounds.



## How can a youth attend a Coastline program?

- Referral's are accepted from multiple sources though primarily come through probation officers.
- A referral package must be completed for each youth.
- Groups are designed to complement each other so advance notice tends to work best.
- There is ongoing contact with our intake coordinator throughout the process.

