

# So you want to be a Counsellor for the Tim Horton Children's Ranch?

This brief job description is meant to introduce you to what our program requires of the staff. The major requirement for a job at the **Tim Horton Children's Ranch (THCR)** is having a genuine love of children. Children are the reason our program is in existence. You must be willing to be with them for many days at a time. You become an integral part of helping them learn about themselves, other people and the environment.

Another requirement is the willingness to put your problems and hang-ups on the back burner and devote your time and energy to concentrate on the needs of the campers that come to us.

You should have the ability and the desire to work long hours, both emotionally and physically, in very close proximity to other people. Our days are long and the program demands a lot from staff.

Our Summer begins June 11, with 11 intense days of staff training. During this time you will learn everything you need to know about being a counsellor. Your days will be filled with team building, camp songs, dance parties, behavior management training, emergency response, intentional programming, and learning all about our fun programs, like rafting, hiking, horseback riding, rock climbing and everything else on site. During this time you will also receive your camp name which you will keep throughout your career with the Tim Horton Children's Foundation. Our first 10 day session starts on the 24<sup>th</sup> of June.

The following is a basic schedule of a 'day in the life' of a **THCR counsellor**.

- 7:00am. The counsellors awaken the campers. Time for showers, and getting dressed for the day.
- 7:45am *Flagpole*. A time to come together in our camp community, and begin the day. Cabin groups take turns raising the flag, leading the national anthem, sharing a thought of the day, and dismissing cabins who do the best impressions.
- 8:00am *Breakfast*. All staff and campers eat together, family style. It's a chance to discuss the events of the day, find out the weather, and get energized for the day.
- 8:45am *Golden Broom*. Time to clean up our living spaces, make our beds, and get ready for the morning activities.
- 9:30-12:00 *Morning activities*. This is when half of the camp will head off to their morning activities on site. You might be going to the Low ropes course, archery range, Arts and Crafts, Studio, Pond, the Environmental Centre or horseback riding. Or it might be your day to jump on a bus and head off to one of our offsite activities, White Water Rafting, or Outdoor Rock Climbing. If this is the case you will pack a lunch with your campers, and return back to camp at approximately 3:30pm.
- 12:10pm *Table Setters*. Cabin groups will take it in turns setting the tables in the dining hall, or outside if it's a nice day

- 12:30pm *Lunch.* Time to have re-fuel for our busy afternoon and enjoy the mountain view.
- 1:15-2:30pm *Rest and Reflect.* Campers can take a nap, write a letter home, read or work on their scrapbooks.
- 2:30-5:00pm Time for afternoon activities. Similar to the morning.
- Every session each cabin will get to go on a one or two night backpacking trip. If it is your turn you will assist your group in packing gear and food, and preparing for your adventure in the mountains. You will then be taken to the trailhead where you will hike and set up camp, cook food and have a real wilderness experience. Returning the following day or the day after.
- 5:10pm *Table Setters* – A different group to set up for every meal.
- 5:30pm *Dinner.* Everybody together - one big happy family. Time to tell stories, laugh, sing songs, and contemplate what is for dessert.
- 6:45pm *Evening Program.* Usually chaotic and loads of fun. This is where the whole camp comes together for an activity. It might be a campfire, capture the flag, a talent show, or a challenging race with your cabin group.
- 8:00pm *Intros.* If you have an offsite activity the following day, this is where you will learn what is happening. For rafting and climbing you will find out where you are going, and receive any gear you will need for the following day.
- 8:30pm *Snack.* Campers will meet in the main lodge for a night time snack before bed.
- 8:45pm *Debrief.* The purpose of a daily debrief with your campers is to allow them to share the highs and lows of their day; to share the new things they tried and to offer encouragement to each other. By the end of their 10 days at camp, we hope they realize they can be friends with a variety of people; that they have talents and interests they didn't even know about; and that they are a reliable and valuable member of their cabin.
- 9:00-10:00pm *Bed Time* – Time for campers to have showers, and begin to settle down for the night. Lights should be out no later than 10:00.
- On a rotating basis each floor of the bunkhouse will have 2 counsellors sitting in the corridor on bunk duty in the evening giving other staff some time off. While on bunk duty, it is your responsibility to ensure campers are going to sleep, and not disturbing each other. This is also a time when campers might experience home sickness or other issues, so it's a great time to lend a listening ear.
- Once a session there will be a staff social, where counsellors can dress up and have some fun from 9:30 to 10:30pm, while the guides look after campers on bunk duty.

### Additional Duties:

- Maintaining behavior management
- Helping campers make wise choices with their time
- Locating lost and found items
- Checking campers for head lice, and beds for accidents in the night
- Developing and Implementing new skill builders and programs
- Tidying up after a meal
- Facilitating i-choice (camper choice activities)
- Being patient, even while your attention is being demanded by 8 children at a time
- Cleaning up the entire camp at the end of day 10, when all you really want to do is sleep. Ready to do it all over again 2 days later
- Everything else not mentioned.....there's always something!

Our campers come from anywhere there is a Tim Horton's Restaurant. This summer our campers will be from all over Alberta, BC, Saskatchewan, and even a few from the Yukon and North West Territories. 2 or 3 times per summer, each staff member will get to go on a trip to escort our campers to and from camp. This may be by bus or by plane. This means that on some of your breaks you will be travelling, however it is a great way to experience other areas of Canada, and the foundation covers all costs associated with these trips.

The staff is on duty **24hrs a day**, 10 days a session. During session you will not be able to leave site. You will get 1 hour off per day, and the evening hours when you aren't on bunk watch will be your own, but we reserve the right to call on you in an emergency. You will have 2 days off at the end of the session, to share stories with each other, recuperate and adventure in our beautiful Rocky Mountain home.

Please come willing to work harder than you ever have before. Your flexibility and sense of humour must be "on" at all times, and you must be able to separate you own personal issues from your job.

Certification in Standard First Aid and CPR C is required.

Staff are involved in every aspect of THCR, from leading campfire songs and skits, to moving tables, to belaying campers up a rock wall. **Remember that the Tim Horton Children's Ranch is the staff and the children.** Our program is only as good as we live and make it. We are role models for the thousands of children we meet each year.

Counsellors are required to live in the bunk houses with campers. You will be sharing a room with bunk beds with 3 other counsellors, and sharing a bathroom with campers. There is not a lot of personal space, and you need to be available if your campers need you throughout the night.

What are other THCF staff like? Our staff comes from a wide variety of backgrounds..... science folks, liberal arts, recreation, education, environmental studies, musicians, theatre, English, travellers.....you name it. Some have taught in school classrooms and take this opportunity for an alternative. They all come and share their knowledge and experiences and become part of the program.

The benefits of a summer camp are too numerous to list here. Making a positive difference in the lives of children, learning about people from many different back grounds, training, making friends for life, FUN, travelling, the list goes on. Camp is magical, unique and LIFE CHANGING!!

So you want to work for the Tim Horton Children's Ranch? Still have questions? Great! The next step is to get in touch. Email the Program Coordinator Carla McGruer at [carla.mcgruer@thcf.com](mailto:carla.mcgruer@thcf.com)

Learn more about the foundation at <http://www.thcf.com>



