

CAMPFIRE
CIRCLE

HEALING THROUGH HAPPINESS



Annual Report

2025



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A Message **from Leadership**

Because of you, 2025 was a year of remarkable growth and impact.

Together, we served 25% more campers—reaching more children facing cancer or serious illness and their families in paediatric hospitals across Ontario and at our two medically supported overnight camps.

Your generosity made it possible to welcome **6,300 campers** and deliver **33,400 life-changing camp experiences** across Ontario, meaning countless moments for campers to discover new strengths, make friends who understand their challenges, and feel a sense of belonging they don't get anywhere else.

This summer, more kids and families experienced camp at Muskoka and Rainbow Lake, including kids with cancer, heart disease, sickle cell disease, or a rare blood disorder. For the first time, we welcomed kids from the organ transplant and organ failure community to camp, providing new experiences for kids facing some of the toughest challenges.

Our Weekends at Camp program grew by 20%, creating year-round opportunities for families and kids to reconnect in a medically supported environment.

In hospitals across Ontario, we expanded programming by 20%, delivering 16,970 experiences to 3,500 kids, bringing creativity, music, friendship, and camp spirit directly to kids' bedsides and playrooms.

It's all part of our bold plan to serve 10,000 kids annually by 2030.

Thank you for believing in the healing power of camp and for helping ensure that, no matter their diagnosis, every child can experience the joy and connection of childhood.

Sincerely,

Alex Robertson (CEO) & Jennifer Grossklaus (Board Chair)



Alex Robertson
Chief Executive Officer
Campfire Circle



Jennifer Grossklaus
Board Chair
Campfire Circle

About Campfire Circle

Since 1983, Campfire Circle (formerly Camp Ooch & Camp Trillium) has brought healing through happiness to kids with cancer or serious illness and their families—at no cost. Campfire Circle provides year-round programs in paediatric hospitals across Ontario and at two medically supported overnight camps. Through our play-based programs, we create opportunities for children to build friendships and social skills, develop self-confidence and resiliency, and improve their overall well-being.



IN HOSPITALS

Campfire Circle plays a key role in providing play-based programming, combatting isolation, supporting frontline healthcare teams, and ensuring equitable access for kids too sick to go home. We serve The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids), McMaster Children's Hospital, Children's Hospital at London Health Sciences Centre, the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO), Kingston Health Sciences Centre, and satellite centres across the province.

OVERNIGHT CAMPS

Campfire Circle offers an opportunity no one else can: medically accessible, overnight camps with no financial barriers. Muskoka is the only camp in Canada that can provide IV chemotherapy, blood transfusions, and peritoneal dialysis, while Rainbow Lake hosts family camps, fostering healing and connection with onsite medical support.

Impact Survey Results

2025 KIDS CAMP IMPACT

MEASURABLE GROWTH

Independently analyzed pre- and post-camp data shows meaningful gains across key areas of camper well-being. **Here's what our campers and their families shared about summer 2025.**

Campers experienced improvements across four key psychosocial outcomes:



SELF-ESTEEM

A strong belief in personal worth and abilities



INDEPENDENCE

More confidence in decision-making and self-reliance



SOCIAL FUNCTIONING

Improved ability to form friendships and feel connected to peers



OVERALL WELL-BEING

Increased positive emotions and less distress

Together, these gains show **a measurable growth in resilience.**

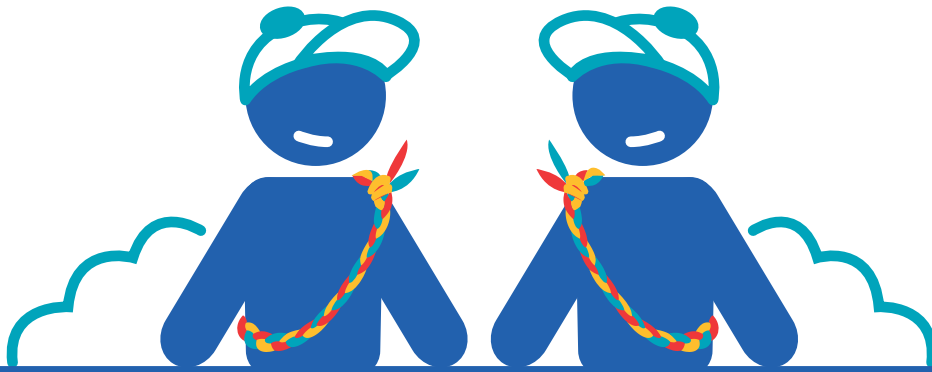
WHAT DRIVES THIS IMPACT:

- Medically supported independence
- Skill building through achievement
- Counsellor-supported risk-taking
- Consistent encouragement



CAMPERS

First Time & Returning



- Begin with lower social confidence and independence
- Camp helps build belonging, peer confidence, autonomy



- Start with higher baseline resilience and autonomy
- Camp reinforces their capacity for resilience

OVERALL IMPACT: A single camp experience strengthens resilience—building belonging, autonomy, confidence, and well-being that lasts.

95%
enjoyed camp
activities



94% of campers **want to return** next year



9.3 out of **10**
camper rating of
overall experience



96%
of campers
made a friend
at camp

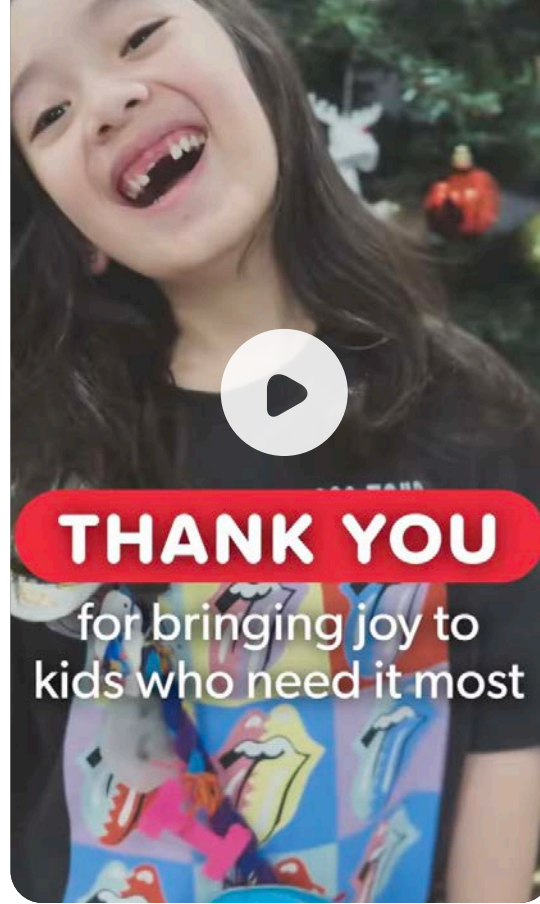


100% of families:

would **recommend**
family camp

felt welcome and
included at family camp

said family camp
helped them connect
with other families



THANK YOU

for bringing joy to
kids who need it most

93%

said family camp
helped them
bond as a family



97%

of families
said camp had a
positive
impact on their
mental health



4.9

 out of

5

rating for **overall**
experience
of family camp



Here's What Camper Families Had To Say:

“

I loved that I got the opportunity to face my fears and **do things that I have never done before**. I am thankful for the counsellors, nurses, and the leaders that help make camp a better place.”

“

I wanted to give our son **the opportunity to be around other children who have an illness**, so he doesn't feel like he's the only child who gets sick sometimes.”

“

Camp made me realize that **it's okay to do things**, even if you aren't 100% confident in your abilities to do them.”

“

We are so beyond blessed to be a part of this community. **This is our third summer camp, and we are leaving with hearts overflowing** with memories, joy, laughter, friendships, and experiences that we were able to enjoy together.”

“

It's a special community that brings hope and joy to families like ours, and we feel lucky to be part of it.”

“

While at camp, I got better at canoeing and a variety of arts and crafts, including pottery. I also grew **better communication skills, team-building skills, confidence, and a sense of belonging**.”

33,400 life-changing experiences

494 visits to our on-site Medical Centres

6,300 campers

130+ medical volunteers

from
14 healthcare centres

16,970 in-hospital experiences
for

3,837 patients across Ontario

In 2025,
You Made Possible:

16,270 medications delivered

2,652 campers attended community programs

20% MORE campers attended Weekends at Camp

3,837 kids served in hospitals

1,800 participants at all summer programs

Weekends At Camp

MEET BROCK



Brock was born with a rare metabolic condition called Argininosuccinate lyase deficiency (ASLD). His liver was unable to break down protein properly, so he required constant monitoring, a very restrictive diet, and would be hospitalized for even a simple virus.

Then, at age two, Brock received a life-changing liver transplant.

Like many kids living with high medical needs, Brock faces ongoing challenges. He's been diagnosed with a language disorder and ADHD, and has needed physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy.

"Day-to-day, he's just a regular kid," says his parents, Sue and Shawn, "but he's had a lot of challenges."

Last year, during a visit with their SickKids transplant team, the Brock's family learned he was eligible for Campfire Circle's overnight camp programs.

The family decided to attend a Weekend at Camp (WAC) in the fall—a decision that became a turning point.

From the moment they arrived, they felt welcomed.

"As parents, we know that in the everyday world, the opportunity for kids like Brock to go to camp just wouldn't be possible," says Sue. "After seeing it firsthand, it's incredible that he can spend a week simply being a regular kid."

This summer, Brock is eager to return to camp.

IN 2025, WE DELIVERED:

4,287 experiences through our Weekends at Camp

22 families were enrolled for our biggest complex care weekend ever

103 campers attended one of our biggest kids-only WACs and the first weekend we welcomed all illness groups together

20% growth in Weekends at Camp

Our Hospital Partners

As the official play partner for paediatric hospitals across Ontario, we collaborate with healthcare teams to fill critical gaps by providing play-based programming that reduces isolation, supports frontline workers, and ensures kids too sick to go home still have access to joy and connection.

CHEO

Children's Hospital
London Health Sciences Centre

K H
S C Kingston Health
Sciences Centre

McMaster
Children's
Hospital

SickKids

TOGETHER, WE PROVIDED:

16,970 in-hospital experiences for
3,837 patients across Ontario

29% more patients served this year

CAMP WEEK

Camp Week is a collaboration between Campfire Circle's in-hospital team and the incredible staff at SickKids. Throughout the week, the hospital is transformed into a vibrant, camp-inspired space—filled with crafts, games, and camp traditions—bringing moments of joy to kids and families facing serious illness. Our team hands out thousands of craft kits to kids across the hospital, plans themed programs, and hosts special shows on The Skoop, SickKids closed-circuit TV channel.



In August, we shared our Camp Week experience with CP24 Breakfast, where reporter Jee-Yun Lee got to experience the fun firsthand.

Coming Full Circle



POWERED BY COMMUNITY

485 volunteers supported Campfire Circle programs this year

67,743 hours of volunteer care and support delivered

1,066 roles filled across camps and year-round programs

98% of volunteers believe they made a positive impact

91% plan to return next year

At five years old, Maram was diagnosed with Ewing sarcoma, a rare, aggressive type of cancer that grows in soft tissues around bone.

Campfire Circle became a place where she could step out of treatment and simply be a kid. “Camp helped me build my confidence and become who I am,” she says.

Inspired by the compassion of the nurses who cared for her, Maram volunteered as soon as she graduated from being a camper and later pursued a career in nursing. Today, she returns to Campfire Circle each year as a volunteer nurse.

“I feel so lucky to be part of the volunteer team. I say this and truly mean it, volunteering with Campfire Circle is the best thing I’ve done.”

At camp, Maram helps administer medications, chemotherapy, and transfusions—care that would normally happen behind hospital walls. But here, treatments take place alongside card games, bracelet-making, and even dance parties, ensuring kids never have to face their hardest moments alone.

“There’s something profoundly different about being able to nurse and deliver hospital-equivalent care in a place built for healing and happiness,” says Maram.

A Brighter Future

We are committed to improving the mental, emotional, and social well-being of children with cancer or serious illness across Ontario.

Today, there are over 40,000 children in Ontario hospitals with serious illnesses who desperately need our programs. With your support, we can triple our reach from serving 3,000 (as of 2023) to 10,000 campers a year by 2030.

Our growth will be driven by two strategic pillars:



Artistic rendering of new camp to be built in Prince Edward County.

Expand

Scaling a Proven Model

- Bringing our high-impact programs to more children with cancer and serious illnesses.
- Serving families right in children's hospitals—where no one else can.
- Reaching thousands of overlooked and underserved kids each year.

Build

More Medical Camps for More Kids

- Building a new medical camp in Prince Edward County to complement our Muskoka and Waterford sites.
- Increasing capacity at all our sites so more kids can experience camp outside hospital walls.
- Supporting the whole family—free of charge, thanks to the power of philanthropy.

Together, we can triple our impact by 2030.

Your support will make it possible to turn this vision into reality.

Learn more at campfirecircle.org/vision

A Defining Investment in the Future of Camp



In 2025, an extraordinary \$20-million gift from philanthropist Emmanuelle Gattuso marked a defining moment in Campfire Circle's history—one that will shape the future of camp for children with cancer or serious illness for generations to come.

One of Canada's leading philanthropists, Gattuso is known for her longstanding commitment to improving health outcomes for underrepresented groups through her charitable organization, La Fondation Emmanuelle Gattuso.

For Gattuso, the mission is deeply personal.

"I understand firsthand how life-changing it is to have care, community, and hope during a difficult time. Every child deserves that same sense of support and joy—the chance to simply be a kid, even while facing a serious illness," she says.

She has long championed Campfire Circle, including support for the Muskoka site redevelopment that helped to reimagine the camp experience for future generations of kids with medical complexities.

"My hope is that this gift helps thousands more children discover adventure, confidence, and belonging."

With 40,000 children in Ontario living with serious illness, demand continues to outpace capacity. This investment will help close that gap—expanding reach, fuelling innovation, and ensuring more children can experience the joy, connection, and resilience that camp makes possible.

We are grateful for Gattuso's leadership and for the community she inspires.

Expanding What's Possible for Every Camper



A historic \$15-million gift from philanthropists Stu and Kim Lang is expanding what's possible for kids and families facing serious illness.

Kim Lang shares that her motivation was simple.

"Once you find out about Campfire Circle and their camp programs, how could you not support them?" she says. "We're so proud to help more children with serious illness experience the joy, connection, and healing power of camp."

The Langs' extraordinary support advanced plans to build a new overnight camp in Prince Edward County, opening in 2030. Their gift will also fund a state-of-the-art athletic centre at the new camp, ensuring campers can safely enjoy physical activity, teamwork, and play regardless of their medical needs.

The Langs' gift reflects their enduring commitment to transforming the camp experience for thousands of families and signals a powerful step forward at a critical time. It conveys confidence in Campfire Circle's vision, strengthens momentum, and inspires others to join in building a future where no child is left waiting for these transformative experiences.

"We hope our gift empowers kids to build confidence, discover resilience, and simply be kids again—regardless of their medical situation."

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Langs for their extraordinary generosity—and for helping make more life-changing camp moments possible.



A Remarkable Journey

On September 10, 2025, 63 riders set out on our first-ever Canadian **R4//Campfire Circle** experience, cycling over 875KM from Toronto to Québec City and raising a record-breaking \$1.3 million for Campfire Circle.

Along the way, riders made a memorable stop at Parliament Hill, where they were greeted by Prime Minister Mark Carney, and Adam van Koeverden, Secretary of State for Sport, who joined the group for a two-day ride and is a long-time supporter of Campfire Circle.

"Camp brings much-needed joy to kids with cancer or serious illness," says Fraser Chapman, a founding rider and champion. "These kids go through so many challenges, and they deserve so much better. That's why I'm proud to be riding and fundraising for Campfire Circle."

Since its inception in 2018, R4//Campfire Circle has raised an incredible \$4.5 million. Congratulations to all of our riders on this epic achievement.





Bonfire Bash

On Wednesday, November 5, 2025, Campfire Circle hosted Bonfire Bash, presented by GFL Environmental Inc., welcoming more than 800 guests to a glamorous evening in the Automotive Building at Toronto's Exhibition Place.

The evening kicked off with a lively cocktail reception, followed by a gourmet dinner, live auction, and dance party. It was an unforgettable celebration of generosity and connection, raising more than \$2.6 million for Campfire Circle.

The night also included the Paddle Project, presented by BMO, featuring over 100 artists, designers, athletes, and celebrities who collaborated to create unique canoe paddles which were auctioned online and at the gala.

Our sincere thanks to the Bonfire Bash committee led by Honourary Chairs Sylvia Mantella, Marianne and Andrew Guizzetti, and Chair Holly Miklas, along with Paddle Project Chair Pam Meckinger.



Our Longtime Partners

For 14 years, Volkswagen Canada has been a valued partner, supporting Campfire Circle's mission to bring joy to kids with cancer or serious illness and their families. In 2025, their generosity made an extraordinary impact. Through the Volkswagen Sweepstakes and the donation of a brand-new 2026 Tiguan, they helped raise \$103,450 to support life-changing camp experiences. They also served as the matching donor for our first-ever summer appeal, inspiring an additional \$80,000 in community giving. Beyond these campaigns, VW Canada continues to help fuel us through an annual gift of vehicles that transport campers, staff, and volunteers to programs across Ontario, as well as ongoing support for signature events like R4//Campfire Circle and the Sporting Life 10K. Their employees bring remarkable heart to this partnership, volunteering each year to help get camp ready and ensure children can arrive to a place filled with belonging.





SPORTING LIFE

WE RUN FOR

10K

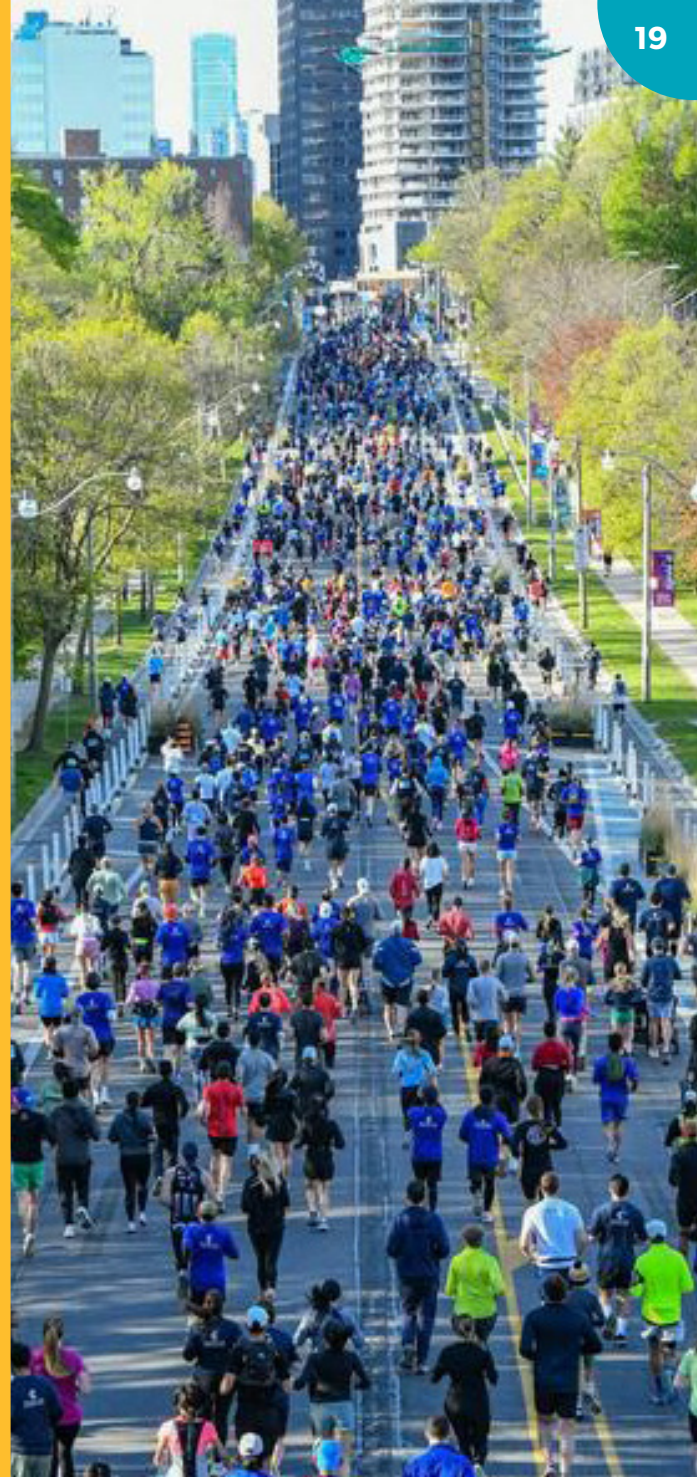
TORONTO



**CAMPFIRE
CIRCLE**

25 Years of Support

On Mother's Day, May 11, 2025, the annual Sporting Life 10K celebrated its 25th anniversary. The sold-out event drew 23,000 participants to iconic Yonge Street, alongside runners from across Canada who joined in the virtual 10K, all to help raise over \$2.5 million. Since its inception in 2000, the event has raised \$29 million to support Campfire Circle's in-hospital and overnight camp programs. Thank you to every participant, camper family, and corporate partner who made this milestone possible.



Community Champions

The Double D's have been knocking it out of the park for Campfire Circle since 2003. Raising more than \$230,000, the Arkona, Ont. baseball team brings the community together to raise funds through an annual baseball tournament, meat raffle, ham bingo, and generous support from local businesses and sports teams. Founded by longtime supporter Carol Williams, the team is now led by her daughter, Lyn Faulds, in Carol's memory.

A special tradition at the annual tournament invites a camper to throw the first pitch and act as honorary team manager. Together, the team has united friends, families, and neighbours to help bring the joy of camp to more kids with cancer or serious illness and their families.



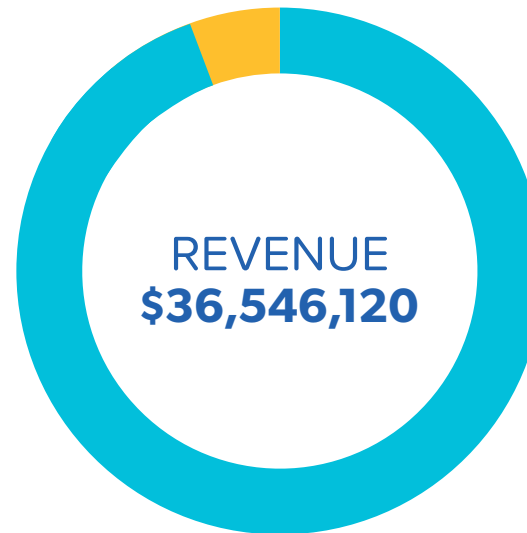
Financial Highlights

2025 was a milestone year, reflecting the generosity of our donors and continued progress toward our long-term vision.

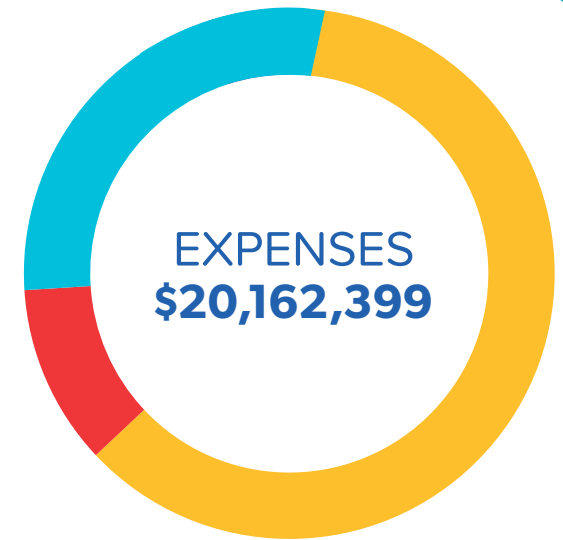
With the support of our community, we raised more than \$36 million through our comprehensive campaign—an important step toward our goal of serving 10,000 kids with serious illness annually across Ontario by 2030. These funds are helping advance the development of a third medical camp in Eastern Ontario and support the expansion of our overnight, in-hospital, and community programs across the province.

During the year, we invested \$20 million to expand programs, strengthen organizational capacity, and advance planning for our future site. The year-end surplus reflects the timing of campaign proceeds received ahead of planned investments. These funds have been set aside to support the development of the new medical camp and the sustainable expansion of programs.

2025 marked meaningful progress toward our long-term goals and positions the organization to build momentum in 2026 and beyond. We are laying the foundation to expand our programs and services, and we are grateful to our campers, families, donors, volunteers, and community partners for their continued support.



- **Donations and fundraising: 96%**
- **Investment, rental, and other: 4%**



- **Camp programs: 69%**
- **Fundraising: 21%**
- **Administration, rental & other: 10%**

*Amortization – included under camp programs

2025 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

[Click here to view](#)

*The financial information in this update is drawn from Campfire Circle's audited financial statements.

Leaving a **LEGACY**



“I’m not rich but I know I’ll pass away with more than I need. **I’d rather give that to causes that matter to me.**”

—Michael

When you make a gift in your Will to Campfire Circle, you become a member of our Legacy Circle. It’s a group of passionate supporters who believe that every child deserves the chance to laugh, play, and build lasting friendships—especially those facing cancer or serious illness.

LET’S TALK

You or your advisor can contact us anytime for more information, confidential guidance, or sample wording for your Will.

Rosie Coelho

Officer, Donor Experience

rcoelho@campfirecircle.org



Thank You!

With your support, we are providing critical programming for children with cancer or serious illness and their families. Thank you for your incredible generosity. We are grateful to our Board of Directors, our faithful donors, and our trusted partners.

DONOR WALL

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Accredited
IMAGINE CANADA**