

GROWING OUR CIRCLE, TOGETHER

GRATITUDE REPORT 2025

 CAMPFIRE
CIRCLE

HEALING THROUGH HAPPINESS



To our community of supporters,

At Campfire Circle this summer, the laughter was louder, the friendships were deeper, and the circle was wider than ever before. Thanks to you, more children and families with cancer or serious illness experienced the joy of camp, and the freedom to be kids again.

We're committed to reaching more kids with cancer or serious illness every year, and our impact keeps growing. For the first time, we offered general patient sessions, welcoming kids with cancer, heart disease, or a rare blood disorder to attend camp together during select weeks. One moment captured the impact of this inclusive session perfectly. A camper asked, "Who is this camp for?" The kids looked at each other—one had cancer, another a heart condition, another thalassemia. Then one replied, "It's for kids like us." And with that, they ran off together to go fishing.

Camp isn't about a diagnosis; it's about belonging and the kind of freedom every child deserves. That's why this summer, we expanded our circle to include even more kids with serious illnesses, welcoming more than 100 campers who live with organ failure or transplants to camp.

I had the privilege of volunteering during this extraordinary week, watching kids who often face complex medical routines experiencing all elements of camp—canoeing, rock climbing, tubing, and discovering that they are not alone. Behind the scenes, our medical team supported them every step of the way, making it all possible.

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

Thanks to you, this summer wasn't just our biggest—it was our most inclusive and transformative yet. Together, we're creating a community where every child facing a serious illness can find hope, friendship, and freedom.

With gratitude,



Alex Robertson
CEO, Campfire Circle





THIS SUMMER, WE SERVED
23% MORE
CAMPERS THAN IN 2024!



OVERNIGHT KIDS CAMP

At kids-only overnight camp this summer, we welcomed 876 campers—23% more kids than last year. More than a third were new to camp, showing how donor support ensures we can continue to grow our impact and expand our programs.

From on-site wilderness trips that allowed campers with complex needs to foster outdoors skills, to our newly resurfaced sports court that made seated volleyball and accessible play possible, inclusion shaped every program we offered. Kids with different diagnoses discovered they often had more in common with others their age than those with the same illness—they shared jokes, traded stories, and even compared scars.

The most powerful moments were unforgettable:

- A teen camper receiving end of life care was able to attend camp this summer with the support of our medical team. She required daily transfusions, constant monitoring, and IV medications, but that didn't stop her from making new friends, dancing in the dining hall, and even creating her own paddle in the woodshop, a goal she'd had for years.
- A longtime camper who had immersed himself in music at camp over the last decade announced his acceptance into a prestigious musical theatre program on his last night as a camper.

FROM DIALYSIS TO HIGH ROPES

Thanks to the generosity of supporters like you, this summer offered new opportunities for kids facing some of life's toughest challenges.

We welcomed **118 CAMPERS** from the organ transplant and organ failure community to Campfire Circle Muskoka.

Our medical team administered a record **7,000+ MEDICATIONS** in one week—more than we typically give over an entire summer!

The medical support included an incredible **15 NURSES** (two specializing in dialysis), **ONE NURSE PRACTITIONER**, **ONE PHARMACIST**, and **TWO PHYSICIANS SPECIALIZING IN NEPHROLOGY**.



We successfully piloted program adaptations, ensuring every child could participate fully and safely. Things like adaptive climbing harnesses so kids with kidney transplants could use the high ropes course, or waterproofing medical devices so kids could go tubing on the lake.

Because of your generosity, we were able to care for kids on peritoneal dialysis right at camp, and in collaboration with Soldier's Memorial Hospital in Orillia, we ensured campers needing hemodialysis never missed out. Evenings became "camp at the dialysis unit," filled with games, songs, and laughter.

In September, our team ran into one of our campers back at SickKids in Toronto, where he was receiving his weekly dialysis. His face lit up when he saw familiar Campfire Circle staff walk in—friends who had played games with him at camp just weeks before.

FAMILY CAMP: A PLACE OF BELONGING

This summer, Campfire Circle Rainbow Lake welcomed 579 kids and family members to our programs, which included eight incredible weeks of family camp, that had three integrated sessions for children with cancer, heart disease, or serious blood disorders. For families who often spend more time in hospitals than at home, family camp is a rare chance to connect, recharge, and simply be together with on-site medical support. It's a community bound by shared experiences.

Every day at family camp is designed to create moments of joy for kids and relief for caregivers. Our family camp programs will grow to include more families as we embark on renovations at Rainbow Lake.



A few stories of your impact:

- **A little girl's dream** of a fairy parade came true when counsellors transformed the dining hall into a special procession just for her.
- On the last day of each session, the entire camp gathered to have **one last pool party!**
- **Campers learned new skills**—from high ropes to fishing to theatre arts—culminating in a camp-wide showcase where children and families got to show off what they learned.
- **Freshly repaired bikes** sparked new adventures this summer—families explored together, kids mastered their first rides, and the trails were busy with campers!





MORE MOMENTS OF JOY FOR MORE KIDS IN HOSPITAL

As the official play partner for paediatric hospitals across Ontario, Campfire Circle brings fun, friendship, and joy to thousands of kids in healthcare settings each year.

We provide programming at SickKids, McMaster Children's Hospital, Children's Hospital at London Health Sciences Centre, Kingston Health Sciences Centre, Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO), and satellite centres across the province. With your support, we're making hospital stays brighter—whether at the bedside, during clinic visits, or through group programs.

Hospital highlights:

- This summer, we ran programs **seven days a week** across hospital partners.
- Our team brought **play to even the littlest campers** in the cardiology unit at SickKids, where seven children were supported by Berlin Hearts, ventricular assist devices that act as "external hearts." While these kids wait months, sometimes a year, for transplants, they often miss out on key developmental experiences. To bring back a sense of normalcy and fun, we created the Baby Olympics with tiny pylons, foam balls, and bubbles.
- At CHEO in Ottawa, we **expanded to serve four inpatient units**—oncology/haematology, rehabilitation, general paediatrics, and surgery.
- At SickKids, we expanded to the 7th floor—Paediatric Medicine, the **hospital's largest inpatient unit**—for children with a wide range of complex conditions. This summer, we also started programming for the burns and plastics unit.
- We **worked with the palliative care team** at McMaster to create deeply meaningful "party boxes" for children at end of life—like a Frozen-themed celebration that gave one girl the chance to share a special day with her family.
- At hospitals across Ontario, our medical partners invited us to **collaborate on events for Sickle Cell Awareness Month**, helping support kids and families affected by the disease.

THIS SUMMER, WE DELIVERED
4,200+
EXPERIENCES TO PATIENTS
IN HOSPITALS.

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 10,000 children in Ontario hospitals with serious illnesses who desperately need our programs. With your support, we can triple our reach from serving 3,000 to 10,000 campers a year by 2030.

Our growth will be driven by two strategic pillars:



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 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

YOUR IMPACT SUMMER 2025

116 MEDICAL VOLUNTEERS
SUPPORTED PROGRAMS



4,200
EXPERIENCES
DELIVERED
TO PATIENTS
IN HOSPITALS
THIS SUMMER
ACROSS
ONTARIO

13,946
EXPERIENCES
ACROSS ALL
PROGRAMS



1,800
PARTICIPANTS
AT ALL
SUMMER CAMP
PROGRAMS



446
VOLUNTEERS
ACROSS ALL
SUMMER
PROGRAMS



“This is our third year of summer camp, and we are leaving with hearts overflowing with memories, joy, laughter, friendships, and experiences that we were able to enjoy together. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for this incredible week. Words cannot describe how grateful we are.”

“My boys talked about their camp experience all year round, sang the songs and maintained contact with their new camp friends. They looked forward to attending this year and we can't wait to come back again next summer!”

“Camp has really impacted how I view my sickness as a kid. Camp made me see that I can still live a fulfilling life and I can meet friends who have been through very similar things.”

“This camp means a lot to us. It is hard to live in the moment. This place allows us to breathe, relax, and feel normal.”

HERE'S WHAT OUR CAMPER COMMUNITY HAD TO SAY:

“What I really like about Campfire Circle is that people come from all over with different conditions and different pasts and different histories, but no one is treated differently. That's what I believe makes camp so special.”

“Campfire Circle is a heartwarming experience filled with joyful activities and cherished memories. It's a place where laughter, love, and lasting memories flourish, making it a truly special gathering for everyone involved. Thank you all.”

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.**



campfirecircle.org

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CIRCLE**

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