



CISV Toronto Delegation Handbook 2024

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Welcome

Welcome to the world of CISV! CISV is a global movement dedicated to educating and inspiring action for peace. We believe that we can help change the world by providing life-changing experiences and building friendships that last a lifetime.

All CISV educational programmes are organized and run by dedicated volunteers. We aim to help our participants of all ages to develop the skills they need to take a lead and make a positive difference. At the heart of everything we do is friendship, in line with our founding belief that peace is possible through friendship and mutual understanding.

Key Dates

To prepare you and your delegation for your CISV experience, there will be mandatory chapter events (listed below) and a series of delegation planning meetings specific for your group that you will be scheduling.



It is very important to set these dates aside on your calendars to allow the delegation to fully prepare. Time flies - so plan ahead accordingly.

Jan 13, 2024	Welcome Back Party	all parents and youth
Feb 2, 2024	Cookie-a-Thon, AGM, Meet the Leaders	All parents and youth
February 24, 2024	Coldest Night of the Year fundraiser	one parent and youth
May 10-12, 2024	Spring MiniCamp	youth
June 9, 2024	Send off Picnic	One parent and youth
Sept 2024	Welcome Back Gathering	one parent and youth

Chapter Contacts

Chapter Chair	Jamie VanWiechen	chair@cisvtoronto.org
Risk Chair	Lorraine Spekkens	riskmanagement@cisvtoronto.org
Volunteer Chair	Irene Lara Corrales	volunteering@cisvtoronto.org
Leadership Chair	Sandra Chen	leadership@cisvtoronto.org
Programs Chair	Charmaine Grenke	programs@cisvtoronto.org
Village Coordinator	Farah Namazi	cisv.villagetoronto@gmail.com

What is a Board Buddy?

The Board Buddy is a chapter member who serves on the board of CISV Toronto and has had experience with CISV. Your delegation's Board Buddy works with the leader to guide parents on expectations and acts as a liaison between the delegation and the chapter. Your Board Buddy can be a board member parent who is already a part of your delegation or if not, will be assigned to your delegation. This person can help answer questions you may have that the leader may not have answers to and can provide different perspectives and context to help with your experience.

Board Buddies

Village			
Costa Rica	V-2024-012	Charmaine Grenke	programs@cisvtoronto.org
Youth Meeting			
Medellin, Columbia	Y-2024-004	Irene Lara-Corrales	irelaraco@gmail.com
StepUp			
Oppland, Norway	C-2024-028	Jamie Van Wiechen	chair@cisvtoronto.org
Toronto, Canada	C-2024-010	Nicole Lee	nicolecelesteelee531@gmail.com

Risk Management

CISV is committed to ensuring that the safety of each child in our care is paramount.

CISV's Child Protection Policy and Procedures are updated regularly. You can access it at <https://cisv.org/resources/risk-management-travel-insurance/child-protection/>.

In addition, a full risk assessment is conducted at the start of every CISV program.

A valid police check is necessary in order to volunteer with youth in CISV. A police check is required for every person aged 18 years and older in your house. If you have not completed the police check form, please contact CISV Toronto's risk managers listed on the key contacts section of this handbook or talk to your Board Buddy.

My Child's Leader

Your Delegation Leader plays an important role you're your entire delegation and for your child. They will help the delegation prepare for programme specific activities and they will be the legal guardian of your child while at the experience.

CISV Leaders are carefully selected by our chapter leadership training team. Each selected Leader will attend leadership training at the chapter and national level. This training familiarizes the Leader with CISV, the goals of the organization and addresses practical items such as:

- Cultural Sensitivity
- Conflict Management

- Risk Management
- Programme Planning and Evaluation
- Programme Specific Information

Your Leader is your first point of contact for any concerns / questions you have regarding your programme. It is important to remember that each CISV Leader is a volunteer and is not compensated for their time.

It is important to remember your child's Leader may look after or take care of youth in a different way than you. If there are specific expectations you want to ensure are maintained, ensure you discuss this with the Leader ahead of time. However, it is also important to have flexibility and allow your child the opportunity to experience CISV in their own way.

Preparing your Child for being away for an Extended Period

If your child has never been away from home without a parent or other family member, it is important to start conversations now with your child about their experience and potential homesickness. It is important to stress that homesickness is normal and not something to be feared or ashamed of. Build up the excitement in the opportunity to participate in CISV.

You may wish to start planning a few sleepovers with friends if they have not had any yet. This will give them an opportunity to experience falling asleep in a different house than their own.

Before the Programme

Delegation Meetings

Each delegation should plan to meet **at least** once a month between now and their departure.

Some of these meetings will be just for the youth delegates while others will be for both parents and delegates. At least one parent should be in attendance at these meetings. It is recommended each family invite the Leader to their home for a visit (or over lunch / dinner) to get to know each other better and to have an opportunity to discuss any particular details about your child that you feel is important for the Leader to know (e.g. your child's typical day, bedtime routine, likes or dislikes, eating habits, have they been away from home before, etc.).

Meet the Leaders

During the Meet the Leaders Event (usually in late February, early March), the delegations will meet their leader and should:

- exchange contact information
- set up a WhatsApp group for ongoing communication
- set a date for the first in person delegation meeting

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First Meeting

During this Meeting, delegations should:

- Assign roles among the families
- Determine date of next meeting



Family Delegation Roles

Travel Coordinator

- The Travel Coordinator should be only liaison to the Travel Agency. As a representative of the group, the Travel Coordinator should agree on travel priorities with the group, provide the travel agency with the Precamp 1 document, gather and provide the travel agency the delegation's required documentation and credit card information so the travel can be booked, review options provided by the agency, communicate travel plans to group.
- The group should understand that by assigning one person as travel coordinator for the group, that they should be trusted to find the best option for the group based on numerous back and forth conversations with the agency. The coordinator should keep the group informed of ongoing conversations with the agency, but once the agency has provided the group with flight options, the coordinator should assume that these plans are acceptable if they haven't heard back within 3 hours from the rest of the delegation.
- This role is the one that typically puts the leader's travel expense on their credit card (to be divided up and paid back by the other families immediately).
- Suggested priorities of the travel booking are:
 - Tickets should be flexible in case program dates change
 - All tickets must be booked on one Booking Number
 - Minimize number of routs while taking overall cost into consideration
 - Consideration of flight times and impact on leaders and delegates
 - Routes with least risk of cancellation/overbooking should be chosen



Forms/Paperwork Coordinator

- Review forms and check in with delegation that forms are filled out in a timely manner
- Check with Delegation to ensure that forms are handed in to Risk Manager by xxxx.
- Ensure/Remind delegation that forms are provided to leader

Booklets Coordinator

This role is to assist leader and delegation in printing and preparation of delegation handbook. Depending on the age of the delegation, this is something that the delegation can take increasing responsibility for.

Finance Coordinator

This role will be responsible for ensuring that the funds spend for the delegation by the group are managed and divided up/reimbursed promptly.



Purchases Coordinator

All could share in this role, but one family could also take the lead. Items are customarily purchased for the delegation including:

- National Night Outfit (Village)
- Staff Gifts
- Homestay gifts (Village, StepUp)
- Thank you gift for leader



Programme Information - Pre-Camps

Each delegation will receive information directly from the host nation or host Chapter - called a "Pre-Camp". This information will be sent to and distributed by your Leader. Information will include specific location, dates, theme, area update, camp amenities, camp staff introductions and other fun details.

Pre-Camp #1 is an information sheet sent out by the host nation which includes practical information such as camp's address and contact info, and the dates and times that delegations are expected to arrive and depart from the host city.

Pre-Camp #2 and #3 set out more detailed about the camp, the theme, staff introductions, site information, packing lists and other key information to assist in your preparation.

Booking Travel

Don't book any travel until you have received specific travel information contained in Pre-Camp #1.

Please note, the travel agent you will be working with is:

Sharyn Cortes at NorthStar Travel
sharyn@northstartravel.ca

ALL travel must be booked through this Sharyn.

Sharyn has extensive experience booking travel for CISV groups and knows how to incorporate the arrival/departure time windows that are critical to the operation of CISV programs.

Note that no additional travel or health insurance is required as this is covered through your membership with CISV.

A few final notes about travel:

Extra travel before and/or after the CISV programme experience is discouraged in all but the most unavoidable emergencies. Please check with programs@cisvtoronto.org if your family has this situation.

Delegations should plan to arrive and depart on the dates listed in Pre-Camp #1. If travel cannot be arranged on the specific dates, the leader should contact the camp director to inquire about arriving or departing on another date. Only after approval from the host nation, should any travel outside the specified dates listed be booked. Should the delegation need to arrive a day early or depart a day later, the leader may want to contact the hosting chapter to see if a local homestay can be arranged.

Delegations should travel to and from their destination as a group. CISV strongly discourages families to travel to meet their child at the camp/programme. This can be very disruptive to the programme and to the delegation.

Forms

There are a number of mandatory forms that will need to be completed prior to travel:

1. Child Travelling with a Leader Legal Form
2. Health Form (must be completed not more than 3 months prior to the start of the programme)
3. Travel Information Form (one per delegation)
4. Delegation Information Form (one per delegation)

Forms can be found on mycisv.org under the delegate's name and program. Your Leader will need a hard copy of these forms to bring with them before the delegation departs. This exchange of papers should take place at the CISV Picnic in June.

My CISV

Every delegate should have an account and refer to mycisv.cisv.org for all program details, pre-camps, and program information. If you have any questions about mycisv, please ask your leader or board buddy for assistance.

Other Costs

There are other costs associated with your experience. Many of these are dependent on choices made by the delegation. It is important that families come to an agreement on these expenses before they are decided upon.

It is advisable that one parent serves as the budget overseer for the delegation.

Some expenses will be shared between the families in the delegation.

Note that the Leader should not incur any costs in preparation (e.g. National Night outfit should be divided amongst the families), although the leader should have their own personal spending money.

Each family will cover the following expenses in addition to a portion of the Leader's expenses as part of the delegation, including:

- All Travel
- National outfit (check with the Junior Branch, they may have something suitable)
- National Night supplies (including delegation booklets)
- Costs for local activities associated with delegation preparation or hosting International children during homestays
- Spending money while at camp and for tour days (this money will be kept safe, but not tracked by the leader)
- International phone plan (for Leader) to use to contact families and send updates (NOTE: not all sites will have access to Wi-Fi).
- Emergency fund or credit card - as determined by the delegation

The pre-camp information will include a list of suggested spending money to send with each delegate, it is recommended that this is adhered to, and delegates bring the same amount. It is also recommended that parents agree to contingency or emergency money to send with each child. This money is only used if there are emergencies. Leaders will be accountable for the emergency money, but the spending money for the kids will be secured by the camp, but expenditures may not be itemized by the leader.

Programme Specific Preparations

Each programme has specific preparations prior to their experience. It is recommended that you look at the programme guide for your specific programme to become more familiar with these expectations. These can be found on cisv.org. Focus primarily on the "sending to" section of these guides as they include information for hosting as well as travelling.

Village:

Village is CISV's flagship programme and runs over 28 days. Pre-Camp 2 provides a lot of detail on what each delegation needs to know about the camp.

Travel Outfit: The CISV Toronto chapter will provide each travelling delegate with a travel outfit (sweatshirt and t-shirt). If you wish to purchase additional merchandise, it will be available through the chapter at chapter events.

Booklets: All delegations prepare a type of booklet or a similar handout to give to everyone at the Village (approximately 75-80 copies). Leaders have access to samples from previous Villages.

National Outfit: Delegations tend to choose a national “outfit” to wear on their national night and Open Day at the Village. These outfits are meant as a way for the delegates to show a bit about Canada. Often delegates enjoy trading their costumes, so do not choose something too valuable.

National Day Activities / Presentation: This is an opportunity for delegations to present an informal programme of songs, dances, games, and legends from their respective countries. International or national activities may include food tasting or a small exhibition of souvenirs. The staff of the Village will provide specific guidelines for food preparation dependent upon the availability of the kitchen. This is an opportunity for the delegation to present Canada and themselves. They will want to be proud of their efforts.

It is recommended that the delegation practise the presentation and try out any recipes. Many delegations plan a send off party shortly before departure and this is an excellent opportunity to present your families.

Homestay Gifts: There are 2 homestays during a Village. The delegation will need to take a gift for each of the homestay families. On the first homestay, the local chapter tries to keep the girls of the delegation together and the boys together. During the second homestay, each delegate is partnered with a friend, so each child will require a gift. It is a nice idea to include a thank you note and a copy of the booklet for each homestay family.

Traders: Trading clothes, pins and souvenirs is a fun part of the Village. It is wise not to pack anything that you would not want to trade! There are many free things available – for example: maple leaf pins and small paper Canadian flags – from your local MLAs, MPs and city councillors. Other popular traders include CISV t- shirts, Canadian souvenirs (balls, key chains, playing cards ...), jewellery and candy. Find out what the JB has made recently and visit your local dollar store! As a delegation you should talk about what you would like to bring and discuss how much is appropriate. In addition, you should agree which traders are potentially shared by the whole group and which ones are individual, so they have varying options.

Staff Gifts: Many delegations agree to bring a small token of appreciation for each of the staff of the Village.

Step Up:

Step Up is a 23-day programme where activities are focused on exploring a theme. Pre-Camp 1 should introduce you to the theme of your specific camp. Take time in the months leading up to your camp to explore the theme as it relates to you and to Canada.

One of the most important aims of Step Up is for the youth to take responsibility for planning, organizing, and conducting activities. This includes learning how to handle responsibility for camp development. The delegate evolves from an observer-participant role to an active role where the implementation of the theme and the achievement of the goals are in their hands.

Preparation for delegates should include:

- How to plan and run an activity
- How Step Up differs from Village and Seminar Camp
- How to understand and develop a camp theme
- Understanding the goals of the programme
- Rules and guidelines – the role of the camp meeting
- Evaluation – how to do it, when to do it and why
- Cultural sensitivity and cultural awareness

Travel Outfit: The CISV Toronto chapter will provide each travelling delegate with a travel outfit (sweatshirt and t-shirt). If you wish to purchase additional merchandise, it will be available through the chapter at chapter events.

National Day Activity: This will be based on your theme and unlike a Village you are not making a cultural presentation about Canada. National “outfits” are not required, but are bought.

Booklets: For Step-up, no booklets are required. Delegations could consider preparing a sheet that has their contact information and a delegation photo.

Homestay Gifts: There is one homestay during the start of a Step Up, where the local chapter tries to keep the girls of the delegation together and the boys together.

Travel Outfit: The CISV Toronto chapter will provide each travelling delegate with a travel outfit (sweatshirt and t-shirt). If you wish to purchase additional merchandise, it will be available through the chapter at chapter events.

Homestay Gift: Each child should provide a small thank you gift for their host family.

Youth Meeting:

Youth Meeting is a 7 or 15 day programme where a theme is explored in detail among the participating countries.

Pre-Camp 1 should introduce you to the theme of your specific camp. Take time in the months leading up to your camp to explore the theme as it relates to you and to Canada.

One of the most important aims of Youth Meeting is for the youth to start to take responsibility for planning, organizing, and conducting about half of the activities at the camp. The delegate evolves from an observer-participant role to an active role where the implementation of the theme and the achievement of the goals are in their hands.

Preparation for delegates should include:

- How to plan and run an activity
- How Youth Meetings differ from Village
- How to understand and develop a camp theme
- Understanding the goals of the programme
- Rules and guidelines – the role of the camp meeting
- Evaluation – how to do it, when to do it and why
- Cultural sensitivity and cultural awareness

Travel Outfit: The CISV Toronto chapter will provide each travelling delegate with a travel outfit (sweatshirt and t-shirt). If you wish to purchase additional merchandise, it will be available through the chapter at chapter events.

National Day Activity: This will be based on your theme and unlike a Village you are not making a cultural presentation about Canada. National “outfits” are not required.

Booklets: For Youth Meeting, no booklets are required. Delegations could consider preparing a sheet that has their contact information and a delegation photo.

Travel Outfit: The CISV Toronto chapter will provide each travelling delegate with a travel outfit (sweatshirt and t-shirt). If you wish to purchase additional merchandise, it will be available through the chapter at chapter events.

Arrival at Destination

Delegations will be met at the airport upon their arrival. Host families will pick-up the delegates directly from the airport and Leaders will often travel directly to the campsite.

For Village and Step-Up, for the first homestay weekend, the delegation often stays at either one or two host families (all 4 together or girls together in one and boys in another host family).

NOTE: Village delegates have a second homestay weekend mid-way through camp where they are partnered up with a child from another delegation.

During the Programme

Communication

There will be no direct communication with your child during their experience (e.g. phone call, FaceTime, text, etc.). The leader will do their best to update you during the programme (once a week is reasonable to expect), however their primary responsibility is the well-being of your children and ensuring programme activities function smoothly.

Upon arrival, the Leader will contact families to advise that they have arrived safely. After that, the Leader will provide short updates (expectation is weekly) to families.

It is important to remember that, while the Leader may have their phone with them, it is to be used for emergencies. Leaders are responsible for the costs of their personal devices / phones to be used while at the camp. The delegation may agree if an additional data plan is needed.

In camp based programmes, parents should refrain from sending the Leaders texts during the programme unless the Leader has reached out to you. Please remember that the Leader will not have their phone with them during activity times and will not be able to respond right away. Like a teacher, the Leader will be involved in activities with the youth throughout the day and unable to respond to texts immediately. If you need to reach the Leader, send an email to the camp address required and they will inform the Leader.

In all cases, please respect the fact that the Leader's focus should be on your children and not their phone. Pre-Camp information will provide parents with an email / address to send communications. In most cases, any emails received are printed off and given to the Leader to distribute to the youth delegates like a letter. Youth will not be permitted to write an email message back, however it is recommended the Leader get the youth to write something to include in a weekly message to the families that can either be scanned or a photo taken to include as an attachment to an email from the Leader.

Cell Phones

Cell phones are not permitted at camp-based programmes (e.g. Village, Step-Up, Youth Meeting, Seminar Camp). Personal electronics may be used during travel (if the delegation parents and the leader agree), but it must be handed to the leader upon arrival. Ensure your child has a device / a camera to take photographs that is not a mobile device or iPod.

After the Programme

When your delegate returns home, they will often be tired and may appear to be “camp-sick”. If possible, allow for some downtime after your child returns. If you wish to host a “welcome back” dinner, it is advised to plan it a few days after they are back to give them time to recover physically and emotionally.

Encourage your child to connect with their new friends (social media, email, letters). It is a great idea to plan a post-programme delegation get-together. This gives the delegation a time to reminisce about their experiences, share stories and photos.

Feedback

Each travelling family will be asked to complete a short questionnaire to provide feedback on their programme. This is very important information and allows the organization to continue to improve the CISV experience.

Volunteering and CISV

CISV is a volunteer based organization. Hosting of all programs locally, nationally and internationally is dependent on volunteers like you. Without volunteers, our chapter would be unable to run our programs and offer opportunities to youth like your child.

CISV Toronto requires that each traveling family accumulates **6 points** from volunteering with the chapter in 2024 for each child traveling.

Roles and activities are assigned different point values based on several factors including time and effort required, skill level, and CISV knowledge. Please speak to our volunteer coordinator or refer to the CISV website volunteer page for the number of points awarded per role or activity. Please note that if your family does not fulfill your volunteer commitments, this will impact future participation in CISV programs.

For any questions on volunteering commitments, please contact CISV Toronto’s volunteer coordinator listed on the key contacts section of this handbook or talk to your Board Buddy.

Stay Involved!

We encourage you and your child to stay involved with CISV (e.g. attend Fall Mini-Camp, chapter activities). This gives your child the opportunity to share their experiences with other CISVers and other youth who may not have had the opportunity to attend an international programme. Staying involved will help your child build on their learnings and hopefully find other ways to develop and grow from the experience they have had.