

Research

ACA's research team worked diligently in fiscal year 2023 to advance camps' ability to provide impactful youth and staff experiences through industry-leading research as well as grant-funded and program quality initiatives.

CAMP PROGRAM QUALITY INITIATIVE

The ongoing camp program quality initiative for elevating continuous improvement was central to our pursuit of excellence and unwavering commitment to quality youth and staff experiences at camp. This initiative, a collaboration with the Weikart Center, blended together peer-led assessments, a knowledge-sharing community, and comprehensive workbooks. Collectively, these components gave camps the tools and support to continuously improve camp programs.

LEADERSHIP PATHWAYS PROJECT

ACA's Leadership Pathways Project: Empowering Youth through Counselor-in-Training Programs supported 22 camps with grant funding, communities of practice, and shared training opportunities, all designed to help camp participants broaden access to counselor-in-training programs. As a critical strategy in ACA's diversity, equity, and inclusion goals, this project aimed to nurture leadership skills and camp staff pathways for young people who did not traditionally access these programs.

CAMP-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

The Camp-School Partnership Demonstration Project, conducted in conjunction with National Summer Learning Association (NSLA), engaged a cohort of 13 camps in their efforts to secure federal funding to develop and implement impactful camp-school partnerships. Leveraging the national focus on overcoming learning deficits and nurturing social-emotional growth among middle-school students, this initiative increased the evidence and visibility of camp-school partnerships among school leadership and policymakers at the state and federal level.

INDIANA YOUTH PROGRAMS ON CAMPUS

The Indiana Youth Programs on Campus (IYPC) Initiative offered tailored support for youth program providers at colleges and universities in the state of Indiana. As the training and technical assistance provider, ACA delivered specialized resources, training, and networking opportunities to nearly every college and university in the state, enriching on-campus camp programs with the goal of strengthening college-going pathways for Indiana youth.

CAMPWELL

The ACA Research and Education team continued efforts to foster a culture of well-being at camp through a multi-tier staff training program. In partnership with the Alliance for Camp Health, the CampWell project team engaged 15 pilot camps in a three-day intensive retreat, follow-up support, and ongoing evaluation focused on building an evidence-based training curriculum to help camp staff manage stress, recognize emotions, and mitigate mental health crises among campers and staff.



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