



Uplifting experiences  
for kids with cancer.

Camp Quality Canada

1444 Queen Street East, Suite 206  
Toronto ON M4L 1E1  
T 416.406.2267 TF 1.866.738.8011

[info@campquality.org](mailto:info@campquality.org) [www.campquality.org](http://www.campquality.org)

## **BEATING CHILDHOOD CANCER, BREAKING BORDERS & GIVING BACK**

HAMILTON, ON – August 14, 2017

Beating cancer is no small achievement for an adult, but for many childhood cancer survivors, their fight to live a full and meaningful life only starts when their battle with cancer ends. In spite of rising survival rates, approximately 80 percent of children with cancer face lifelong health problems as a result of their treatments. For some this has meant physical disability, cognitive impairment, memory problems, and a life filled with uncertainty about their future health. Camp Quality Canada wants to show childhood cancer survivors there can be more to life after cancer. Through a new initiative called Breaking Borders, Camp Quality Canada, has created a program to help childhood cancer survivors develop the skills they need to live as adults.

Since early 2017, a group of childhood cancer survivors from Southern Ontario have been working together, as part of the Breaking Borders program, to organize a trip to Haida Gwaii, BC, with the goal of removing 250 kg of man-made debris from this vital coastline. On August 20<sup>th</sup>, ten young adults will set off on a week-long adventure - the culmination of months of skill-building, planning, fundraising, and growing together as a group - proving a life full of possibility is achievable for everyone.

Childhood cancer survivors are less likely to enter the workforce, or have children. They have a heightened risk of secondary cancers, cardiac illnesses, and infertility and often times have little or no support in people their age who are experiencing the same thing. So, in addition to being able to meet others who 'get it', the participants also have an opportunity to learn skills that will help them find work, build self-confidence, and do something meaningful at the same time.

“I survived going through emergency surgery, a brain tumor the size of a golf ball - but I almost lost my life to depression,” says 18 year old participant Jessica Murphy. “I never had friends I could relate to, but this trip and this program is bringing us all together to relate and break all our borders together.”

In addition to providing an opportunity to go beyond their comfort zones, Camp Quality Canada's Executive Director, Brendan Turner, felt it was also important that the group give back in some way in order to make an impact on the world around them. “As a childhood cancer survivor myself,” says Turner, “I know that having cancer doesn't have to stop us from making a difference. If anything our cancer experience can motivate us to do more in spite of the difficulties we've faced.”



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Together, the group decided that in addition to sea-kayaking, hiking, learning about Canada's pre-colonial history, and simply spending time in nature, they would set a goal to remove at least 250kgs of ocean plastics and other waste from the coastline.

While many members of the group are nervous about travelling so far from home, they are all really excited for the experiences they've planned together and are anxious to get to work cleaning up B.C's coast. They've raised nearly \$10,000 of their \$25,000 goal to help fund their trip, so while preparing for their trip, they're also working hard to raise the funds to cover their costs.

Together this group will prove that there is no limit to what they can achieve, and that there truly is so much life beyond cancer.

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To learn more about Camp Quality Canada, this program, and the participants by contacting Brendan Turner at 416-406-2267, or by email at [brendan.turner@campquality.org](mailto:brendan.turner@campquality.org)

### **About Camp Quality**

Camp Quality Canada is a volunteer non-profit charitable organization that improves the quality of life for children affected by childhood cancer through camps and year-round programming. Our goal is to provide uplifting experience for kids affected by cancer. Camp Quality programs operate in 7 areas in 4 provinces across Canada.