

# INSPIRATIONS

## Developmental Supports and Opportunities of Youths' Experiences at Camp

A benchmark study conducted by Youth Development Strategies, Inc.  
Commissioned by the American Camp Association  
with generous support from Lilly Endowment Inc.



The logo for the American Camp Association features stylized figures in blue, green, and red above the text "american CAMP association".  
american  
**CAMP**  
association  
enriching lives, building tomorrows

## Acknowledgments

A national project encompassing input from thousands of youth attending scores of camps is a complex challenge. Deep appreciation is expressed to the campers in more than 80 camps who shared their insights and impressions. Without your efforts, we would not have a study to write about! We remain in awe of those camp directors and staff who commit themselves to participation in external projects for the sake of their campers, the industry, and pure knowledge.

The American Camp Association (ACA) also expresses heartfelt thanks to Drs. Michelle Gambone, Cynthia Sipe, and Stacey Daraio of Youth Development Strategies, Inc. (YDSI). The framework on which this study was based has inspired camp leaders across the country to take a hard look at their camp programs in a new and insightful way. More than that, their leadership and expertise have helped us take a big step toward improving the future for youth.

Gratitude is also extended to Willis K. Bright, Jr., director, youth development and education, and the Board and Officers of Lilly Endowment Inc. of Indianapolis, Indiana, for their generous support. Their vision and passion for youth inspires us all.

Sheila Dannemiller provided the administrative support to keep us all on track. No small feat. Thank you, Sheila!

May the thoughts and experiences that formed the foundation of this work inspire us to renew our efforts to support youth, both campers and staff, on their journeys to adulthood.

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## About YDSI

Youth Development Strategies, Inc. (YDSI) is a national nonprofit organization focused on how communities improve long-term outcomes for their youth. YDSI works with government agencies, private foundations, schools, and out-of-school systems and programs. YDSI evaluates the effectiveness of strategies to improve youth outcomes, provides technical assistance and tools to measure and improve the quality of services, and conducts and disseminates general research on the developmental approach to serving youth. Visit [www.ydsi.org](http://www.ydsi.org) to learn more.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Day camps and resident camps are powerful, positive experiences for young people. Community living, away from home, in an outdoor, recreational setting provides a foundation for tremendous growth. Best of all, camp is fun. Great friends, exciting activities, and an atmosphere that lets young people be themselves are just three of the reasons why camp is so much fun. And fun, of course, accelerates learning.

This innovative study went beyond the “fun factor” to examine the extent to which camp also offers the kinds of experiences that research has shown are critical to adolescents eventually becoming successful, productive adults. We sought to answer the question: How much does camp contribute to this developmental process?

To find answers, we used questionnaires developed by YDSI that measured four critical domains of developmental supports and opportunities: Supportive Relationships, Safety, Youth Involvement, and Skill Building. During the summer of 2004, questionnaires were administered to a total of 7,645 boys and girls, between the ages of 10 and 18, who were attending one of 80 ACA-accredited day or resident camps in the study across the United States.

Among the four supports and opportunities measured by the YDSI survey, the greatest strength of camp was Supportive Relationships—specifically, the quality of relationships between youth and adult staff. In fact, these relationships are stronger at camp than in any other arena—outside the family system—in which this construct has been measured using

*“Given the unquestioned importance of high quality relationships with adults to the development of young people, camps represent one of the best opportunities many youth have outside of the family for experiencing these essential relationships.”*

this questionnaire. Nearly 70% of campers experienced the highest level of support (dubbed “developmentally optimal” levels) at camp compared to an average of 40% of youth in some community-based organizations and between 15% and 20% in some secondary schools. Given

the unquestioned importance of high quality relationships with adults to the development of young people, camps represent one of the best opportunities many youth have outside of the family for experiencing these essential relationships.

The area that showed the greatest potential for improvement in camps was Youth Involvement, i.e., participation in decision-making and leadership, and expressing feelings of belonging. Only 5% of campers consistently reported these opportunities. While these numbers are similar to the results in other youth settings, camp represents a special opportunity to provide the type of inclusive, meaningful experience young people often do not receive elsewhere.

According to these surveys, the likelihood of youth experiencing key supports and opportunities varied by camp type and sponsorship. In this study’s sample, more youth experienced the highest level of developmental supports and opportunities at resident camps compared to day camps and at independent for-profit and religiously-affiliated camps compared to agency or independent nonprofit camps. More youth experienced the highest levels of supports and opportunities at camps during longer sessions (four weeks or more) compared to shorter sessions.

Developmentally optimal experiences were also associated with certain characteristics of campers. More white (compared to minority); veteran (compared to new); and older campers (compared to those under 14) had the rich developmental experiences we desire for them at camp. Generally speaking, more girls than boys experienced optimal levels of supports and opportunities, but more boys experienced optimal levels at all-boys camps than did boys at coed camps.

These findings have many implications. To the extent this sample represents the larger population of camps and campers in the United States, it will be important to understand more about the camp and camper characteristics associated with the developmentally richest experiences. For example, what can be learned about young people’s experiences at resident camps that might lead to program improvements at all camps? What can be done to increase the percentage of optimal experiences for nonwhite youth, first-year campers, and younger campers? These and other critical questions are explored more fully in the pages that follow. Ongoing research is using the same YDSI survey to measure the effectiveness of selected program improvements. Ultimately, such studies will help refine best practices in the camp industry.





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## GROWTH

Camps have never stood still. Since their inception, they have been alive with both laughter and wisdom. Laughter from the campers and staff whose joy and learning are immeasurable; wisdom from the camp directors who embraced the belief that camp could be even better next season. Today, camps are moving forward faster than ever, using practical research that enhances the camp experience. More than ever, we understand how to meet campers' needs. This most recent national study—the second in ACA's systematic program of research—was designed to provide benchmarks of camp quality. Future studies will take the next important step by using a pre-post design to measure program improvement.

# EXPECT MORE FROM THE AMERICAN CAMP ASSOCIATION

*“The survey and the [YDSI] framework gave us the motivation to see ourselves as others see us and move forward. What a gift this was! I am growing through this process!”*

—Pat Smith, Director, Camp Wawenock

## STUDY DESIGN

This most recent national study—the second in ACA’s systematic program of research—was designed to provide benchmark data on the developmental supports and opportunities at camp. By directly questioning children about their experiences, we sought to answer these basic questions:

- How does the developmental quality of the camp experience vary by the type of camp they attend?
- How does the developmental quality of the camp experience vary by characteristics of the camper?
- What contributes most to an optimal camp experience?

### The Framework

YDSI’s “Community Action Framework for Youth Development” is the product of ten years of youth development research and evaluation work done by Dr. Michelle Gambone and Dr. James Connell (See *Youth Development in Community Settings: A Community Action Framework* at [www.ydsi.org/ydsi/publications/](http://www.ydsi.org/ydsi/publications/)). The YDSI Framework is a roadmap that identifies desired long-term outcomes for young people (e.g., to be economically self-sufficient, to have healthy family and social relationships, and to be connected to one’s community). It also articulates the youth development practices needed to achieve those outcomes at the practitioner, organizational, and systems levels. Specifically, the Framework focuses on four supports and opportunities that young people need to experience in a youth development program in order to move towards these long-term outcomes. They are the building blocks for a successful adulthood.

The four supports and opportunities are:

**SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS**, so that young people can experience:

- Guidance, emotional and practical support, and
- Adults and peers knowing who they are and what’s important to them.

**SAFETY**, so that young people feel:

- Physically and emotionally secure.

**YOUTH INVOLVEMENT**, so that young people can:

- Be involved in meaningful roles with responsibility;
- Have input in decision-making;
- Have opportunities for leadership; and
- Feel a sense of belonging.

**SKILL BUILDING**, so that young people can:

- Have challenging and interesting learning experiences that help them build a wide array of skills, and
- Experience a sense of growth and progress.

The YDSI Framework also articulates the link between these supports and opportunities and the organizational practices necessary to support quality youth programming. For example, if a camp wants to foster skill building, it needs to offer progressively challenging activities for all age groups. The Framework allows practitioners and agency leaders to see these links clearly and to examine their own practices through this lens. More details about the Framework are found in Figure 1.

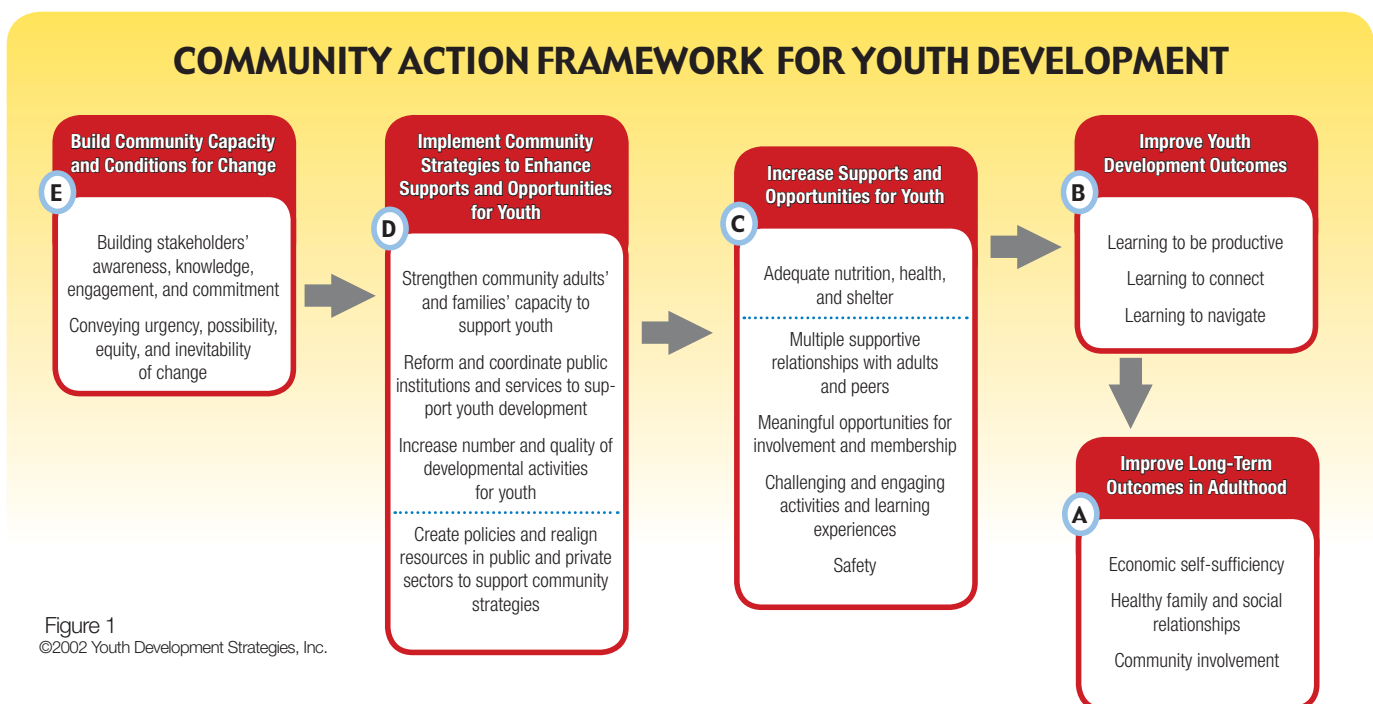


Figure 1  
©2002 Youth Development Strategies, Inc.



## STUDY DESIGN

### Camp Selection

The 80 camps who participated in this study were recruited in several ways. First, all of the stratified random sample of camps that participated in the ACA's 2002-2003 Youth Development Outcomes study were invited to participate. About half (44) chose to be included. Most of the remaining camps were recruited from among camps whose directors expressed interest after seeing the results of a pilot study that was presented at ACA conferences in 2004. A few camps were recruited by ACA's Director of Research to comprise a study sample of camp types that closely matched ACA's national membership.

Table 1 presents a comparison of all ACA member camps with camps who participated in this study. Note that day camps were slightly underrepresented in the study sample. This is partly because the YDSI survey is appropriate only for youth ages 10 and older and many campers at day camps were younger than 10. Day camps were also harder to recruit. Several camps that operated both day and resident camps were recruited as part of the day camp sample. However, some of these camps administered the survey only to their resident campers.

**Table 1. Comparison of ACA Member Camps and Camps Who Participated in the Research.**

ACA Membership	Type of Camp	Research Sample
37%	Day Camp	20%
62%	Resident Camp	80%
41%	Agency Sponsorship	38%
23%	Religiously Affiliated	20%
22%	Independent For-Profit	21%
14%	Independent Nonprofit	21%
69%	Coeducational*	63%
23%	All-Boys*	9%
33%	All-Girls*	29%

\* Note that some camps offer both coed and single-gender programs, at different times during the summer. Therefore, ACA membership statistics on gender makeup add up to more than 100%.

In the spring of 2004, prior to data collection, YDSI staff trained key staff at each camp to administer the survey to groups of campers. Each camp was asked to select one camp session during which they would administer the survey to all participating youth between 10 and 18 years old. During the target session, the trained staff members at each camp read the survey out loud in a group setting while participants followed along and completed their paper copies. The number of campers surveyed in each camp ranged from 19 to 386, with an average of 134 campers per camp. During the summer of 2004, some 7,645 youth (39% boys and 61% girls) between the ages of 10 and 18 completed YDSI surveys.

### The YDSI Survey

The YDSI survey is an 8-page, 16-part questionnaire with 62 total items. Including oral instructions and administration guidance, camps needed about 40 minutes to complete the survey with a group of campers. Surveys were administered near the end of a camp session, usually the last full day of a one-week session and within the last 48 hours of a multi-week session.

On the survey, campers are first asked about their gender, ethnicity, grade, year at camp, and participation in specific program activities. They are then asked questions about their relationships with adults at camp, their sense of safety, their involvement and responsibilities at camp, feelings of belonging, and challenging activities and experiences. Sample survey items for each of the four constructs and 13 dimensions measured by the YDSI survey are listed in Table 2. Most responses are marked on a four-point Likert-type scale or a frequency scale. Sample scales used on the YDSI survey are featured below.

strongly agree       agree       disagree       strongly disagree   
 all of the time       most of the time       sometimes       never   
 none       one       two or three       more than three

*"It's hard to take an honest look at yourself. This helped us do it."* —Joe Van Tassell, Director, Camp Gray

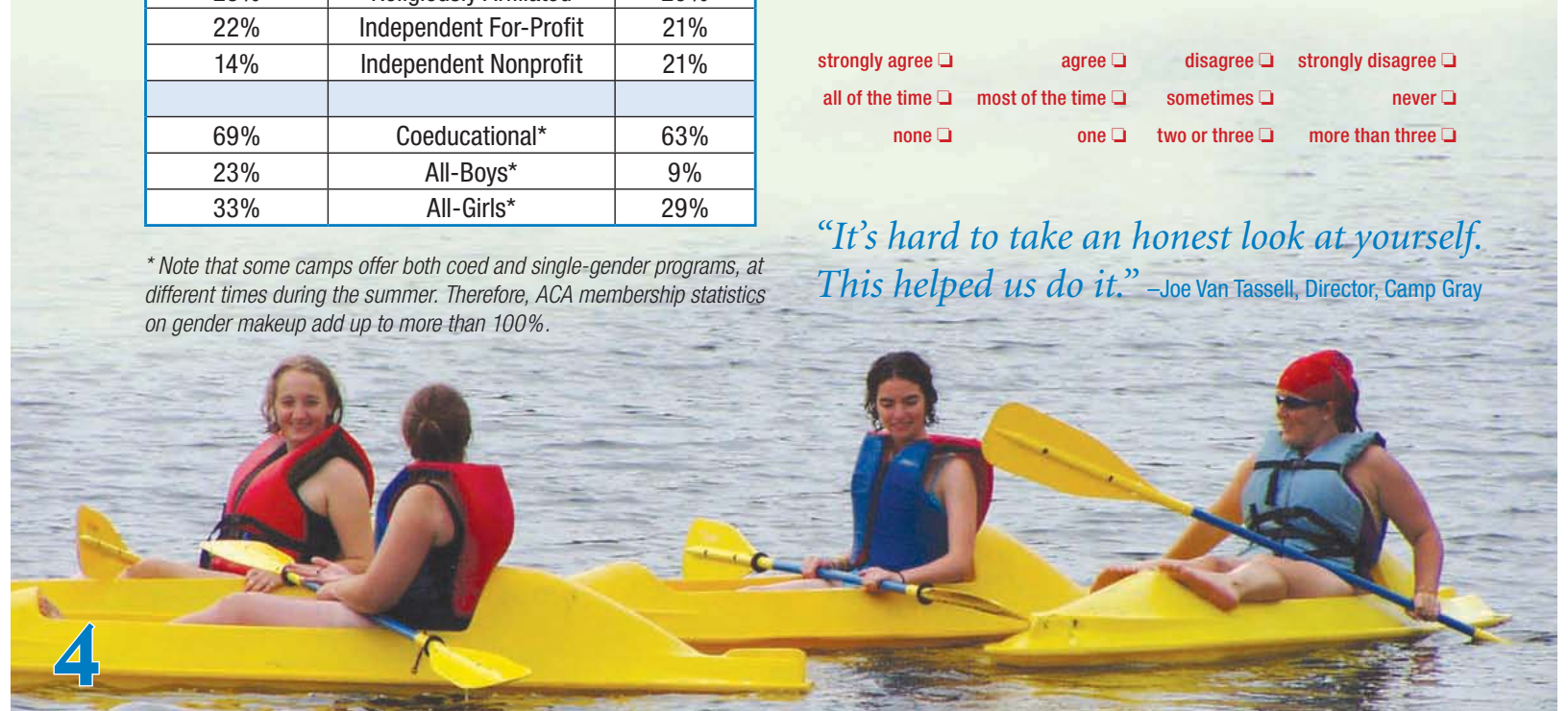


Table 2. Supports and Opportunities Dimensions and Sample Items

Dimensions	Sample Questions
<b><i>Supportive Relationships</i></b>	
Guidance	Q. How many adult staff pay attention to what's going on in your life?
Emotional Support	Q. How many adult staff say something nice to you when you do something good?
Practical Support	Q. How many adult staff could you go to for help in a crisis?
Adult Knowledge of Youth	Q. How much do you agree with the statement: "The staff here know me well."
Peer Knowledge of Youth	Q. I get chances to do things with other people my age.
<b><i>Safety</i></b>	
Physical	Q. I feel safe when I'm at this camp.
Emotional	Q. I feel respected by staff at this camp.
<b><i>Youth Involvement</i></b>	
Decision Making	Q. I get to decide what activities I'm going to do here.
Leadership	Q. How often have you helped plan activities and events?
Belonging	Q. I feel like I belong here.
<b><i>Skill Building</i></b>	
Interesting	Q. I get to do a lot of new things here.
Growth and Progress	Q. I have a chance to learn how to do new things here that I don't get to learn anywhere else.
Challenging	Q. The staff here challenge me to do my best.

### Data Analysis

The YDSI method of analyzing responses to the survey questions is not traditional. Instead of yielding an average score on the four constructs, the results are expressed in terms of youths' experiences measured against a standard. Participants' responses are combined according to a formula based on prior youth development research. These combined responses fit into one of three categories: **optimal**, **insufficient**, or **mixed**. This scoring method is designed to measure the extent to which young people experience the supports and opportunities at camp that are the necessary *pre-requisites* to achieving the developmental outcomes central to growth and progress (For details on scoring algorithms, see Gambone, Klem, & Connell (2002) *Finding Out What Matters for Youth* or visit [www.ydsi.org/ydsi/publications/](http://www.ydsi.org/ydsi/publications/)).

For example, in Supportive Relationships, if a youth's responses indicated he or she consistently had adults to go to for guidance, emotional support, and practical support, this youth's experience of supportive relationships would be rated



as developmentally optimal. Conversely, if a young person's responses indicated that he or she consistently did not get these benefits from relationships with adults at camp, the rating would be of a developmentally insufficient experience.

By stating the results as percentages of participants who fell into each of the three categories—optimal, insufficient, or mixed—agencies such as camps are able to understand the current state of affairs and set goals for moving young people out of insufficient or mixed levels into optimal levels. To increase the percentage of participants in the optimal range, camps must put in place a set of improvement strategies that are intentionally connected to campers' supports and opportunities. As noted above, the technique of categorization (optimal, insufficient, or mixed) allows agencies to measure youths' experiences against a fixed standard rather than against a moving average. This indexing provides a stable metric against which camps can compare themselves to other agencies and measure change within themselves from one season to the next.

## STUDY DESIGN

This study was the first step in a systematic process of program improvement for camps. We hypothesized that although a large portion of campers would report optimal experiences in some domains, some would report developmentally insufficient experiences. In theory, camps could examine their group's data and then design focused improvements that addressed insufficient experiences. Such a process of program improvement (currently underway) would be expected to increase the percentage of campers at optimal experience levels in subsequent seasons.

### Presentation of Results

Results of this study are divided into four parts. First, overall results are presented in a single table. Next, the data based on camp type are presented, followed by analyses based on camper characteristics. The fourth section is an analysis of what factors matter most in determining campers' optimal experiences. Each of these four sections begins with a key question, followed by key answers. Next, complete tables of results are presented, followed by a discussion.

This study was undertaken to provide a direct, honest look at young people's experiences of the supports and opportunities that serve as the foundation upon which successful development rests. Only by reviewing these data with an open mind and an eye toward improvement can we truly be ready to create and implement enhancements to our camps.

## OVERALL RESULTS

**Key Question: What percentage of youth at these 80 camps had optimal and insufficient experiences in the four domains and 13 dimensions of supports and opportunities?**

### Key Answers

- ✓ Overall optimal levels of supports and opportunities were highest for the domain of Supportive Relationships (69%); then Skill Building (41%); and then Safety (30%). Reports of optimal levels of Youth Involvement were low (5%). (See table 3.)

- ✓ Optimal levels of Supportive Relationships and Skill Building for campers at these 80 camps exceeded averages in the community-based organizations and schools that have been studied by YDSI.
- ✓ Optimal levels of Safety, especially physical safety, fell below camp directors' expectations, though just 1% of campers at these 80 camps reported insufficient levels of safety.
- ✓ Optimal levels of Youth Involvement, especially decision making and youth leadership, fell below camp directors' expectations. Some 39% of campers reported insufficient levels of involvement.

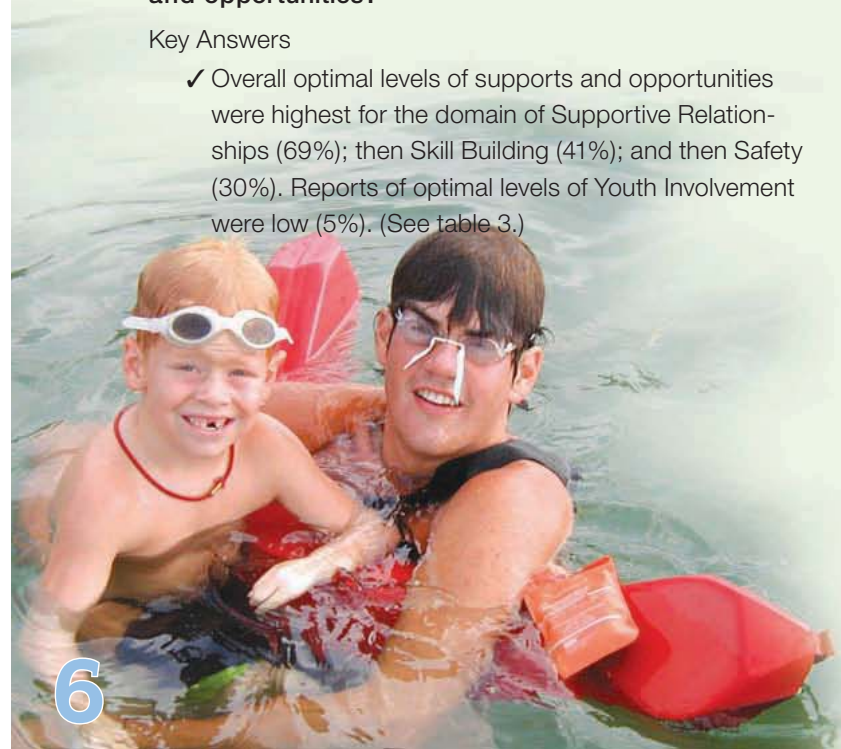
**Table 3. Overall Distribution Of Developmental Experiences, 2004 YDSI Benchmarks, (N=7,672)**

Dimensions Of Supports And Opportunities	Percent Optimal	Percent Insufficient
<b>Overall Supportive Relationships</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>9%</b>
Guidance	79	15
Emotional Support	89	8
Practical Support	81	13
Adult Knowledge	71	28
Peer Knowledge	65	34
<b>Overall Safety</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1</b>
Physical Safety	40	1
Emotional Safety	60	1
<b>Overall Youth Involvement</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>39</b>
Decision Making	9	28
Youth Leadership	2	66
Belonging	31	25
<b>Overall Skill Building</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>25</b>
Interesting	48	10
Growth and Progress	41	12
Challenging	44	17

Youth who fall into the middle or "mixed" category are not represented in these tables; thus the percentages for any specific dimension do not add to 100%.

*Note that the summary percentages for each of the four domains are not numerical averages of the relevant dimensions. Rather, overall percentages for the four domains were computed separately, using a unique algorithm.*

*"This is one of the greatest times I've had in my life every year at camp." –Ian, age 11*





## POWER

Recent national research conducted by ACA confirmed what the first camp directors knew: Camps are potent fun. Parents and staff reported significant growth in campers' self-esteem, independence, leadership, friendship skills, social comfort, peer relations, adventure-seeking and exploration, environmental awareness, positive values, healthy decision-making, and spirituality. Children themselves reported significant growth in self-esteem, independence, leadership, friendship skills, adventure-seeking and exploration, and spirituality. (To download a copy of *Directions*, a publication sharing the results of a representative national sample of over 5,000 youth and families from over 80 camps demonstrating the outcomes achieved through camp experiences, visit: [www.ACAcamps.org/research/research\\_book.pdf](http://www.ACAcamps.org/research/research_book.pdf).)

Naturally, no camp promotes growth in every child, nor does every child mature equally in each developmental domain. However, enough children have grown in noticeable ways that the institution and social movement of organized youth camping in the United States have blossomed from a single camp in 1861 to more than 12,000 camps, serving 10 million children annually. These children, and the trained staff who lead them, represent myriad ethnicities, socio-economic levels, nationalities, religions, and abilities. Around the world, families recognize that camp changes lives and policy makers view camp directors as youth development professionals.

### Discussion Spotlight: Overall Results

The positive results for Supportive Relationships and Skill Building give the 80 camps in this study reason to celebrate. Not only did optimal levels exceed what YDSI has found in some community-based organizations and some schools, but relatively small percentages of campers had insufficient experiences in these domains. The percentage of campers who experienced optimal levels of Youth Involvement and, to a lesser extent, Safety, was surprisingly low.

It is important for camp professionals to put these results in the larger context of positive youth development. Almost every "delivery vehicle" for positive youth development, such as schools, after-school programs, community programs, and religious organizations, has strengths. It would be a mistake for camps either to put themselves on a pedestal or to isolate themselves from other positive youth development organizations. Instead, the results of this research should spark discussion and interaction among camp professionals and between camp professionals, teachers, coaches, mentors, clergy,

parents, and policymakers. Such interaction is the best way to benefit from each others' methods and wisdom.

As the results in the following sections show, optimal levels for these Supports and Opportunities varied considerably by camp type and camper characteristics. For example, a higher percentage of 16 to 18-year-old campers reported optimal levels of Youth Involvement compared to 10 to 11-year-olds. Moreover, youth at religiously affiliated camps were more likely to experience optimal levels of safety compared to youth at independent nonprofit camps. More details are highlighted in the sections that follow.

### Program Improvement Possibilities:

- ✓ Continue cultivating camps' greatest strengths: supportive relationships and skill building.
- ✓ Examine ways to enhance campers' feelings of physical and emotional safety, recognizing that campers' neighborhood and school environments shape their expectations of the camp environment.
- ✓ Create meaningful new practices for involving youth in decision making and leadership.
- ✓ Refine activities and traditions that promote feelings of belonging.
- ✓ Construct more opportunities for interesting and challenging skill-building activities.



**STAT SMART:** The overall sample of youth who completed the survey is relatively large. As a result, many seemingly small differences were statistically significant. Therefore, when comparing percentages of optimal experiences in Table 4 on page 8, YDSI researchers used a threshold of 10 percentage points or higher to indicate substantive differences. Although differences of less than 10 percentage points may be real (i.e., not statistical error), 10 percentage points or greater suggested a more meaningful, substantive difference.



## CAMP TYPE

**Key Question: How does the quality of youths' experiences vary by camp type?**

Key Answers:

- ✓ Resident camps, compared to day camps, had a higher percentage of youth with optimal levels of Supportive Relationships, Skill Building, and Safety. (See table 4.)
- ✓ Camps with longer session lengths had a higher percentage of youth with optimal experiences on all four broad domains: Supportive Relationships, Safety, Youth Involvement, and Skill Building.

✓ All-boys camps had the highest percentages of optimal levels of Supportive Relationships and Skill Building. All-girls camps had the highest percentage of optimal levels of Safety.

- ✓ Independent for-profit camps had the highest percentages of optimal levels of Supportive Relationships and Skill Building.



**Table 4. Proportion of Youth with *Optimal* Developmental Experiences by Camp Characteristics, 2004 YDSI Benchmarks (% Optimal)**

Dimension	Sponsorship				Type		Session Length			Coed vs. Single		
	AGENCY	REL*	IFP*	INP*	DAY	RES	1 WK	2-3 WKS	4+ WKS	COED	BOYS	GIRLS
<b>Overall Supportive Relationships</b>	62%	71%	78%	67%	47%	72%	61%	66%	77%	66%	76%	72%
Guidance	74	83	84	78	63	81	75	78	84	77	85	81
Emotional Support	86	88	94	89	81	90	85	88	93	88	92	90
Practical Support	78	83	85	81	64	84	78	80	86	79	88	84
Adult Knowledge	66	70	80	69	60	72	63	68	80	69	81	72
Peer Knowledge	63	67	72	60	47	68	61	65	69	64	68	67
<b>Overall Safety</b>	28	35	34	25	22	31	27	28	34	27	30	37
Physical Safety	36	45	45	35	30	41	36	37	45	36	39	49
Emotional Safety	57	63	65	54	58	60	58	58	63	56	61	68
<b>Overall Youth Involvement</b>	4	5	6	6	3	6	4	5	7	5	6	6
Decision Making	8	9	9	10	4	10	7	9	11	9	10	10
Leadership	2	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	1
Belonging	26	30	40	30	23	32	22	27	42	28	35	36
<b>Overall Skill Building</b>	35	41	51	36	27	42	35	39	47	37	54	43
Interesting	46	54	53	38	40	48	48	44	50	45	62	48
Growth And Progress	36	37	54	38	26	43	32	39	50	38	52	45
Challenging	39	49	50	42	31	46	42	43	47	43	56	42
<b>Sample Size</b>	2,584	1,338	1,974	1,756	883	6,771	2,410	2,302	2,923	4,773	814	2,101

\*Rel = Religiously-affiliated camps; IFP = Independent, for-profit camps; INP = Independent, nonprofit camps

## Discussion Spotlight: Camp Type

Most noticeable was how the proportion of youth reporting optimal experiences at resident camp exceeded the proportion reporting optimal experiences at day camp. This difference was most striking for the domains of Supportive Relationships and Skill Building. This finding is sure to prompt discussions among camp professionals about the structural distinction between resident and day camps. Questions about how the immersive nature of resident camps could be adapted for day camps are interesting but don't have easy answers.

Like resident camps, day camps make unique and important contributions to youth development. Indeed, they are immersive and intense experiences in their own way. The key is to explore what it is about living away from home that increases the likelihood of youth having high quality experiences and to investigate how those qualities could be incorporated into the day camp experience. For example, some day camps offer overnight experiences and multi-day trips that may help to foster a sense of independence in youth. These feelings may, in turn, contribute to an optimal experience.

The percentage of youth reporting optimal experiences also varied by sponsorship category. More boys and girls reported optimal levels of Supportive Relationships, Safety, and Skill Building at independent for-profit and religiously affiliated camps. No one answer explains this finding. Perhaps the staff and campers at these camps had greater clarity about the camp's mission. Or perhaps these camps were most intentional in their programming for positive youth development. Another interesting finding was that more youth at independent for-profit camps experienced optimal levels of feelings of belonging, a component of Youth Involvement.

Longer session lengths were associated with greater proportions of youth saying they had optimal levels of Supportive Relationships and Skill Building. To a lesser extent, this trend existed for the domains of Safety and Youth Involvement. This finding may parallel the resident-day variation. Shorter sessions and day programs clearly provided positive experiences for some youth, but not to the same extent as longer sessions or residential programs. One might ask: Can shorter camp

## TRADITION

As many camp professionals know, the earliest camps in the United States were nonprofit experiments directed by educators who saw opportunities to teach children in ways schools did not. Under the direction of enthusiastic and often idealistic adults, children at both day and resident camps have long experienced the essential trinity of camping: (1) community living; (2) away from home; and (3) in an outdoor, recreational setting. This holistic experience typically includes physical exercise, such as hiking; mental challenges, such as cooperative problem-solving; social skill development, such as making friends from different backgrounds; and may also include spiritual events, such as outdoor worship. Camps have gained strength and endurance by adhering to this traditional formula.

experiences—at both day and resident camps—be intensified in ways that provide even more positive experiences?

Another camp characteristic associated with higher percentages of optimal experiences was gender composition. More campers at all-boys camps experienced optimal levels of Supportive Relationships and Skill Building compared to boys at coed camps. More campers at all-girls camps experienced optimal levels of Safety compared to girls at coed camps. What might have been different at single-sex camps that resulted in a higher proportion of campers who experienced optimal levels of supports and opportunities? Perhaps the self-consciousness that romance induces in some campers at some coed camps detracted a bit from youths' experiences. Or, perhaps a single-gender environment with single-gender role models provides a particularly supportive, safe environment or allows greater focus on skill building.

Searching carefully for answers to these questions and others will ultimately lead to program improvement across all types of camps. No doubt there are many things that every individual camp and every type of camp does well. There are also many things an individual camp can learn by seeing what other types of camps do well.





### Program Improvement Possibilities

- Be clear about the camp's mission and stay focused on the camp's purpose. Evaluate your activity lesson plans to see how they provide challenges, support, and reinforcement of your mission.
- Identify and improve the ways in which campers are immersed in the camp's program, philosophy, traditions, and mission.
- Encourage multi-week stays as you deem developmentally appropriate.
- Conceptualize and create shorter stay programs that are qualitatively distinct from longer stays. Capitalize on the intensity of shorter stays rather than seeing a shorter stay as a limitation.
- Spend some time at other camps observing programs and learning ways other camp staff put missions into action. Invite other camp directors and staff to spend time at your camp to allow for cross-fertilization of best practices.
- At coed camps, consider providing additional activities and spaces that create single-gender environments and interaction.

*“At first, I missed my family, but then my cabin becomes my family and when I go home I miss them.”* –Maya, age 10

**Key Question: How does the quality of experience vary by camper type?**

Key Answers:

- ✓ More youth who had attended camp for multiple summers reported optimal levels of Supportive Relationships and Safety compared to youth attending camp for the first time. (See table 5.)
- ✓ More white than non-white campers reported optimal levels of Supportive Relationships, Safety, and Skill Building.
- ✓ More female than male campers reported optimal levels of Supportive Relationships and Safety.
- ✓ More older campers (14-18) reported optimal levels of Supportive Relationships, Safety, and Youth Involvement than younger campers (10-13).
- ✓ More older campers (14-18) reported optimal levels of Growth and Progress and Challenge (dimensions of the Skill Building construct) than younger campers (10-13).

### Discussion Spotlight: Camper Characteristics

The reason behind the finding that older campers had a higher percentage of optimal experiences may be related to the fact that many have attended camp for multiple summers and they tended to choose longer sessions as they got older. More camp, over more seasons, may provide more supports and opportunities. Also, a self-selection process may have been at work, whereby the young people who gained the most from the experience were the ones who choose to return to camp when they were older. A third factor also needs to be considered: Perhaps the experiences that some camps provided—specifically the supports and opportunities they provided—were best suited to the oldest campers.

A concerning finding is that a lower percentage of nonwhite campers, compared to white campers, reported optimal experiences in the domains of Supportive Relationships, Safety, and Skill Building. Although white and nonwhite



## CAMPER CHARACTERISTICS

Table 5. Proportion of Youth with *Optimal* Developmental Experiences by Camper Characteristics, 2004 YDSI Benchmarks (% Optimal)

Dimension	Age				Gender		Ethnicity		Number of Summers		
	10-11	12-13	14-15	16-18	Male	Female	White	Nonwhite	1	2-3	4 or more
<b>Overall Supportive Relationships</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>76%</b>
Guidance	76	79	83	88	77	81	82	71	72	79	84
Emotional Support	87	89	90	91	87	90	90	84	86	89	92
Practical Support	77	82	85	89	79	83	84	73	75	82	86
Adult Knowledge	69	71	73	80	72	71	74	62	61	73	78
Peer Knowledge	56	66	73	80	61	68	67	58	58	65	72
<b>Overall Safety</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>38</b>
Physical Safety	33	39	46	58	30	46	44	27	28	39	50
Emotional Safety	62	57	58	66	54	63	61	52	55	60	63
<b>Overall Youth Involvement</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>
Decision Making	6	8	12	18	9	9	10	7	6	9	11
Leadership	1	2	2	6	2	1	2	2	1	2	2
Belonging	24	31	37	50	27	34	34	20	19	30	42
<b>Overall Skill Building</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>43</b>
Interesting	55	46	42	44	48	47	49	41	48	48	46
Growth and Progress	40	40	41	53	39	42	43	34	35	43	44
Challenging	44	43	44	55	45	44	45	41	40	45	47
<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>2,366</b>	<b>3,079</b>	<b>1,749</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>2,968</b>	<b>4,586</b>	<b>5,947</b>	<b>1,607</b>	<b>2,263</b>	<b>2,647</b>	<b>2,644</b>

youth reported similarly low levels of Youth Involvement, more white youth reported a sense of belonging compared with nonwhite youth. These findings provide a clarion call to action for all camps. Providing optimal levels of supports and opportunities to campers of all ethnicities necessitates an even more culturally sensitive approach than most camps currently take.

Another noteworthy finding was the gender difference in perceived safety. A higher percentage of female campers than male campers experienced optimal levels

of physical and emotional safety at camp. In other areas (Supportive Relationships, Youth Involvement, and Skill Building), the differences between boys and girls were less than the 10 percentage-point threshold.

Also, physical safety lagged behind emotional safety with a higher percentage of both boys and girls who experienced optimal levels of emotional safety compared to physical safety. In addition, boys in all-boys camps were more likely to experience optimal levels of safety than boys in coed camps. Questions for future research include: What





## CAMPER CHARACTERISTICS

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concerns those campers who feel unsafe? How can we make all campers feel more physically and emotionally safe at camp?

Particularly remarkable in this set of analyses was the apparent benefit of time spent at camp. More camp seems to result in more optimal results, especially for older campers. Whereas length of stay was not correlated with the magnitude of outcomes in ACA's previous study (*Youth Development Outcomes of the Camp Experience*, summarized in the ACA publication *Directions*), this study suggests that optimal experiences are more likely for children who have multi-week stays at camp and who attend camp for multiple summers. However, it is important to remember that the surveys in these two studies were very different. The Camper Growth Index, used in ACA's first study, assessed outcomes such as independence, self-esteem, and social skills, whereas the YDSI survey assessed the supports and opportunities that lead to those positive youth development outcomes.

### Program Improvement Possibilities

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- Convene focus groups of boys and girls and youth of different ethnicities to brainstorm ways of customizing camp programs to best suit participants' needs. Explore with youth the ways that camps can best serve the full diversity of the camper population.
- Design ways to enhance camp programs for younger, newer participants by ensuring that instruction and activities are developmentally appropriate.
- Renew efforts to help younger and first-time campers feel safe and believe that this camp is "their camp."
- Provide many more opportunities for youth involvement, especially in the areas of decision-making and leadership.

- Learn as much as possible about the experiences of older and returning campers, including those in junior leadership positions.
- Understand and cultivate the experiences that motivated experienced campers to return.
- Develop strong internal leadership development programs that draw staff from the camper ranks. This process encourages staff tenure and provides meaningful opportunities for the older campers to become involved in decision-making and leadership in their cabins and units as well as in all-camp issues and activities.

## WHAT MATTERS

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**Key Question: Which isolated factors best predict optimal experiences at camp?**

Key Answers:

- ✓ Holding all other factors constant, the camp characteristics most strongly associated with high proportions of optimal experiences included: (1) being a resident camper; (2) being an all-boys camp; (3) offering a session of four weeks or more; and (4) being an independent for-profit camp, a religious camp, or an agency camp, versus an independent nonprofit camp.
- ✓ Holding all other factors constant, the camper characteristics most strongly associated with high levels of optimal experiences included: (1) being a girl; (2) being white; (3) being older (14-18); and (4) having spent multiple summers (4 or more) at camp.





**Table 6. Comparison of Likelihood of Youth Having Optimal Developmental Experience by Camp Characteristics**

↑ = significantly more likely; ↓ = significantly less likely

Camp Characteristics	Supportive Relationships	Safety	Youth Involvement	Skill Building
DAY compared to resident	↓	↓	↓	↓
BOYS ONLY compared to coed	↑	↑		↑
GIRLS ONLY compared to coed	↓			
AGENCY compared to INP		↑		↑
RELIGIOUS compared to INP	↑	↑		↑
IND FOR PROFIT compared to INP	↑	↑		↑
1 WEEK compared to 4+ weeks	↓	↓	↓	↓
2-3 WEEKS compared to 4+ weeks	↓	↓		↓

**CHANGE**

From the Industrial Revolution to the Computer Revolution, camps have been evolving. Although the essential trinity of camping endures (community living, away from home, in an outdoor, recreational setting), day and resident camps have risen to the challenge of serving a cohort of children and adolescents whose demographic features, mental health concerns, and abilities are developing and changing.

Rising to that challenge is increasingly difficult without evidence to guide the way. This study, commissioned by ACA and conducted by YDSI, was expressly designed to examine the strengths and weaknesses of a representative selection of ACA-accredited day and resident camps. Our intention is to use these benchmarks of quality to guide program improvement. To succeed, camps must preserve their integrity while promoting the sorts of changes that enhance program quality.

**Table 7. Comparison of Likelihood of Youth Having Optimal Developmental Experiences by Camper Characteristics**

↑ = significantly more likely; ↓ = significantly less likely

Camper Characteristics	Supportive Relationships	Safety	Youth Involvement	Skill Building
BOYS compared to girls	↓	↓		↓
WHITE compared to minority	↑	↑		↑
1 SUMMER compared to 4+	↓	↓	↓	↓
2-3 SUMMERS compared to 4+	↓	↓		
12 TO 13-YEAR-OLDS compared to 10 to 11-year-olds				↓
14 TO 15-YEAR-OLDS compared to 10 to 11-year-olds	↑		↑	↓
16 TO 18-YEAR-OLDS compared to 10 to 11-year-olds	↑	↑	↑	↓

*“We can get overwhelmed by standards and health inspections. This helped us look at things that really matter from the campers’ point of view.”*

—Karen Lubecki, Director, Camp Glengarra

### Discussion Spotlight: What Matters

To determine the relative importance of camp and camper characteristics that influence youths’ optimal or insufficient experiences at summer camp, multivariate analyses called *logistic regressions* were conducted. These analyses allowed comparison of the importance of each factor *holding all other factors constant*. For example, one could isolate the unique importance of attending a day versus a residential camp on the quality of youth’s experiences after accounting for any differences based on all other camp and camper characteristics.



**STAT SMART:** Readers familiar with the technique of linear regression may wonder why that common statistical technique was not used here. Linear regression, like logistic regression, does help explain why a variable

of interest changes as a function of the unique contributions from a bunch of other variables. But linear regression requires (among other things) that the dependent variable be linearly related to the independent variables and that it be normally distributed. In this study, our key dependent variable was binary (e.g., optimal/not optimal). Logistic regression’s specialty is dealing with dependent variables that are binary, not continuous. The technique allowed us to look at the unique contribution of different independent variables (e.g., gender, age) to youths’ optimal experiences.

Tables 6 and 7 on page 13 show graphically the significant difference each factor makes in the likelihood that a camper will have an optimal experience in each developmental area *when accounting for all the other factors*. Using the logistic regression technique is like asking, “If everything about these camps or these campers was the same *except for this one factor*, how much would it make a difference?”

An interesting finding from these multivariate analyses involves the different experiences of boys and girls at camp. According to Table 7, more girls experienced optimal levels of Supportive Relationships, Safety, and Skill Building than boys. However, Table 6 indicates that more boys experienced optimal levels of these same constructs in boys’ camps compared to coed camps. One explanation of this finding is that boys had best experiences at all-boys camps but girls in general had more optimal experiences than boys.

Other results are more straightforward. For example, the higher optimal levels on all four constructs in resident camps compared to day camps held true when the effects of all other camp and camper characteristics were taken into account. In other words, it’s not just that resident camps tended to have older campers who stayed longer. It’s that resident status seems to have an effect above and beyond the effects of camper age and session length. By the same token, session length had its own effect on optimal experiences, even after accounting for the effects of age and number of summers at camp.

The factors that affected the development of **Supportive Relationships** most strongly were: resident camp status, longer session lengths, and being white. The factors that affected perceptions of **Safety** most strongly were: sponsorship type (religious, independent for-profit, or agency, compared to independent nonprofit); gender mix (youth at all-boys camps had an advantage over youth at coed camps, but girls in general were more likely to have optimal levels); session length (youth at one-week sessions were the least likely to experience optimal levels of safety); experience (youth in their first summer at camp were the least likely to report optimal levels of safety); and ethnicity (white youth were more likely to report optimal levels of safety).

The factors that affected **Youth Involvement** were difficult to discern because the overall levels of optimal experiences were so low. However, the 16 to 18-year-old campers—of whom 51% were serving as CITs—had a much greater likelihood of being in the optimal category when compared to 10 to 11-year-olds. However, an examination of the insufficient group provided more insight. Youth who attend camp for one week were 40% more likely than those staying for four or more weeks to be in the insufficient category of Youth Involvement, which indicated they perceived almost no opportunities in this area.

Finally, the biggest group difference in **Skill Building** was between youth in day camps compared to resident camps. Day campers were 42% less likely to have optimal levels of experience than resident campers and twice as likely to have insufficient levels of skill building. Girls experienced more optimal levels of skill building than boys, though youth at all-boys camps had an edge over youth at coed camps. Sponsorship category also seemed to have an effect, with independent for-profit, religious, and agency camps having higher percentages of youth in the optimal category than independent nonprofit camps. Interestingly, Skill Building was the only area where the



youngest youth in this study (10 to 11-year-olds) were more likely to have an optimal experience than older youth.

### Program Improvement Possibilities

- Enhance camp programs to actively and consistently involve youth. Provide not only activity choices, but allow campers to develop and participate in original programs. In a developmentally appropriate way, allow campers to participate in the governance of certain aspects of camp, such as a group's code of conduct.
- Encourage strong camper return rates through programs such as alumni gatherings, newsletters, multi-year camper awards, and discounts for returning campers.
- Address the unique needs of boys and girls in various settings, recognizing that campers in a single-sex camp have different experiences than campers in a coed camp.
- Design culturally sensitive, developmentally appropriate programs that better meet the needs of new campers and nonwhite campers.
- Find ways to challenge campers of all ages so that skills can be built at any camper age.
- Focus efforts on helping one-week campers and first-time campers garner a strong sense of belonging through activities that build group unity and camp loyalty.

### INQUIRY

Honest inquiry takes humility. The traditional nature of day and resident camps makes them naturally resistant to change. In some ways, tradition can serve as a protective factor. Tradition and intuition have guided successful camp programs for a century and a half. In other ways, tradition and intuition are risk factors. Camping professionals' own biases can provide incomplete pictures of their programs. Without a better understanding of how camps' supports and opportunities meet campers' developmental needs, camps may fall short of achieving their best.

To guide our honest inquiry, we partnered with leading youth development researchers and narrowed our focus of our inquiry to our toughest critics: campers themselves. Our previous research had included data not just from campers, but also from directors, parents, and staff. In this study we focused exclusively on campers' reports, knowing that the best indicator of any camp's strengths is the quality of campers' experiences. We wanted to learn what campers actually experience rather than what camps intend to deliver. We believe a youth development organization must listen to the voices of youth.

## STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

This study's strengths include its large, national, broadly representative sample, its refined and validated instrument, and a theoretical framework grounded in youth development research. To administer the YDSI survey to a large group of campers was a bold step that afforded the camp industry its first examination of the developmental supports and opportunities that camps provide youth. Ultimately, these are the supports and opportunities that lead to successful adulthood. Some readers may see this study's reliance on self-report data as a limitation when in fact it is a strength. We wanted to better understand the camp experience as viewed through the eyes of youth. Thus, we necessarily cared most about young people's self-reports.



There were a few limitations to this study. First, the sample of camps was not randomly drawn, though it was broadly representative. Second, this study measured just one point in time. Cross-sectional analyses of youth of various ages and levels of experience do permit some tentative conclusions about how camp affects a young person over time, but collecting data at multiple points in time, and from campers younger than 10, may deepen our understanding about specific groups of campers' developmental trajectories. Such longitudinal designs also permit the evaluation of program improvement. As a follow-up to this study, ACA has a research program to assess levels of supports and opportunities at various camps before and after program improvement strategies have been implemented.

Like any study, this research generated as many questions as it answered. We have a better sense than ever about how well camps are providing developmental supports and opportunities. Yet we do not understand all the reasons why the levels of supports and opportunities varied by camp type and camper characteristics.

Future research could focus on specific camp and camper factors to uncover the differences most intimately linked to optimal experiences. Camps have always been intentional communities designed to complement what families, neighborhoods, and schools provide. Intuition and conventional wisdom have taken this industry through a century and a half, but good science ensures camp's relevance for the future.



## CONCLUSIONS

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### Day and Resident Camps

The one factor that seemed to play an important role in the likelihood of youth having optimal or insufficient experiences—across all four domains of supports and opportunities—was whether they attended a day or resident camp. In all cases, residential campers had some advantages over day campers, regardless of length of time at camp, number of years coming to camp, or characteristics of the youth themselves, such as age. These factors were all controlled in the analyses. This finding suggests a fundamental difference between these two experiences.

Whereas residential campers are immersed in an intentional community day and night, day campers experience a partial immersion. Perhaps this distinction accounts for some differences observed in this study. Maybe residential campers' cognitive and emotional investment in their camp experience is distinct from that of day campers'. Perhaps, too, the content of the activities offered or how time is structured in day compared to resident camps made a difference. Further study of resident camps' unique features may reveal key practices that any camp could adapt to their setting in order to provide more of their campers with high quality developmental experiences.

### Session Length

Another factor that plays a consistent role in the likelihood of youth having optimal experiences at camp in all four domains is duration. Youth who attended one week camp sessions or who were attending camp for the first time were less likely than the long-term campers to have the highest quality experience *in terms of youth development*. Of course, campers at almost any camp will have fun and gain new skills. But camp is more than just fun. Camps have always been in the business of positive youth development. In this study, the likelihood of experiencing optimal levels of the factors associated with positive youth development seemed highest for campers who were returning campers or who are staying for more than a week.

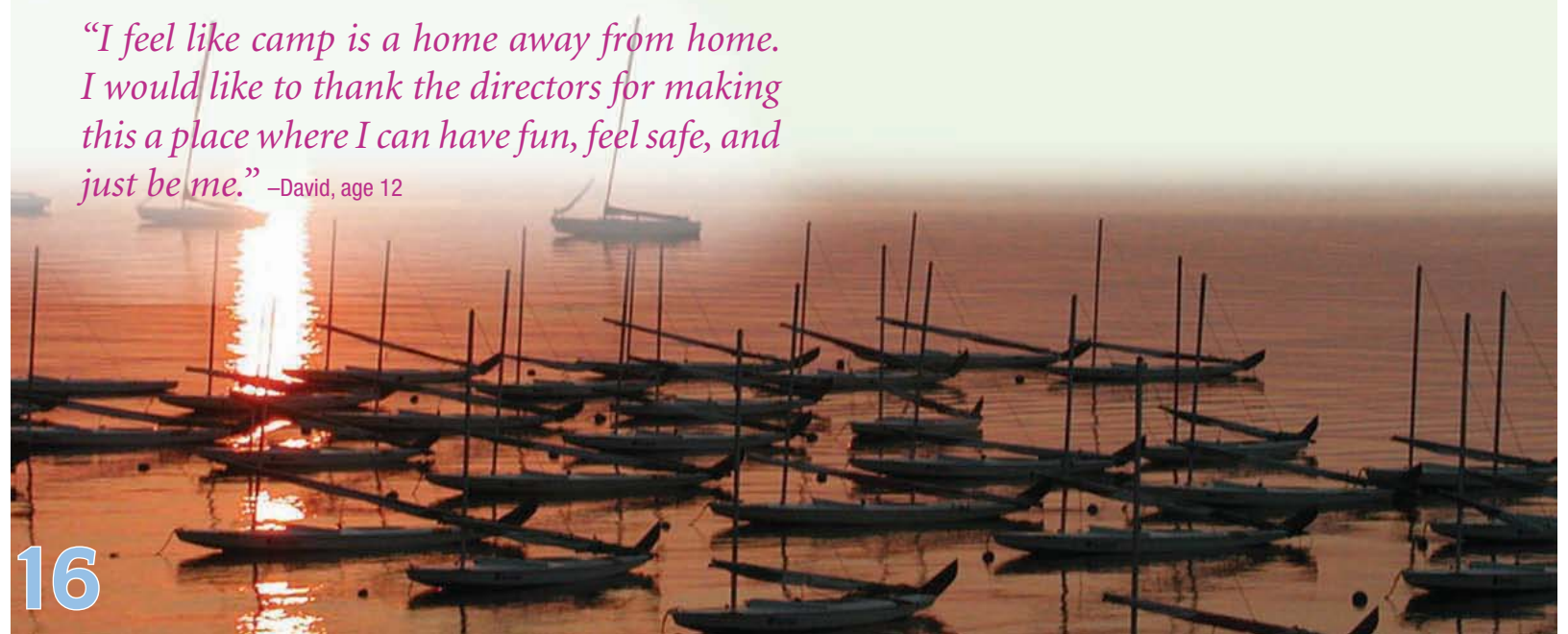
### Seasonal Tenure

In the case of the advantage associated with spending four or more weeks at camp, it may be that the extended time provided staff with more opportunities to develop relationships and create engaging and safe environments for youth. The challenge facing one-week camps is to creatively structure time and activity with youth so that the camps' settings contain as much developmental richness as possible. The advantage for the returning campers (those who have come to the same camp for four or more years) is likely due to the familiarity that staff have with these youth and the comfort the camper has with the familiar camp culture. This finding suggests that involvement strategies for new campers will increase the overall quality of the experience. Naturally, for relationships to endure over multiple seasons, camps need to implement strategies aimed at retaining both campers *and* staff. Equally important are programs that cultivate staff from the camper ranks.

### Gender Composition

Regarding youth who fall into the lowest level of developmental experiences, it was most noteworthy that few campers fell into the insufficient category, relative to schools and other youth organizations studied by YDSI. At camp, however, the one factor that mattered across all of the supports and opportunities was gender. Boys at camp were significantly more likely than girls to report developmentally insufficient experiences. This finding means that as camps try to improve quality by reaching youth who consistently do not benefit in the four developmental domains, they need strategies that are effective with boys. Perhaps boys have special challenges forming relationships, being emotionally supportive of each other, and being engaged and involved in meaningful activities. Girls, too, have unique needs, but these needs seem to be met more often in the camp setting. Designing programs that meet gender-specific needs presents an ongoing challenge for camps.

*“I feel like camp is a home away from home. I would like to thank the directors for making this a place where I can have fun, feel safe, and just be me.”* —David, age 12



*“The counselors have been really great. Not only did this week help me grow in my faith walk, but I have become a better person in all.”* —John, age 13

## STRENGTH

Results from this study were not hypothesized to be uniformly positive. Rather than being self-congratulatory or self-promotional, ACA’s program of research, beginning with *Directions* and continuing with *Inspirations*, is a rigorous, scientific look at camps’ strengths and weaknesses. Given that campers’ experiences vary a great deal, scientific principles demand that we examine that rich variety with an eye toward enhancing every aspect of that experience.

## IMPLICATIONS

Understanding the implications of these results and generating ideas for addressing the effects of various camp and camper factors is a process ideally suited for national collaborative work. The results of this study spotlight areas of opportunity for strengthening the camp experience that would be difficult for individual camps to identify and address on their own. Rather than having each camp retool its program, structure, and staff training, ACA and other professionals and organizations who work with the camp community must collaborate to develop tools, strategies, and techniques to help camps be successful. Our current research tests setting-level interventions in an effort to further refine the delivery of optimal experiences in all types of camps for all types of campers.

The camp community should be both encouraged and challenged by these results. The area of greatest strength for camps was the quality of relationships between youth and adult staff (i.e., counselors and cabin leaders). Nearly 70% of campers received the highest level (developmentally optimal) of support from their experience compared to an average level of 40% in the community based youth organizations studied by YDSI and average levels of 15% to 20% in the secondary schools studied by YDSI (For more information on these other YDSI studies, visit [www.ydsi.org](http://www.ydsi.org)).

Conversely, less than 10% of all campers experienced developmentally insufficient relationships with adults, whereas the proportions in community based organizations where YDSI has collected data averaged around 25% and in secondary

schools between 33-50%. Given the importance of high quality relationships with adults to the positive development of children and adolescents, camps represent the best chance many youth have outside of the family for experiencing these critical relationships.

Camps also offer youth the best chance to experience challenging, engaging learning experiences. In camps, almost half (about 40%) of all youth had optimal levels of skill building experiences, compared to half that number (20%) in community-based youth organizations and numbers as low as 1% in some secondary schools studied by YDSI.

Along with the opportunity to build on camps’ strengths, all camp professionals must accept the greatest challenge for all organizations who deal with young people: providing youth with the meaningful decision making and leadership opportunities that are critical for their development as active, engaged citizens in their communities. Just how day and resident camps will harness the essential trinity of camping—community living; away from home; in a natural, recreational setting—remains to be seen. Certainly these benchmark data suggest that meaningful decision making and leadership opportunities are the areas most in need of focused program improvement. Fortunately, these improvements can be developed on a solid foundation of supportive relationships among the campers themselves and between campers and adult staff.





# ABOUT ACA

- Founded in 1910, the American Camp Association (ACA) is a community of professionals dedicated to enriching the lives of children and adults through the camp experience, reaching nearly 3,000,000 children through ACA-accredited camp programs.
- ACA is the largest association serving the organized camp industry and represents all segments of the camp profession, including agencies serving youth and adults, independent camps, religious and fraternal organizations, and public/municipal agencies.
- ACA serves as the knowledge resource center for the camp industry, educating camp owners and directors in the administration of camp operations—particularly program quality, health, and safety—and assisting parents, families, and caregivers nationwide in selecting camps that meet industry-accepted and government-recognized standards.
- ACA is the only national organization that provides accreditation for camps, a process with a fifty-year history. Based on 300 national standards for health and safety, the value of ACA accreditation is recognized by courts of law and government regulators.
- ACA works in close conjunction with the many nonprofit organizations which operate three-quarters of the camps nationwide—including the YMCA, YWCA, Camp Fire USA, Girl Scouts of the USA, and Boy Scouts of America—as well as individual churches and synagogues, and a large number of private, independent camps throughout the United States and Canada.
- *Camping Magazine*, the premier resource for camp professionals, is published by ACA and is the primary resource for the most recent trends in the camp industry—the latest research in the field of youth development, critical management tools, and innovative programming ideas.
- *CAMP*, published by ACA, is an authoritative and comprehensive resource for parents who want their children to benefit from a positive and expanding camp experience. *CAMP* reached consumers in January 2005 and 2006, becoming a must-read magazine for parents exploring camps for their children.



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