

July 25, 2014

Summer Literacy Camp Helping Sooke Kids Get Ahead



Now in its fourth year, the Play and Learn Summer Camp is in full effect. The camp, located in Sooke, aims to provide a rich play-based learning experience for children ages six to nine. They are immersed in a variety of literacy activities (reading, math, and physical education) to expand their academic skills and self-confidence. With the help of Telus, Vancity, Coast Capital, the Vancouver Foundation, and many local supporters, the EMCS Society was able to offer the camp free of charge to 24 Sooke region students.

This four-week long, interactive camp improves the literacy skills of its participants year after year. On average, last year's campers increased their reading skills by 27% - similar results are expected this year as well. With help from 4 engaging and passionate camp leaders, and 3 youth assistants, there is a lot of individual attention for each student. The children participate in educational field trips, which also helps them bond with their classmates. They play inclusive games that are fun, hands-on, and have Aboriginal components.

It is a learning experience for the children, but also for the camp leaders. Sarah Staszkiel said that her favorite part of working with the children is "seeing their faces light up with joy when an exercise clicks for them. Even if they are behind academically, they are still very excited about learning." Matthew Miller, another camp assistant, expressed that the goal of the camp is to "enhance the learning for the kids and create a routine, so that they can get ahead in the summer months."

Spending time with the camp is energizing. The children are actively learning and engaged in their work. They are making new friends and preparing for a strong start to the next school year.

For the full report and more information about the camp, please visit www.emcsprograms.ca