



Edmund Rice  
Camps



# 2021

# Referral Guide

# Edmund Rice Camps QLD

Edmund Rice Camps Queensland (ERCQLD) is a not-for-profit organization that exists to respond to the needs of children experiencing marginalisation and social isolation in the community.

At ERCQLD we believe that every child deserves a happy, and safe childhood. We strive to create a world where children who have experienced childhood adversity and trauma can thrive and belong by creating a space where they can just be kids.

We provide a variety of group-based, recreational activities, including week-long and weekend camps and follow up day programs for participants who otherwise could not afford or access opportunities like this.

It is our priority to encourage sustainable change and development within communities, by promoting resilience, a sense of purpose, and aspirations for the future in every child, adolescent, and adult that attends our programs. We are also committed to the personal growth and development of all young adult volunteers, who serve as friends and mentors to those in our care.

Our programs typically take place during school holidays and are designed and implemented by young adult volunteers. All of our programs have a 1:1 ratio of volunteer leaders to participants. This high ratio enables us to provide intensive support and enrichment for all of our participants – each with their own abilities, needs and circumstances. For example, they may be living in out-of-home care, have a disability and/or mental health issue, come from a very low-resource household, are living with a family member with a disability or mental health issue, are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, or are from a migrant, refugee or asylum seeker background.

We encourage referring agencies and community organisations to refer the children and families they have in mind, with an open, honest and strength-based approach. Please enjoy this helpful guide on our referral process, and as always, don't hesitate to ask questions.

We look forward to working with you in the future.

## Our Program Ethos

### A Kid First Focus

In every aspect of our programs, we operate with a child first mentality to deliver quality over quantity for participants.

Whether that is our volunteers stepping outside of their comfort zone to make a child laugh or in our focus on Child Protection and Safeguarding, ERCQLD is always child first.

### Diverse Activities

Every program is tailored to its location, and to the volunteer participants attending.

Each program will include sports, arts and crafts, as well as activities like swimming, high ropes, canoeing and other team building activities, where volunteers affirm the unique and positive qualities of each child on camp.

### 1:1 Ratios

All of our programs have a 1:1 ratio of volunteer leaders to participants.

This enables us to provide a fun and safe environment for every child; a unique experience that builds self-esteem and confidence, and promotes appropriate socialisation with others. We are committed to developing a positive relationship with each child.

## Types of Programs

Program Type	Length	Demographics
Traditional Camps	4 days, 3 nights	10 - 13 years
Hybrid Camps	3 days, 2 nights	14 - 16 years
Family Camps	4 days, 3 nights	Whole family unit
Head2Heart	2 days, 1 night	8 - 10 years

## **Camp Participants**

Places on our programs are open to children and families who may be experiencing some form of disadvantage, marginalisation or adversity such as:

- Social or economic disadvantage
- Financial or emotional hardship
- Social or geographical isolation
- Young people who would not otherwise be able to access such an experience

It is important to understand that no behavior, medication, or situation is a reason to deny someone access to our programs. We are happy to support anyone that needs it, within our capacity. Our organisation is supported by passionate volunteers and this is a major consideration when accepting children onto a program. It is largely dependent on how many experienced volunteers we have for that camp, the make-up of genders, and our capacity to support the people we accept, without overwhelming volunteers and placing them, children and our organisation at risk.

## **Guarantees**

Places on camp will be allocated and prioritised on a needs basis, and we will consider each referral equally based on the number of places we have available. We often receive more referrals than places available on camp. It is therefore very important that referral forms contain an appropriate level of information to demonstrate the reasons for referral to a program.

## **Fees**

Referring agencies of successful applicants will receive an invoice with their letter of acceptance. In most cases, agencies will cover the cost of the camp fee, and will be issued an invoice after the child's place on camp has been confirmed.

The participant fee will go towards covering activity costs, accommodation, travel expenses, and catering for the participant(s) over the course of the camp program.

Current fees are as follows:

- \$250 for a Week- long Camp (per participant per camp)
- \$25 for an overnight Head2Heart Camp (per participant per camp)

Please note, should a participant cancel their place on camp with less than 4 business days' notice, they will be charged 50% of the camp fee, to cover our administrative costs. The referral agency needs to be prepared to ensure fees can be paid.

## How to Refer to ERCQLD

Each referral form must be completed by a non-relative who holds a position of responsibility or qualification, such as a Caseworker, Social Worker, Psychologist or Teacher. It is expected that this person knows the referred child well enough to comment on their suitability for an Edmund Rice Camps program.

The purpose of you seeking and signing the referral form is to ensure, as far as practicable, that the safety of the referred child, as well as the other camp participants and the staff is not compromised by accepting a referred child who might demonstrate behaviour that is inappropriate and beyond the ordinary capacity of an Edmund Rice Camps program.

All referral forms must have a completed, and signed, Conditions of Placement – Referrer, and Parent/Guardians Statement for a referred child to be considered for an Edmund Rice Camps program.

### Step 1: Be comfortable with the Referral Guide

Once you've read through this document, and you're happy with everything, you are good to go. Please never hesitate to give us a call or email to clarify any questions.

### Step 2: Complete a Referral Form

All of our referral forms are completed on our website. Once you head to our website, [www.ercampsqld.org](http://www.ercampsqld.org) make your way to the 'Refer a Child' page. There are 3 options.

- **Option 1:** if you would just like to receive information and updates when programs are available, subscribe to our mailing list.
- **Option 2:** If you have a specific child in mind, but not a specific program, please complete the 'Waiting List' form. This is our full referral form, and once it is completed, you won't need to do it again once the child is placed on a program.
- **Option 3:** If you are from a Partner organisation and have a specific program allocated, please select 'Refer to a Program'. This form is our full referral form as well, but allows you to select a specific program.

### Step 4: Confirmation of placement

Once we have received and approved your referral form along with confirmation of payment, we will confirm your client's placement on our program, and provide any relevant information for the program including what to bring and any other logistical information.

### Step 5: Your client is on camp

Please work with us to support your client on camp by ensuring that all relevant information is passed on to the client prior to their camp experience.

## Safeguarding

At ERCQLD we are continuously seeking to engage in best practice which works to prevent and minimise the risk of harm to children and adults who engage with any services run by, or in collaboration with ERCQLD. We seek to ensure that all those who hold a duty of care towards children are aware of their responsibilities to respond to safety concerns that arise. We do this through our Safeguarding Policy and accompanying Safeguarding Principles:

### Zero tolerance of abuse

Abuse towards a child or adult is not tolerated. The welfare and best interests of the child and adult are paramount.

### Existence of risk for children

ERCQLD acknowledges that barriers to child safety still exist within our society and, for that reason, persistent efforts to safeguard children and adults from harm are required.

### Shared responsibility

Child protection is everyone's responsibility, to ensure that a culture of safety is fostered and maintained within the organisation and its associated services.

### Professional responses

All concerns regarding the safety, development or wellbeing of a child or adult will be managed with a high degree of professionalism and appropriate confidentiality will be maintained. Our practices seek to ensure that all parties involved in the process will be appropriately supported.

### Diversity respected

All individuals are unique and will be treated equally and fairly. The views of children and others are highly valued. Everyone has the right to be safe regardless of any diverse factors such as attributes, socio-economic status, nationality, sex, culture, ethnicity, beliefs, health, or any other status.

### Accountability

Processes related to effective documentation, monitoring, and review procedures are practiced that support and inform management and staff to ensure their safeguarding roles and responsibilities are being conducted to the best of their ability.

By working to uphold these principles and/or rights, we are seeking to recognise and demonstrate genuine respect for the inherent value, dignity, and worth of all. Through this commitment, we are also demonstrating respect for basic human rights as this is the cornerstone of developing strong communities in which every member feels safe and secure, together with having a sense of connectedness and belonging.

# FAQs

## **How are participants selected for a camp placement?**

ERCQLD considers every referral for camp – we do not work on a 'first in, first served' basis. Our camps are run by volunteers and one paid staff member. We assess the needs of all the children who have been referred, and best match children to our volunteers' skill and experience levels. All referrals submitted before closing date, and meeting ERCQLD conditions of placement, will be considered for a place on camp.

## **How many new referrals will you take for each camp?**

ERCQLD believe it's important to provide continued service provision to our children. For this reason we have many participants return to camps each year. We have a maximum of 50% new children on each camp program. ERCQLD always receive more referrals than we have placements on camp; if your referral is not accepted this camp season please try again for the next camp.

## **Why do you require an agency after hours contact number?**

ERCSA works with vulnerable children, and we require 24/7 access to a professional who works closely with the child and can provide information in the case of a child protection disclosure. It is only used as a last resort, and our policy means we are unable to accept a referral without this number.

## **The agency I work for doesn't provide an afterhours number, how can I still refer this child?**

We recommend you speak to the school the child attends; often they will have a school counsellor who can provide after-hours contact for the duration of the camp program. Otherwise, source another agency working with the family who can provide an afterhour's contact number. This can include a therapist or doctor, as long as they are familiar with the disadvantage the family faces, and can provide detailed information on the child.

## **What will the children experience on camp?**

Activities on camp encourage children to work as a team or to challenge themselves to try something new in a safe and supportive environment. While each camp will offer different experiences there are some key activities that are repeated across camps.

These might include:

Swimming

Adventure activities

Various arts and crafts

Outdoor games and sports

Obstacle courses

Talent show

Team games

Face painting

Candle Sharing - giving children the opportunity to say something positive about one of their peers, and hear something positive in return

# Contact



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