

Camper Guide

JULY 2025



LETTER TO CAMPERS & FAMILIES



Dear Camp Family,

Welcome to Arthritis Society Canada's Manitoba Camp, a place where you don't have to explain what it's like to live with a rheumatic disease. Where everyone understands. And where you will have the opportunity to meet new friends, take your medicine in a supportive environment, sing songs and dance around the campfire, and have the best week ever! At camp, you'll stay in a cabin with kids just like you, along with really cool camp counsellors. Arthritis Society Canada believes that every child and youth living with arthritis in Canada deserves to experience the unforgettable opportunity that summer camp has to offer.

This Camp Guide is designed to provide general knowledge on the Camp Limitless experience, such as packing lists, policies, camper care, and more! The intent of this guide is to offer a clear picture of what to expect at camp.

Please note: It is perfectly normal for you and your camper to feel anxious and nervous about attending camp. We hope that this guide will ease any feelings of worry. If you have any questions or concerns after reading through the following information, please do not hesitate to contact camp@arthritis.ca or call (647) 730-9026 ext. 3384.

Camp is all about having the time of your life, for one whole week, just being a kid at camp. We are thrilled you have joined our camp family!

Warm regards,

Jessica Caldwell (she/her pronouns)
Manager, Childhood Arthritis Programming
Arthritis Society Canada



Pre-Camp Checklist



Checklist

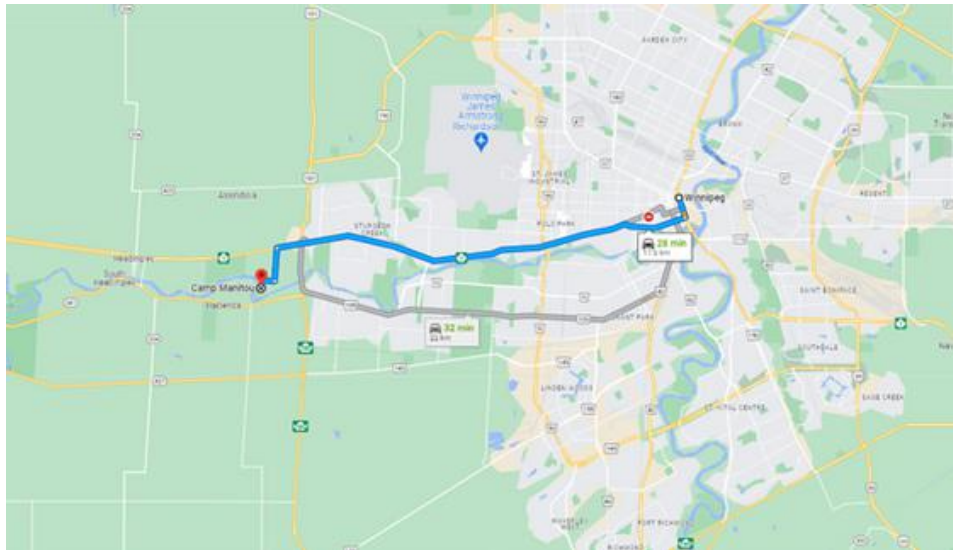
- ✓ Read this package in its entirety
- ✓ Review the packing list
- ✓ Go over the camper code of conduct with your child
- ✓ Notify camp@arthritis.ca of any changes to medical status or medications
- ✓ Complete the camp MAR and bring it to registration on day #1
- ✓ Talk to your child about homesickness if you think it will be an issue



LOCATION



Camp Limitless, our Manitoba camp is hosted at Camp Manitou in Headingley, Manitoba. With its forests, grass playing field, small man-made lake, NHL size hockey rink, cabins, gym, meeting spaces and the Assiniboine River on three sides, this 39-acre oasis provides lots of space in which to enjoy nature. For one week every summer, Camp Manitou offers its space to Arthritis Society Canada to put on an amazing week of camp for kids with arthritis.



ADDRESS: 850 Green Oaks Ln, Headingley, MB R4H 1C5
PHONE: [\(204\) 837-4508](tel:(204)837-4508)

Camper Drop-off & Pick-Up



Check-In and Check-Out

All campers will arrive at camp on Monday, July 21 between 10:00am - 10:30am and depart on Friday, July 25 between 10:00am-10:30pm. Arthritis Society Canada does not offer bus transportation to/from camp.

Please note: Campers will not be released to an unauthorized person. Verbal or written permission must be received by Arthritis Society Canada staff before we will release a child to anyone who is not authorized on the registration forms. ID must be provided upon camper pick-up.

Date	Location	Time
July 21	Camp Manitou 850 Green Oaks Ln, Headingley MB R4H 1C5	10:00 AM - 10:30 AM
July 25	Camp Manitou 850 Green Oaks Ln, Headingley MB R4H 1C5	10:00 AM - 10:30 AM

What to expect at registration

Authorized parents/guardians must drop-off their camper at Camp Manitou and show their ID to the Lead Bus Chaperone. You will be required to handover MARs and medications for your child with any instructions for transport to the camp nurse.

Upon return, authorized parents/guardians must show their ID to the Lead Bus Chaperone and all unused medications will be returned.





PRIOR TO CAMP

Please contact camp@arthritis.ca if...

- Your child has any symptom of covid-19, cold, flu, infection or contagion leading up to camp, as campers must not come to camp with these symptoms.
- Your child has been in contact with measles, chicken pox, whooping cough or any other communicable diseases within one month prior to the first day of camp.

These precautions are in place for the safety of our campers and their families due to the life-threatening implications any virus may have on their immunosuppressed health status. Should your child develop any symptoms of a virus/infection in the weeks following camp you should report this to your physician as soon as possible

Head Lice & Communicable Illnesses

Head lice and communicable illnesses are a common occurrence among children and spread rapidly. For this reason, we have a proactive head lice and communicable disease management protocol in place to prevent outbreaks. Please check your child for lice or nits before arriving to camp. Any child with lice, nits or a communicable illness will not be able to attend camp and the family must inform camp@arthritis.ca.



OUR VOLUNTEERS



Camp Volunteers

The heart of the camp – that’s the best way to describe our wonderful volunteers. Every year, Arthritis Society Canada recruits, screens and trains volunteers from across Manitoba to create a magical week for our campers. Our volunteers include camp counsellors and medical team members.

Arthritis Society Canada aims to create a safe and healthy experience for each camper and volunteer. We have designed mandatory training to ensure all volunteers feel comfortable in their positions at camp. This includes training from rheumatologists, social workers and occupational therapists on what it is like to live with childhood arthritis. Many of our volunteers live with arthritis and create endless opportunities for campers to learn and relate to others living with arthritis.

Elective Leads

Our elective activities are run by Camp Manitou employees. These staff members go through an intensive training period, led by Camp Manitou at the start of their camp season, and all have the required certifications to lead our various electives, including lifeguarding, swimming instruction, among others.



Arrival & Camp Life



Arrival

Your camper will be welcomed by Arthritis Society Canada's volunteer team and Camp Manitou's program staff. At camper drop-off, they will explain what's going to happen, provide cabin assignments and begin a luggage line to unload all bags and equipment. Medications and MARs will be collected by the Camp Nurse on duty.

Community Meeting

Once your camper has checked-in, everyone will gather in the main lodge for a community meeting. At this time, we go over camp rules and what we expect of the campers. We also explain our emergency procedures and other need-to-know information.

Tour

After the community meeting, campers will go for a tour of the area to familiarize themselves with their surroundings. Campers will then put their luggage in their assigned cabin.

Camper Teams

Campers will be divided into teams by age and gender, with a supervision ratio of 1:10 at all times. This may be adjusted depending on age ranges, program activities and requested additional support. Campers eat all meals, sleep in the same dorm area, and cycle through camp activities in their teams.

Camp Staff & Volunteers

Upon arrival, every camper will be assigned to a cabin group. Cabin groups are divided by age and gender and supported by two camp counsellors. This may be adjusted depending on age ranges, program activities and requested additional support. Campers sleep in the same cabin, and cycle through camp activities in their cabin groups. Meals and evening programs are enjoyed together, with the entire camp group. We maintains a supervision ratio of 1:10 at all times.

Meals

Camp provides three nutritious full meals each day, plus an afternoon and evening snack. Campers are not allowed to bring food to camp. Food in the cabins is an open invitation to unwanted visitors and can promote disharmony among cabin mates. Please discuss these reasons with your child to help us enforce this policy. All food items will be confiscated on the first day of camp and dealt with as the camp sees fit.

Emergency Procedures

Our Host Camp, Camp Manitou, has emergency procedures in place. All campers and group leads are informed about the camp safety and emergency procedures during their welcome and orientation.

LOCATION & ACTIVITIES



Host Camp

Camp Manitou runs a day camp that will run adjacent to our overnight camp. Camp Limitless has exclusive access to the Host Camp space after 5:00pm.



Cabins

Campers stay in comfortable cabins and sleep in bunk beds. The washroom and showers are located adjacent to the cabins. If your camper requires a bottom bunk and you have NOT already shared this information in their registration forms, please email camp@arthritis.ca.

Activities

Below is a list of SOME of the wonderful programming that camp has to offer:

- Swimming pool
- Land sports
- Arts and crafts
- Climbing wall
- Zip-line
- Ropes course
- Archery
- Canoe/Kayaking
- Mountain biking



A TYPICAL DAY AT CAMP



Example Schedule

Our goal is to provide a balance of group activities, education and independence building programs. Activities will vary daily and are subject to weather. We value the opportunity for children to connect with others living with arthritis and for them to become leaders, advocates and champions! Please note that the below schedule is a template and the activity content is subject to change.

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
7:00am					
7:30am		Wake up	Wake up	Wake up	Wake up
8:00am		Meds	Meds	Meds	Meds
8:30am		Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
9:00am		Arthritis Society Session	Arthritis Society Session	Arthritis Society Session	Cabin Clean-up and Pack up
9:30am	Arrival/Settle in				
10:00am	Meet with Kalyn/ Med info / Team Building	Activity One	Activity One	Activity One	Group Picture and Pick-up
11:00am	Activity One	Activity Two	Activity Two	Activity Two	
12:00pm	Lunch / Meds	Lunch / Meds	Lunch / Meds	Lunch / Meds	
1:00pm	Activity Two	Activity Three	Activity Three	Activity Three	
2:00pm	Activity Three	Activity Four	Activity Four	Activity Four	
3:00pm	Activity Four	Activity Five	Activity Five	Activity Five	
4:00pm	Cabin Time	Cabin Time	Cabin Time	Cabin Time	
5:00pm	Supper / Meds	Supper / Meds	Supper / Meds	Supper / Meds	
6:00pm	Gym Games	Evening Swim	Evening Activity of Choice	Evening Swim	
7:00pm	Crafts	Mural Painting	Movie Night	Giant Games	
8:00pm	Bonfire	Skits and Songs	Movie Night	Bonfire (S'mores)	
9:00pm	Snack, Meds, Showers, Cabin Time	Snack, Meds, Showers, Cabin Time	Snack, Meds, Showers, Cabin Time	Snack, Meds, Showers, Cabin Time	
10:00pm	Bed	Bed	Bed	Bed	

Golf carts are available to transport campers as needed



PACKING LIST



NOTE: Please limit your child's luggage to one carry-on, and two larger bags. Label everything.

Bedding, towels, and toiletries

- 1 flat and 1 fitted twin sheet set with warm blanket/comforter (single or cot size) or 1 fitted twin sheet with sleeping bag
- 1 pillow
- 2 towels (shower & swimming)
- 1 bottle shampoo, 1 bottle of conditioner, and 1 bottle of body wash
- 1 toothbrush, floss, and toothpaste
- 1 toiletry bag or bucket
- 1 hairbrush or comb
- 1 deodorant
- 1 bottle sunscreen (30 SPF minimum)
- 1 lip balm with sunscreen (30 SPF minimum)
- 1 bottle insect repellent (non-aerosol)
- Box feminine hygiene product (if applicable)
- Large laundry bag
- Reusable water bottle (MANDATORY)
- Box of Kleenex

Clothing & accessories

- 5 t-shirts
- 1 nice outfit OR alien-themed costume for last night of camp
- 2 sweatshirts or long-sleeved shirts
- 1 warm jacket
- 1 raincoat or poncho
- 3 pairs of pants
- 6 pairs of underwear
- 6 pairs of socks
- 2 bathing suits (camp appropriate)
- 2 pairs of pajamas
- 1 hat (MANDATORY)
- Sunglasses (MANDATORY)
- 1 pair of running shoes
- 1 pair of rain boots
- 1 flashlight



PACKING LIST



NOTE: Please limit your child's luggage to one carry-on, and two soft duffle bags.

Optional items

- Games (e.g. cards – nothing electronic)
- Reading material (books, comics)
- Baseball glove
- Battery-operated fan
- 1 stuffed animal
- Disposable camera
- Bathrobe
- Hand sanitizer and mask
- Pain management tools (e.g., heat/cold packs, TENS machine, etc.)
- 1 Journal and pen/pencil

Do NOT bring

- Items such as cash, candy, food, gum, pets, cell phones, stereos, electronic games, good jewelry or any other irreplaceable items should NOT be brought to camp.
- Clothing with inappropriate graphics or phrases.
- Prohibited items include, but aren't limited to, explosives, knives, drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.
- Cost to replace and/or repair equipment or property destroyed will not be assumed by Arthritis Society Canada but by the parent or guardian of the child responsible.





Medical Care

Our medical staff team consists of two registered nurses. Whether your camper is newly diagnosed or is approaching adulthood, our medical staff team work tirelessly to ensure your camper will get the most out of the camp experience. The camp medical team is responsible for overseeing the holistic health care of the camp. These professionals are available 24-hours a day to care for the campers and staff and are an essential component of the camp team. All medications (except puffers and epi-pens as indicated) are kept and administered by the camp nursing team. No medications are permitted in the cabins. All medication times are accommodated at camp. As such, it is imperative that we have updated medical & medication on file. If there have been any changes to your campers medical status or medication list please contact camp@arthritis.ca immediately. In the event of an injury or illness that needs further attention, the camper will be taken to a local hospital. If indicated, the camp medical team will also make recommendations to send campers home.

Health and Well-Being of Campers

Our medical team is onsite to help manage your child's health and well-being throughout their time at camp. Any emotional, behavioural or medical issues that arise will be managed by the at-camp medical team, and camp lead. If your child needs to be sent home due to safety, behavioral or health concerns, you will be contacted to come pick up your child. Arthritis Society Canada cannot provide transportation home. If a child or teen experiences suicidal ideation or self-harm behaviours, parents or guardians will be contacted to immediately pick up the camper to ensure their safety.

Medicine and Treatment

Medications, including prescription and non-prescription drugs, PRN medications and vitamins MUST be in blister packages. This is MANDATORY so please plan ahead. Please only provide the proper dosage for the duration of the camp program. All medications will be collected at the bus site at the time of check-in or at camp upon arrival by camp volunteers. You will also be required to print out and bring an updated Arthritis Society Canada MAR to bus registration. Please do NOT pack medication in camper's luggage.

It is imperative that any updates, from the time of registration to your camper's medications, doses, administration time, are communicated with us prior to camp. Please contact camp@arthritis.ca to report any medication adjustments. This is a non-negotiable request. All parents/guardians are required to verify that their camper's medications are up-to-date at registration at drop off.

REMINDER: If the child carries their own medication (eg. Puffer, Epi-Pen) a note from a legally-qualified medical practitioner or a nurse registered under the Health Disciplines Act should indicate that the child may carry and administer their own medication. A copy of the doctor's note must be provided at Registration to be kept on file. Each medication requires a separate medication form (e.g. 2 Puffers require 2 forms).



Homesick Campers

Our counsellors are trained to recognize the symptoms associated with homesick campers. Efforts will be made to console campers and assist them in developing coping strategies. The following guidelines will be used to address homesick campers:

- Encouraged not to call home until 48 hours have passed
- If a camper is still homesick after two nights and reasonable efforts by camp staff have been exhausted, parents may be contacted to pick up their camper.

Arthritis Society Canada does not provide transportation home for homesick campers.

Food Services

Balanced meals are prepared and served by the food service staff for each meal. If your child has any special dietary needs that were indicated on their registration forms, these needs will be met at camp. If a camper refuses to eat for an extended period of time, the camper will be required to leave camp in order to ensure their health and safety.

Cabin Life

Cabin groups are arranged by age/grade/gender. We do our best to ensure all cabin-mates are within one year or grade of each other. Your camper is expected to maintain an acceptable level of manners, behaviour and attitude in their group to create a positive living environment

Overall Expectations

Campers are expected to participate in assigned activities, adhere to lights out/curfew and respect others. Failure to comply will result in dismissal from camp.

Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco

There will be no possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, illegal drugs or weapons before, during or after the camp experience while on camp grounds. Failure to comply will result in dismissal from camp.

Harassment

As outlined in the Camper Code of Conduct that was signed during your registration process, all camp participants will refrain from any bullying, hazing, harassment or similar behavior. Failure to comply will result in dismissal from camp.

Visitors & Phone Calls

Once your child arrives at camp, they will begin the experience of making new friendships and participating in camp activities. Since the camp program is only a short time, we want your child to take advantage of every moment. Visits or phone calls from family members will take away from that experience and possibly lead to homesickness. If we need to speak with you during the camp program, we will contact you immediately.



Bullying at Camp

At Arthritis Society Canada Camps, bullying is inexcusable. We have a firm policy against bullying.

Our camp philosophy is based on our mission statement to ensure that every camper has the opportunity to build friendships with peers who experience the same health challenges, learn about their disease, and discuss coping skills, enhance their self-confidence, gain a sense of independence, and have a TON of fun! We work as a team to ensure that campers gain self-confidence, make new friends, and go home with great memories. Unfortunately, bullying takes away from the camp experience.

Our leadership addresses all incidents of bullying seriously. Staff are trained to promote open communication with their volunteers and their campers so they feel comfortable alerting us to any problems during their camp experience and between camp seasons. If a camper bullies another camper, they will be asked to stop, and provided strategies to change their behaviour. If their behaviour does not change, Arthritis Society Canada may ask the camper to leave the program. If this occurs, parents/guardians are responsible for picking up their camper from camp.

Lost & Found

Please remember to label every item of clothing, in order to help ensure that they return home with your child. After two weeks, unclaimed items will be donated to Goodwill.



Sun at Camp

At camp, the safety of our campers is our first priority. As part of its ongoing risk management program, camp has a sun safety policy to help protect our campers while enjoying time outside. We encourage parents to talk to campers about the risks of overexposure to sun and the importance of wearing sunscreen, hats and sunglasses.

Our volunteers will participate in training regarding sun safety before campers arrive. Campers will be expected to wear hats, apply sunscreen and drink water regularly. Please send sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher) to camp with your camper so that they will be ready to reapply throughout the day.





UNPLUG AT CAMP

We have a strict “no cell phone” policy at camp. This includes electronic devices with the capability to play games, videos, and/or connect to the internet, which are not permitted to camp even if these features are disabled.

Aside from the fact that cell phones are expensive and can get lost, or that the physical camp environment is not kind to such items, these items discourage the positive interactions in the bunk that are a big part of the camp experience. The “downtimes” at camp are a great opportunity for campers to shape the strong bonds and share their experience living with arthritis. Campers who are “tuned out” are missing out on this. Your understanding and support of this policy helps us ensure campers have an engaging summer camp experience. As such, we request that all cell phones stay at home. If your camper decides to bring their cell phone camp, it will be held in the camp office for the duration of the camp.

While we discourage the use of cell phones at camp, small, lightweight and inexpensive digital cameras are allowed, along with their chargers and preferably waterproof cases. Cameras that are large, bulky or with removable lenses are strongly discouraged. iPods or devices that store music ONLY are also acceptable. Arthritis Society Canada Camps and our Host Camps are NOT responsible for damage/loss of devices or cameras at camp.

WHAT NOT TO BRING TO CAMP

The following items are not allowed at camp:

- Alcohol, drugs not prescribed to the camper, tobacco products, cannabis
- Knives, including camping or Swiss army knives
- Valuable or precious items
- Matches or lighters
- Food - To reduce the risk of attracting bugs or mice, please refrain from bring any food into the cabin.
- Non-medical electronic devices, with the exception of digital cameras.





CAMPER CODE OF CONDUCT

Our Camper Code of Conduct is our guide to ensure the enjoyment and safety of all campers! This document should have been previously read and signed by both parent/guardian and campers during the registration process. This document is **MANDATORY**, and it details specific behavioural expectations required to attend camp, including a list of our summer camp rules and disciplinary procedures. Camp can be one of the best experiences for a child! We work hard to ensure safety and quality fun at camp, but we will only be successful if everyone who comes to Camp Manitou plays a part. Please make sure to review the following expectations with your camper ahead of the camp week.

Our expectation of you, the camper, is simple: Treat yourself, your peers, your chaperones, the facilities, and the program planned with the highest amount of respect. Everyone is responsible for making their time at camp a success!

Treating yourself with respect includes:

- Getting enough sleep at night;
- Practicing healthy hygiene (showering, brushing teeth, frequent hand washing, etc.);
- Seeking help from your counsellors if you are experiencing any sort of social, emotional, physical or mental distress;
- Dressing appropriately for the weather outside.

Treating your peers and chaperones with respect includes:

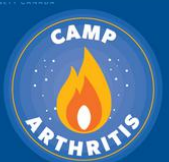
- Listening to others when they speak;
- Being honest with others;
- Allowing others to get enough sleep at night;
- Referring to your peers and chaperones by their pronouns;
- Communicating with your counsellors if you are feeling unwell to prevent the spread of contagion.

Treating the facility with respect includes:

- Keeping the dorms and buildings clean and in their original state;
- Keeping noise to an appropriate level, especially at night and during meal times;
- Refraining from eating in dorms, leaving garbage, damaging furniture;
- Leaving our natural environment as we found it.

Treating the program planned with respect includes:

- Try everything at least once;
- Try to learn something new;
- Work as a team to complete activities.





Leaving home for the first time – without your parents/guardians – is a big developmental step. To help your child get ready for camp, listen well to their worries and then assure them that a little homesickness is normal at the beginning. It helps to hear that it happens to lots of people! We believe that the camp experience is one of the most wonderful gifts that you could ever give to your child and while preparation for the first-time camper may be somewhat overwhelming, please know that in the end, it is most certainly worth it! Here are some tips that we hope will help eliminate some of the unexpected curves on this new journey.

1. Honest Communication

Before camp, there needs to be an open and honest discussion with Arthritis Society Canada staff about any special circumstances that might impact the success of your camper's summer. Bedwetting, a recent divorce, routine medications, sleepwalking and other personal information are treated with utmost confidentiality. It is crucial that together we strategize and have a proper plan in place.

2. Promises, Promises...

Avoid promising to pick up your camper early if they are having a "bad time". It makes it easier for them to focus on leaving than it is to jump into the routine and put in the emotional energy to see it through. Overcoming homesickness builds wonderful skills - resiliency, confidence and a sense of accomplishment.

3. Have a "Test" Sleepover

Some first-time campers have never slept away from home. Going to Camp shouldn't be "the practice run"! Make arrangements with a family or friend to have a sleepover without their parent/guardian present. It may be uncomfortable and unfamiliar the first time out, practice does make perfect.

4. Stop and Shop

Have a fun outing! Take your campers with you to have them choose camp items, a camp costume, a new pair of terrain appropriate shoes, or a brand-new hoodie to keep the mosquitoes at bay. Having tangible symbols of their adventures to come will help to further invest them in the camp experience.

5. Discuss Expectations

Many parents respond to their child's fear of camp by reassuring them that there is nothing to worry about. It's best to prepare your camper for how they might feel the first few days and nights away from home. They need to know that it's perfectly normal to miss family, familiar routines, the comfort of home and to find it difficult falling asleep. Brainstorm strategies that you know work best for your child.

6. A Quick and Happy Good-bye

Arrival day is a soup-pot of emotions for both campers and parents. However, it is up to the parents to exhibit confidence and speak reassuringly. The camper may well interpret a tearful goodbye from the parents as "I don't really want you to go". So, kiss them goodbye and leave in good spirits!



YEAR-ROUND PROGRAMS



Club Sunrise is a free virtual club that connects Canadian children ages 5-17 living with arthritis and other rheumatic conditions. Club activities range from cooking classes, to scavenger hunts, to dance parties, to Parent Nights to everything in between.

BACKPACK PROGRAM



Launched in March 2013, the Backpack Program delivers a FREE backpack filled with information and tools to families of children ages 4-12 who have been newly diagnosed with arthritis, helping them lead healthier, more fulfilling lives. Ask your rheumatologist for a voucher.

PARENT NIGHT



Join Mireille and Debbie who, just like you, are parents of kids with rheumatic disease. Through quarterly, virtual Parent Nights they are creating a community of parents who “get it” and are able to support each other in a unique and invaluable way. ALL parents/guardians are welcome!

**Scan the QR Code
to learn more!**



CONTACT



Jessica Caldwell
Manager, Childhood Arthritis
Programming
Arthritis Society Canada

Email: camp@arthritis.ca
Phone: (647) 730-9026 ext. 3384

