

Camper Guide

JULY 2026



LETTER TO CAMPERS & FAMILIES



Hello Camper and family,

Welcome to Arthritis Society Canada's BC camp— we are so excited to welcome you this summer!

Here, there's no need to explain what it's like to manage symptoms during a school day, or why some mornings are harder than others. Everyone gets it. From the moment you arrive, you'll be surrounded by people who understand your journey because they're on it too.

For campers: This is your week to be yourself, fully, and without explanation. Make friends who know what you're going through without having to ask. Take your medication without feeling different. Dance around the campfire, try new activities, challenge yourself, and create memories that'll last long after camp ends. You'll bunk with other kids who share your experiences and alongside counsellors who are there to support you every step of the way.

For families: We know that sending your child to camp can bring a mix of excitement and questions. To help you feel as confident about this experience as we are, we've created a comprehensive guide. Inside, you'll find everything from daily schedules and medical protocols to packing lists and camper care policies. We encourage you to read through it together, as it's designed to paint a clear picture of the incredible week ahead.

Arthritis Society Canada believes every child and youth living with arthritis in Canada deserves the transformative experience of summer camp. A place where they can focus on being kids, not patients. Where independence grows. Where friendships form over shared understanding, not shared limitations.

We're here for you: As you review the guide, questions will naturally arise. Maybe lots of them. That's exactly what we want. Please reach out to us at camp@arthritis.ca or call me at 604.317.2294. No question is too small, and no concern is too minor. We believe peace of mind starts before you pack, so please don't hesitate to connect with us.

We're thrilled you are a part of 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
- ✓ Review 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 with you to camp on day #1
- ✓ Talk to your child about homesickness if you think it will be an issue



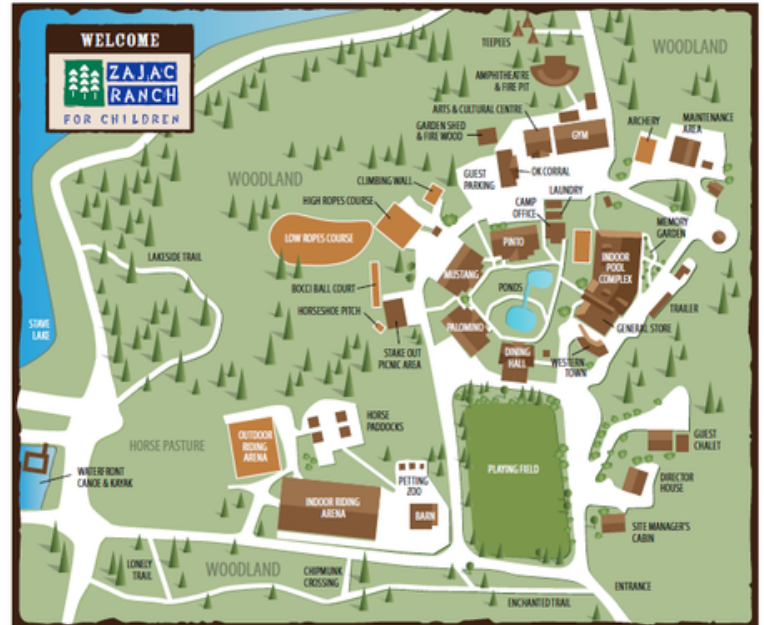
LOCATION



Our British Columbia camp is hosted at Zajac Ranch. Located on the scenic shores of Stave Lake in Mission, BC, Zajac Ranch offers 44 acres of stunning wilderness, along with all the modern amenities you need for the perfect camp experience. For one week every summer, Arthritis Society Canada and Zajac Ranch collaborate put on an amazing week of camp for kids with arthritis. Please note that the gravel road into Zajac Ranch is in quite good condition, but long (very long). Just keep driving!



**15600 Florence Lake Rd
Mission, BC V4S 1C4
PHONE: 604. 462. 8305**



FROM Vancouver (APPROX 1.5 HOURS)

- Take Trans-Canada Hwy/BC-1 E, Mary Hill Bypass/BC-7B, Lougheed Hwy./BC-7 E and Dewdney Trunk Rd to Burma St/Florence Lake Forest Service Rd in Mission
- Head northeast on Hornby St toward W Georgia St/BC-1A/BC-99 N
- Turn right onto W Georgia St/BC-1A/BC-99 S
- Use the middle lane to turn slightly right onto the ramp to Historic Chinatown
- Use the left lane to turn right onto Main St/BC-1A/BC-99A S
- Turn left onto Terminal Ave
- Continue onto E 1st Ave
- Use the right lane to take the BC-1 E/TC ramp
- Merge onto Trans-Canada Hwy/BC-1 E
- Use the right 2 lanes to take exit 44 for British Columbia 7B E/British Columbia 7 E toward Coquitlam City Centre/Maple Ridge
- Use the left 2 lanes to take the BC-7B E ramp to Maple Ridge/United Blv
- Continue onto Mary Hill Bypass/BC-7B
- Use the left 2 lanes to merge onto Lougheed Hwy./BC-7 E via the ramp to Pitt Meadows/Maple Ridge/Mission
- Use the left 2 lanes to turn left onto Dewdney Trunk Rd
- Follow Florence Lake Forest Service Rd to your destination
- Turn left onto Burma St/Florence Lake Forest Service Rd
- Continue to follow Florence Lake Forest Service Rd
- Turn right onto Florence Lake Rd
- Destination will be on the left
- Zajac Ranch for Children, 15600 Florence Lake Rd, Mission, BC V4S 1C4



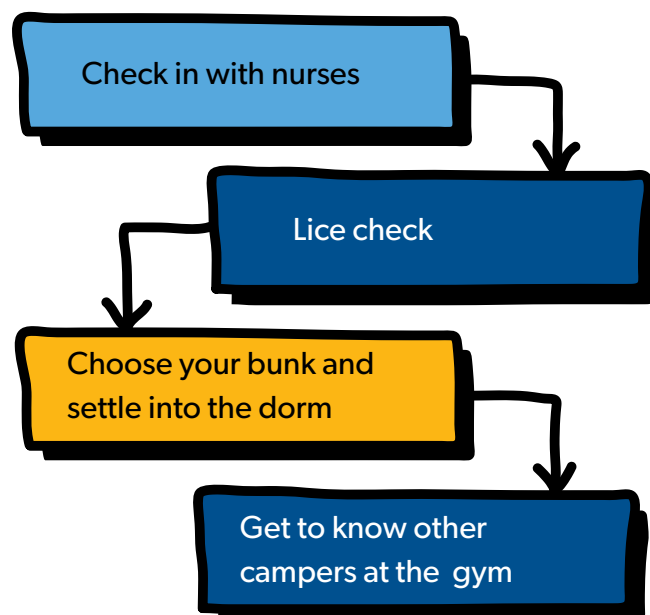
Check-In and Check-Out

All campers will arrive at camp on Sunday, July 5 and depart on Thursday, July 9. More details on the camper arrival and departure processes will be provided via email ahead of camp. Please expect an afternoon drop-off and pick-up on both days. Please note that Arthritis Society Canada does not provide transportation to/from camp.

What to expect at registration

Authorized parents/guardians must drop-off their camper at camp and show their ID to the camp nurses. You will be required to handover MARs and medications for your camper.

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





PRIOR TO CAMP

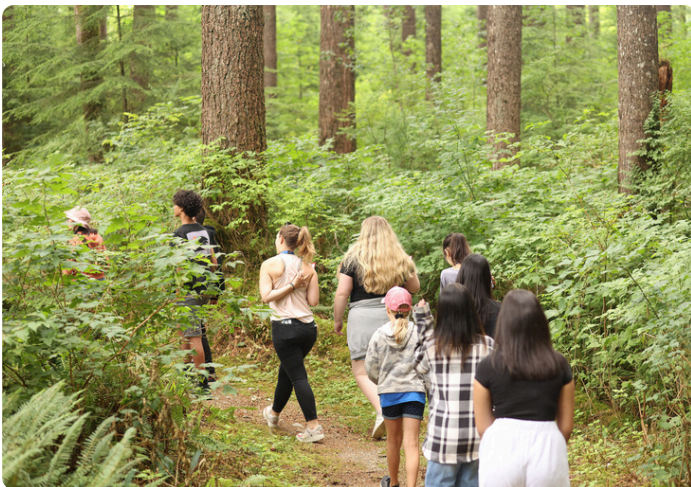
Please contact camp@arthritis.ca if

- Your child has any symptom of Covid-19, cold, flu, infection or other contagious illness 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 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 all over BC to create a magical week for our campers. Our volunteers include camp counsellors and medical team members.

Arthritis Society Canada works with Zajac Ranch 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. All our camp counsellors live with arthritis and are open and willing to share their experiences and answer questions if your camper has any.

Activity Leads

Our activities are primarily run by Zajac Ranch employees. These staff members go through an intensive training period, led by Zajac Ranch 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 Zajac Ranch's program staff. At registration check-in, they will explain what's going to happen, provide camper team assignment and begin a luggage line to unload all bags and equipment. Medications will be labelled and checked in at this time by the camp nurses.

Zajac staff will conduct a lice check on campers and then campers can get settled into their bunks (family members are welcome to help them get settled).

Community Meeting

Once your camper has checked-in, everyone will gather together for a community meeting. At this time, we go over Zajac Ranch's values and discuss 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 rooms.

Camper Groups

Campers will be divided into groups 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 and cycle through camp activities in their teams.

Camp Staff & Volunteers

Each group has a consistent group of camp counsellors that are there to support them for the week. The program staff facilitate the different camp activities, provide overnight supervision and are trained in Standard First-Aid and CPR. All staff at Zajac Ranch work hard to ensure the well-being, safety, and success of each camper.

Meals

Groups will meet Zajac staff in the dining hall who will welcome the campers inside to wash their hands and take a seat. Staff will make announcements before sending campers up to get food. Each table is responsible for clearing their plates and cleaning their table.

Emergency Procedures

Our host camp, Zajac Ranch, 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



Nursing games

Our medical team comes up with some crazy games and activities for campers to enjoy. Be prepared to be goofy!



Dorms

Campers stay in comfortable heated lodges and sleep in bunk beds. The washroom and showers are single occupancy, shared with other campers. 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-lining
- High ropes course
- Archery



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!

Arthritis Society July 5-9					
Time	Sunday July 5	Monday July 6	Tuesday July 7	Wednesday July 8	Thursday July 9
Morning		Breakfast High Ropes Low Ropes Archery	Breakfast Canoeing/Kayaking Volleyball	Breakfast Skynet Escape Room	Breakfast Cabin Cleanup Sign t-shirts
	Home time at 10-10:30 a.m.				
12:40-1:40	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	
Afternoon	Icebreaker activity	High Ropes Low Ropes Archery	Game Free Time	Game Free Time	
	Pool Time	Pool Time	Pool Time	Pool Time	
5:50-6:50	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	
Evening	Fellow's Night Campfire with Smores Bedtime	Jeopardy Campfire Bedtime	Young Adult Panel Game Campfire	Final Night at Camp Bedtime	

PACKING LIST



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

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 for last night of camp (dress up)
- 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, 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 and anything that could be considered a weapon, 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 registered nurses, a physiotherapist and occupational therapist. 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. 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 on site to help manage your child's health and well-being throughout their time at camp. Any emotional, behavioral or medical issues that arise will be managed by the 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 camper 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.

Dorm Life

Campers sleep in dorm style bunks based on gender. Your camper is expected to play an important role in creating a welcoming environment by demonstrating respect, consideration, and a positive attitude within their group.

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 camp, 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. Quite simply, 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

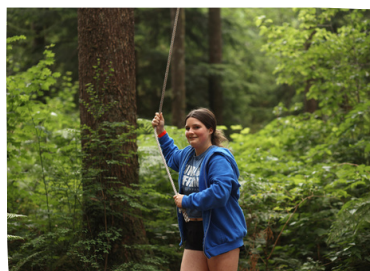
Please remember to label every item of clothing, in order to help ensure that they return home with your child. After two weeks, unclaimed items will be donated to charity.



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

Our summer camps are designed to provide campers with authentic experiences, meaningful face-to-face connections, and a healthy break from digital distractions. While we encourage a technology-free environment, we recognize that complete disconnection is not realistic in today's culture and may cause anxiety for some campers.

If a camper chooses to bring their cell phone or another electronic device to camp, it may only be used during rest hours (designated quiet time) and before bedtime (for listening to music/podcasts with headphones). Cell phones and electronic devices are not permitted during program activities and meals, any time outside cabins, or during any group activities. Additionally, campers are not permitted to take photos of other campers without consent.

There will be no warnings if campers do not abide by this policy. If a camper uses their device outside of this policy, it will be confiscated and held in the medical centre for the duration of camp.

Please note that Arthritis Society Canada and our host camps assume no responsibility for lost, stolen, or damaged cell phones or electronic devices. Campers bring devices entirely at their own risk.

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.



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 Zajac Ranch 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 illness.

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.

Thank you to our wonderful donors! Because of donor support, camp is free.



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!**





Jessica Caldwell
Manager, Childhood Arthritis
Programming
Arthritis Society Canada

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

