



## Overview

The counsellor is responsible for every aspect of all their campers' well-being - from personal hygiene to good spirits. Each cabin has 10-13 campers aged 6-15 along with two or three counsellors. We want every camper to feel valued, cherished and successful. We also place very high priority on the relationships between campers, and on the emotional well-being of cabin groups. Additionally, because we have a special needs (SN) program, you may have an SN camper in your cabin. We think of our SN campers like every other camper in our community - just with a different level of need.

### **Minimum Qualifications**

Lifesaving Society of Canada Bronze Cross (or local equivalent)  
Criminal Reference Check

### **Recommended Qualifications (Bonuses Available)**

Lifesaving Society of Canada National Lifeguard Service (NLS)

### **Skill Competencies**

Ability to work as part of a team  
Strong listening skills and commitment to respecting children  
Ability to empathize with those who are struggling  
Good communication and problem-solving skills  
Strong commitment to growth - both personal and professional

## Responsibilities

As a cabin counsellor you could be faced with a wide variety of demands, making it impossible to truly list all of the duties that one will have.

### **Essential Responsibilities**

The following is a list of the key duties of every cabin counsellor:

- Supervision of campers
- Participation in canoe trip
- Night duty and staff hour duty as assigned
- Attendance at staff meetings
- Returning to the cabin at 1am as assigned

### **Other Responsibilities**

The following list will help you better understand your role, however, note that this is not an exhaustive list of possible responsibilities.

- Waking up of campers with music and excitement to set the mood for the day
- Sitting with your campers during meals, engaging them in conversation, ensuring that they eat properly and are included in the group
- Supervising and taking part in cabin clean-up
- Attending and assisting at your 'specialist' activity for half the day
- Ensuring campers arrive at activities on time and prepared
- Spending Rest Hour bonding with your campers

- Participating in an activity with your campers at General, unless you have Dock (lifeguard) duty
- Attending camper snack and engaging the campers who are isolated and not interacting with their peers
- Putting your cabin to bed by lowering the energy level and leading Cabin Circle

### **The Daily Schedule**

At camp, everyday (except Sundays and Special Days) follow the same routine. Camper bedtime ranges from 9:15 to 10:30 depending on the campers' age.

7:25	Wake Up
8:00	Breakfast
8:30	Cabin Clean-Up
9:50	1st Period
11:00	2nd Period
12:00	General
1:00	Lunch
2:00	Rest Hour
3:00	3rd Period
4:10	4th Period
5:10	Staff Hour
6:10	Dinner
8:00	Evening Activity
9:00	Camper Snack
11:00	Staff Snack

## **Tools**

The most important role of a counsellor is to have a personal bond with each of their campers. During pre-camp, counsellors are trained to use the following techniques to foster that close connection.

### **Active Listening**

This is the skill of drawing out a camper in a caring manner. Key phrases that you will hear are “tell me more”, “how does that make you feel,” and “that is completely normal.”

### **Validation**

Arowhon staff practice accurate and honest validation. We tell the campers what they do well so they feel good about themselves and continue the good behaviour. You could call this the “carrot” approach.

### **Cabin Circle**

Every night, each cabin camp does Cabin Circle, during which campers (and counsellors) have the opportunity to answers questions about their day uninterrupted. The required question is “What is your rose and thorn of the day” (your high and your low) and some some type of fun question like “what new activity would you add to camp” or “what two animals would you combine and what would you call it?” This is designed so that every camper has a chance to reflect on their day and a chance to feel heard by their peers.

**Collaborative Problem Solving**

Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) is an advanced technique that we use to teach campers how to resolve conflict with their peers. Both/all campers involved in conflict sit down together so that THEY can talk about the problem and how to solve it. At Arowhon you aren't just taking care of kids, you are teaching life skills.

**Evaluation**

Three times per summer, supervisors formally evaluate each of their staff. During these conversations staff are encouraged to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and devise growth plans to improve their counselling skills.

**In-Services**

After pre-camp, we offer ongoing training during in-service meetings, where we address challenging camper problems. These are a fantastic opportunity to ask questions, voice concerns, collaborate with fellow counsellors (and decompress with a slice of cake!)