



# 2025 GRATITUDE REPORT





# CELEBRATING 50 SESSIONS OF ENCOURAGEMENT & BELONGING

Through the eighteen years since our founding year, Camp Encourage has provided a total of 50 quality camp sessions to youth on the autism spectrum and their peers. What a beautiful ride it has been!

For the third year in a row, we called Heartland Retreat Center our new camp home. The social outings or Camp Family Events grew, welcoming even more individuals to the safe spaces.

With guidance from our established Strategic Plan, we continue to focus on:

- ▬ Improving equity and increasing the diversity of campers, volunteers, and leadership;
- ✂ Expanding programming;
- 📁 Ensuring staffing levels and skill sets meet the needs of growing programming; and
- 🔄 Continuing to maintain a diverse and sustainable funding model.

Unequivocally, we know that our mission absolutely could not move forward (and enter the hearts of those we serve) if not for the vast amount of funding, volunteer hours, and support poured into our campers. The below feedback, quotes, and statistics are thanks to each that walks beside us. ***Thank you for joining us!***


## CAMP CHANGES LIVES

Check out this year's documentary videos from Tyler Wirken and learn how Camp Encourage is making an impact on the lives of our campers.

▶ WILD ABOUT WILDER

▶ ANDE: A PARENT'S REFLECTION OF CAMP

## OVERVIEW

<p>SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS DISTRIBUTED</p> <p><b>\$80,710</b></p>	<p>TOTAL NUMBER OF CAMPER SLOTS</p> <p><b>217</b>   195 AUTISTIC CAMPERS 22 PEER CAMPERS</p>	<p>TOTAL NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS <b>150+</b></p> 
		<p>TOTAL NUMBER OF CAMP FAMILY EVENT OPPORTUNITIES <b>340</b></p>

## IMPACT

With the community's love and support, Camp Encourage has distributed nearly \$874,000 in scholarships since the first camp session in 2008.



## CAMPER STATS



Campers that received scholarship support



Campers from the greater Kansas City area



Campers from Missouri and Kansas

*"[My daughter] has made friendships that have lasted beyond camp, which is pretty neat. This last time several of them got to attend together along with a couple of more friends who were here for the first time. It was a lot of fun for them." — Parent*



## PARENT FEEDBACK

After each camp session, parents were asked to provide feedback to ensure that the experience is meaningful, of high quality, and valuable. Parent feedback in 2025 was overwhelmingly positive.

PARENT SURVEY QUESTIONS	AGREEMENT RESPONSE
Camp Encourage cares about providing a quality experience.	100%
I can tell that Camp Encourage cares about safety.	100%
Camp Encourage provided increased social opportunities and growth.	100%
Camp Encourage assisted my camper in feeling good about themselves	98%
I would recommend Camp Encourage to other parents.	100%
My camper felt he/she/they could be "themselves" while at camp.	100%
Camp Encourage is well designed and organized.	100%
Overall, Camp Encourage enhances self-esteem and strengthens emotional wellness.	100%
My camper received sufficient and helpful information prior to camp.	100%
I would send my child to Camp Encourage again.	100%
It was valuable for my camper to meet others with similar interests, needs, and/or abilities at camp.	98%



*"[My son] absolutely loves Camp Encourage — it's the highlight of his year. He came home from camp and was in tears because he missed camp so much. Camp gives him the opportunity to be himself and have fun in a way where he doesn't have to work to fit in. We are so grateful for Luke to be able to attend Camp Encourage each year." — Parent*

*"[My son] has grown so much since camp! He is more independent, he is very confident since camp, too. He has always been a very "clingy" kiddo but he has realized he doesn't need mom and dad all the time. He's been figuring out things on his own. He also is proud of his autism for the first time. He has really struggled with self esteem since he was very young and now he says he wouldn't cure his own autism because it's part of who he is and what makes him special. I cannot stress enough how amazing that is to hear." — Parent*

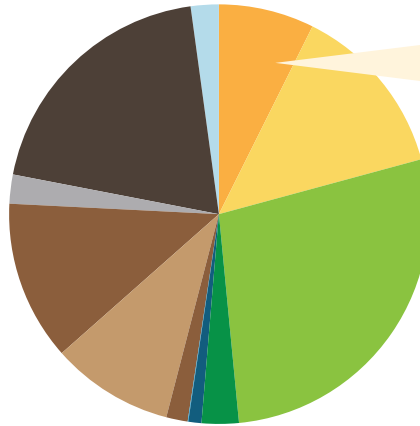


## PUBLIC SUPPORT & REVENUE

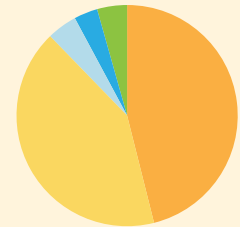
● SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS (INCLUDES CAMPS FOR KIDS)	\$44,271	7.53%
● INDIVIDUALS*	\$80,686	13.73%
● FOUNDATIONS*	\$166,400	28.32%
● CORPORATIONS*	\$17,160	2.92%
● GOVERNMENT GRANTS	\$6,043	1.03%
● UNITED WAY DESIGNATIONS	\$287	0.05%
● IN-KIND (GOODS & SERVICES)	\$9,952	1.69%
● IN-KIND (CAMP STAFF)	\$56,775	9.66%
● SPECIAL EVENTS	\$74,031	12.60%
● CAMPER TUITION	\$119,028	20.26%
● OTHER	\$12,962	2.21%

**TOTAL** **\$587,595**

\*Totals not including those made during Camps for Kids Campaign



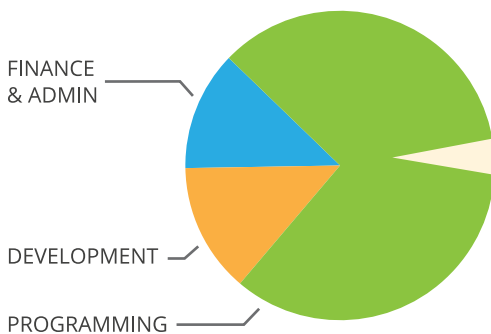
### CAMPS FOR KIDS CAMPAIGN & OTHER SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTION DETAILS



- CAMPS FOR KIDS MATCH
- INDIVIDUALS
- CORPORATE
- FOUNDATIONS
- SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS / OTHER

## EXPENSES BY FUNCTION

**TOTAL EXPENSES: \$615,068**



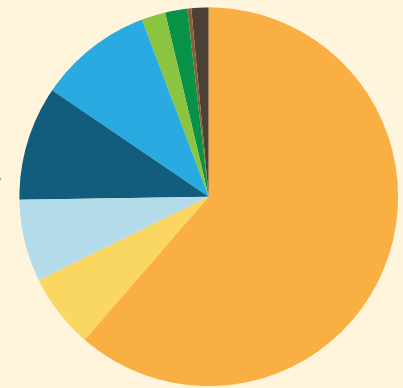
FINANCE & ADMIN

DEVELOPMENT

PROGRAMMING

### THE CAMP. THE MAGIC.

- The superstars that make it happen
- The place where the magic is planned, year-round
- Tons o' fun (horseback riding, target sports, STEM activities, swimming, ziplining, and a plethora of other goodness)
- Comfy lodging and activity spaces, a home away from home
- Food for volunteers and campers
- ACA\* & Getting here and there
- Shuttle rides (to help with the distance and rocky, hilly camp)
- Safety first! (background checks)
- This and that (Insurance, outreach, storage/moving costs, and more necessities)



\* ACA: American Camp Association



*"[One of my favorite parts of camp was] making friends who accepted me as I was — and making trucker hats!" — Camper*



*"He loved zip lining. Archery was also a hit. He loved it so much last summer that he has signed up for lessons this year." — Parent*

## TOGETHER

There is a clear need for the quality services Camp Encourage provides. More youth on the autism spectrum deserve this source of encouragement and the sweet togetherness that only camp provides. More parents deserve the respite and the assurance that their child can be safe and successful away from home.

Camp Encourage continues to focus efforts on ensuring that more of our community members—especially our immediate neighbors in Jackson County—have access to our services.

As our new Strategic Plan guides us toward a 30% increase in programming in 2026, we know that it **would not be feasible without your generosity** and the support of our community. **Together**, we will ensure that more local youth discover that Camp Encourage is a space where each is welcomed, is loved, and feels at home. Where we are reminded how essential it is that we love ourselves, celebrate exactly who we are, and gather in a space where others do the same.

*"HORSEBACK RIDING!! My camper was so disappointed when this activity was cancelled during the summer session due to excessive heat. She couldn't wait to tell me all about her experience when I picked her up from the overnight. "Daddy! Daddy! They did it, they brought back the horseback riding and I rode the biggest horse you ever saw!" You all nailed it!!!" — Parent*

*"During swimming me and a few others were all hanging out together the whole time in a group and talking." — Camper*

*"When [another camper] was helping me into the bouncy obstacle course, she lifted my feet and pushed me in and then she jumped in after me. I had so much fun with her." — Camper*



## THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO SUPPORT OUR MISSION

Find out how **YOU** can contribute at [campencourage.org](https://campencourage.org) or contact [info@campencourage.org](mailto:info@campencourage.org)



**VOLUNTEER**



**IN-KIND DONATION**



**FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION**



**VISIT [CAMPENCOURAGE.ORG](https://campencourage.org)**