

# 2020 Sites, Facilities, & Programs Study Report for Day Camps



Hello!

Thank you for reading this report!

This report is focused on camps that offer day programming only. We have arranged the contents in hopes of providing a user-friendly document that allows for both general as well as more specific information to be easily accessed.

We hope that you find this report useful!

ACA Research Team

**Purpose**

The primary purpose of this study was to better understand the ACA member camps' sites, facilities, and programs. A secondary purpose of the study was to understand this information based on the type of programming camps provide (i.e., day camp only, overnight camp only, combination of day, overnight, and rental programming). The study was conducted as part of ACA's business research program.

**Population**

All ACA member camps were invited to participate in this study.

**Online survey**

An email with information about the study and an invitation to participate was sent to all ACA member camps on October 28th, 2019. A total of 2,405 emails were sent. Of these emails, 21 bounced and did not reach their intended recipient.

**Survey close**

The survey was closed on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2019. No more responses were collected after this date.

**Response rate**

A total of 679 camps provided usable responses, resulting in a response rate of 28%.

**Cleaning**

Screening procedures were employed to clean the data prior to analyzing the data. All responses that did not provide the type of camp (i.e., day camp only, overnight camp only, combination of day, overnight, or rental programming) were withheld from the analyses.

**Reporting**

This document reports the results of the survey responses provided by camps. Results from each camp programming type is reported separately.

# FINDINGS: Day Camp Sample Characteristics

## **Overview**

This report describes data from member camps that only offered day programming.

## **Description of Sample**

Respondents from a total of 194 camps completed this survey. Most member camps reported operating in the summer only. A little less than half of the camps reported being not-for profits affiliated with another entity. Of these camps, about half indicated that the other entity was a youth-serving agency. Camps reported having a diversity of operating budgets with nearly all reporting an annual budget of less than \$5 million. Most camps reported serving primarily mixed-gender groups of participants.

\*This sample size is based on the screening criteria that survey respondents must have provided their camp programming offering in order to be included in further analyses.

## Regions

Day camp only camps that responded to this survey were located across the United States. The most commonly reported region where day camp only camps were located was the Mid-Atlantic. The least prevalent region where day camp only camps were located was the Southern region.

*50 States, D.C. and Puerto Rico - Grouped into Regions*

*New England = CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT*

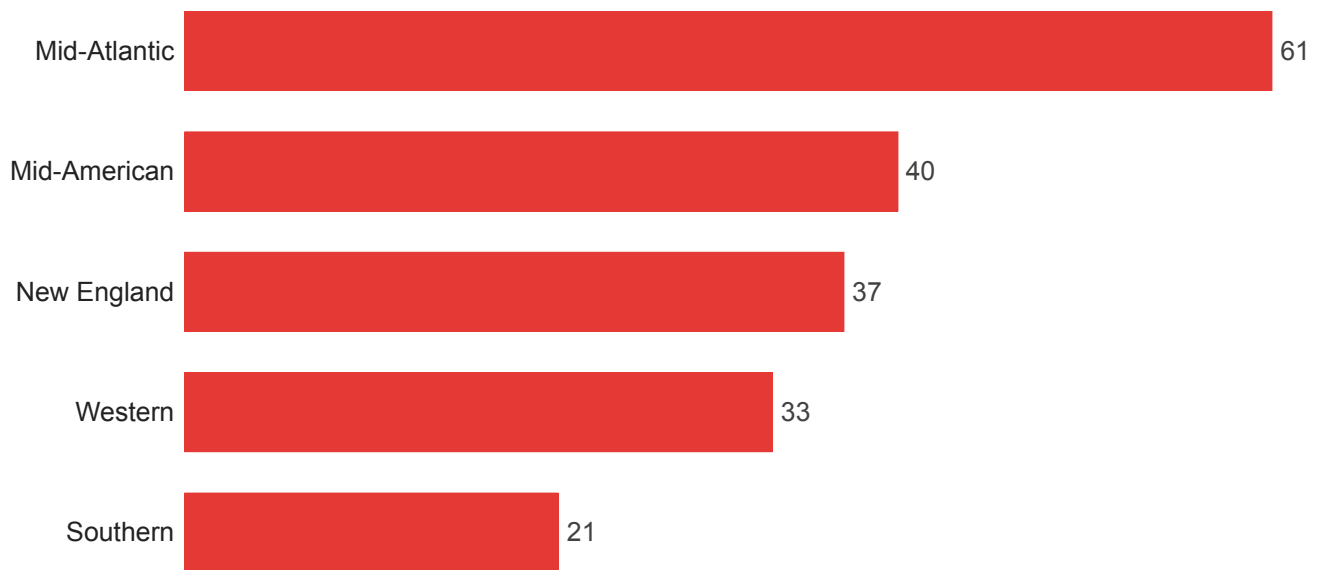
*Mid-Atlantic = DC, DE, MD, NJ, NY, PA, VA, WV*

*Southern = AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, PR*

*Mid-American = IA, IL, IN, KS, MI, MN, MO, ND, NE, OH, SD, WI*

*Western = AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NM, OR, NV, UT, WA, WY*

192 Responses



Region	Percentage of Choices
Mid-Atlantic	31.77%
Mid-American	20.83%
New England	19.27%
Western	17.19%
Southern	10.94%

### Primary Operating Season

Nearly 90% of ACA member day camp only camps primarily operated during the summer.

*What is your primary operating season? - Selected Choice*

194 Responses



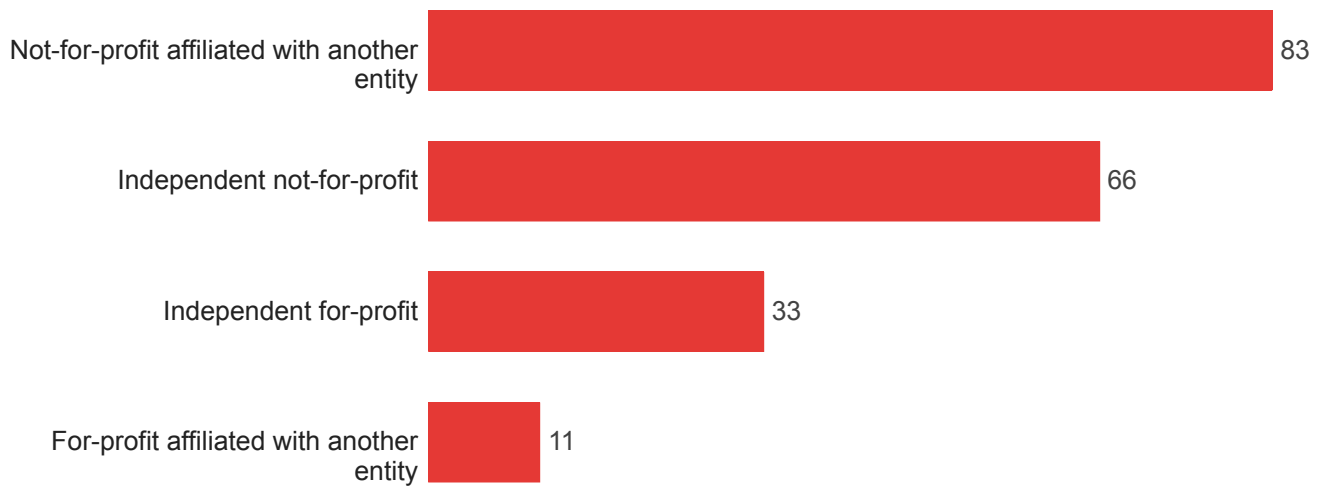
Primary Operating Season	Percentage
Summer	89.69%
Year-round	8.25%
Other	2.06%

## Camp Business Model

Most ACA member day camp only camps represented in this survey reported being not-for-profits affiliated with another entity (43%). A slightly smaller portion of respondents (34%) reported being independent not-for-profit camps. About 17% of respondents indicated that their camp was an independent for-profit entity.

*Which of the following best describes your camp's business model? - Selected Choice*

193 Responses



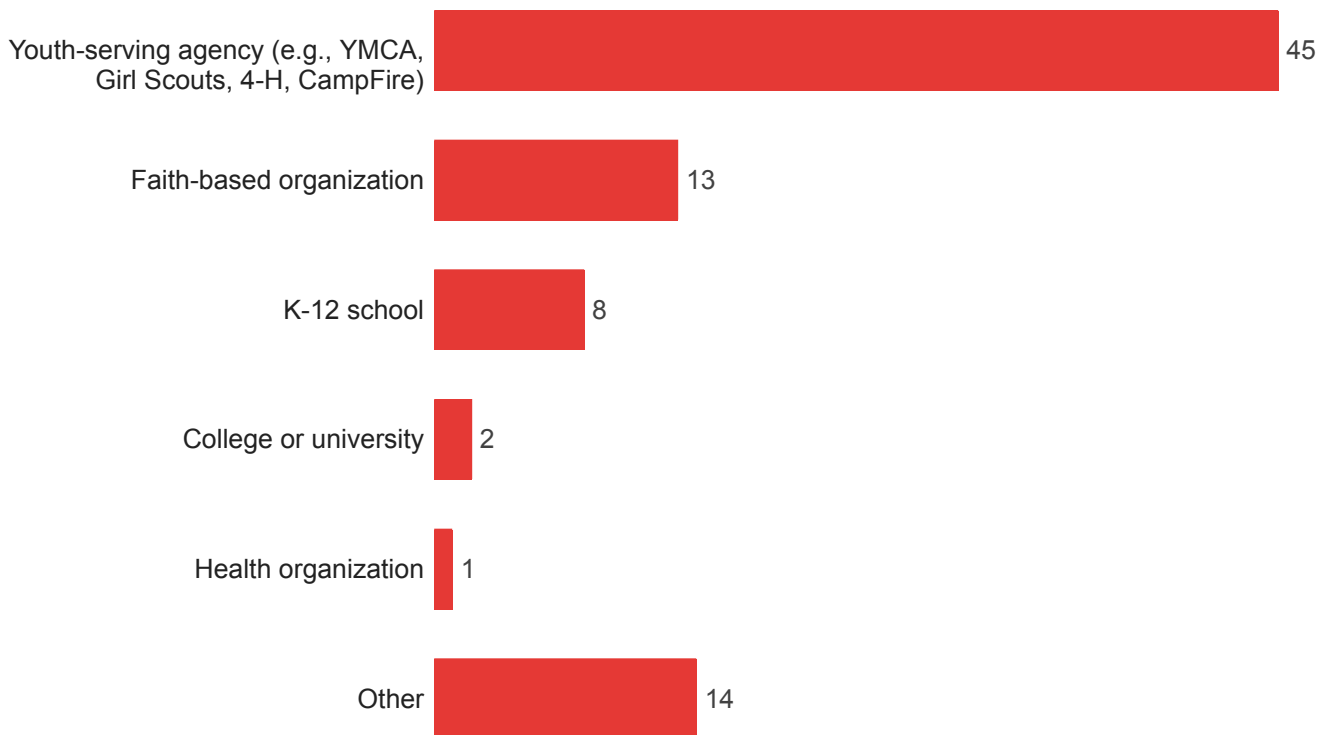
Camp Business Model	Percentage
Not-for-profit affiliated with another entity	43.01%
Independent not-for-profit	34.20%
Independent for-profit	17.10%
For-profit affiliated with another entity	5.70%

### Not-for-profit Affiliation

Of the camps that reported being *not-for-profit and affiliated with another entity*, the greatest number of respondents indicated that they were affiliated with a youth-serving agency (e.g., YMCA, Girl Scouts, 4-H, CampFire, etc.).

*Not-for-profit affiliation: - Selected Choice*

83 Responses



Not-for-Profit Affiliation	Percentage
Youth-serving agency (e.g., YMCA, Girl Scouts, 4-H, CampFire)	54.22%
Faith-based organization	15.66%
K-12 school	9.64%
College or university	2.41%
Health organization	1.20%
Other	16.87%

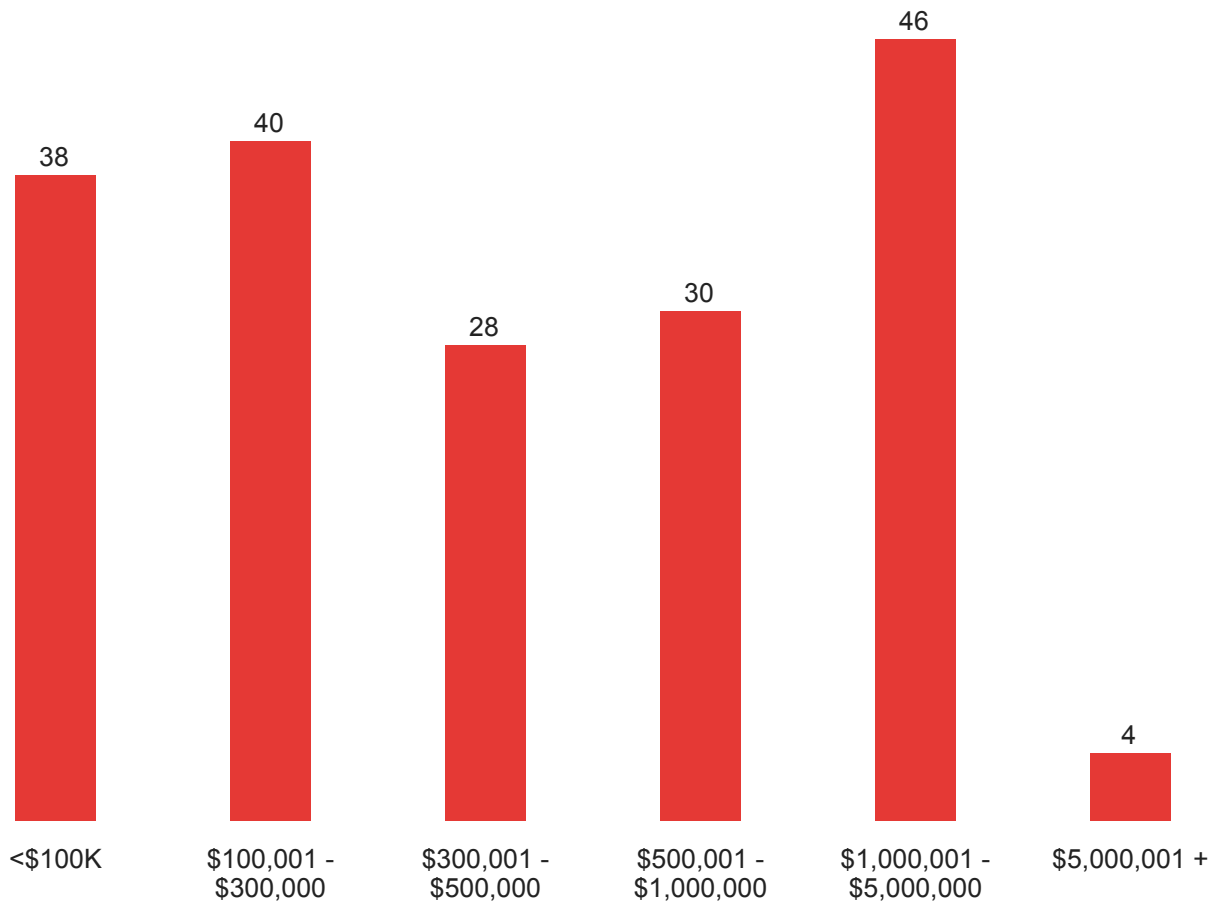


## Operating Budget

Day camp only camps that responded to this survey reported a variety of annual operating budgets. Over half of the camps reported an operating budget less than \$500,000. About 27% of camps reported having an operating budget of more than \$1 million.

*Please select the option below that best represents your 2019 operating budget.*

186 Responses



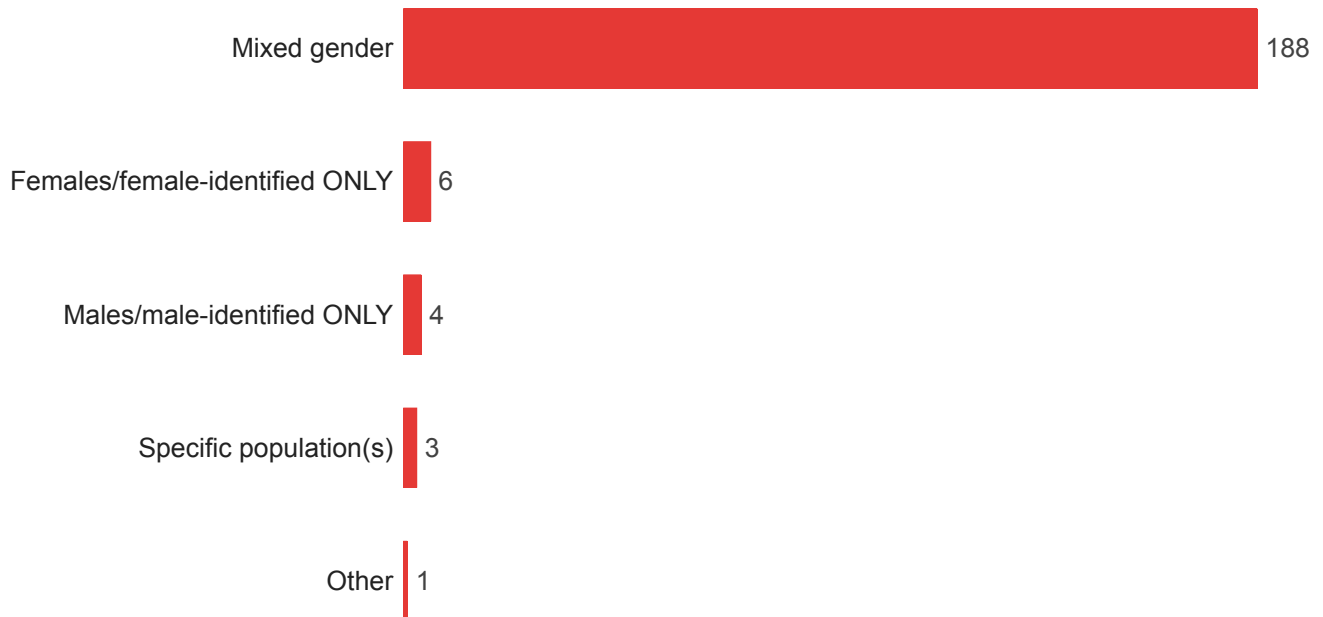
Operating Budget	Percentage of Responses
<\$100K	20.43%
\$100,001 - \$300,000	21.51%
\$300,001 - \$500,000	15.05%
\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	16.13%
\$1,000,001 - \$5,000,000	24.73%
\$5,000,001 +	2.15%

## Camp Participants

Most day camp only camps respondents reported that their camp primarily served mixed gender groups. A small portion of day camp only camps reported offering single-gender programming or programming for specific populations (i.e., low-income backgrounds, LGBTQ+, and participants with specific health or medical diagnosis or diagnoses).

*Select the options that best describe(s) your day camp participants (select all that apply). - Selected Choice*

193 Responses



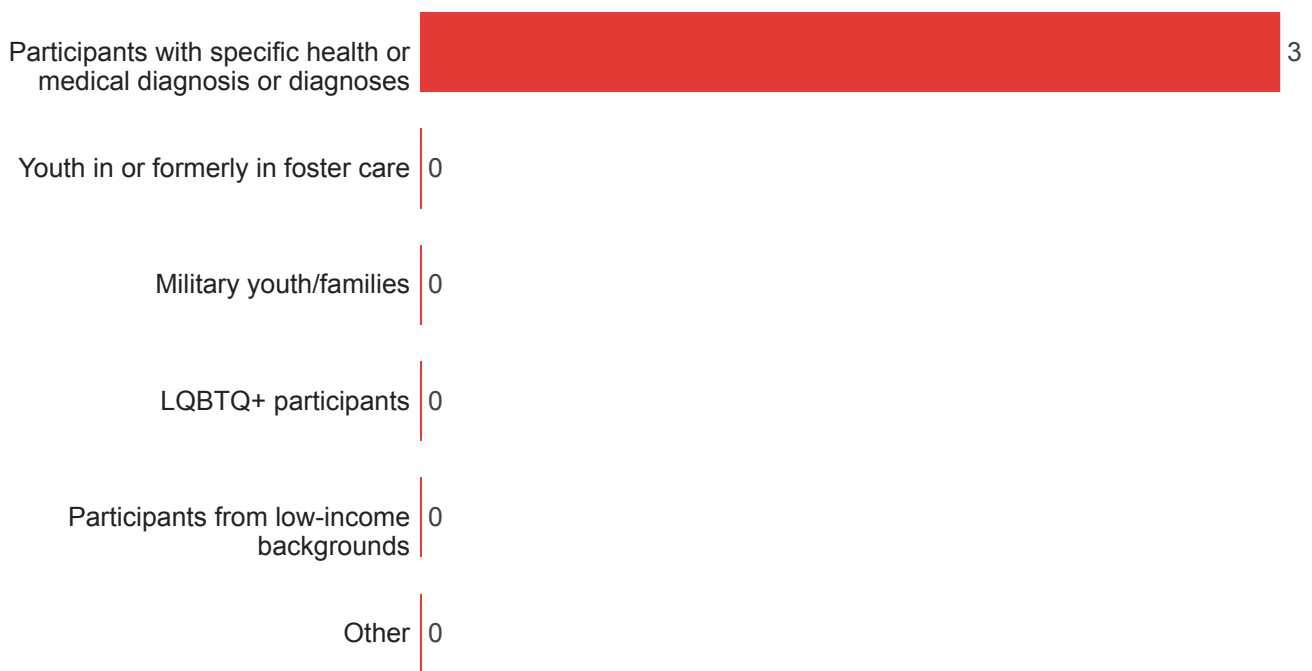
Participant Characteristics	Percentage of Responses
Mixed gender	97.41%
Females/female-identified ONLY	3.11%
Males/male-identified ONLY	2.07%
Specific population(s)	1.55%
Other	0.52%

### Special Populations Served

Very few day camp only camps provided programming for special populations. Of those that served special populations, the only population indicated was participants with specific health or medical diagnosis or diagnoses.

*You indicated that you serve specific populations. Please indicate which groups you serve, or enter any that are not listed in the text box.*

3 Responses



Participant Characteristics	Choice Count
Participants with specific health or medical diagnosis or diagnoses	3
Other	0
Youth in or formerly in foster care	0
Military youth/families	0
LGBTQ+ participants	0
Participants from low-income backgrounds	0

## Camp Participant Demographics

Day camp only camps that responded to this survey indicated that they served 5-17 year old participants, with most of their participants being 6-12 years old. A majority of camp participants at the day camp only camps were White. These camps reported very few participants that were American Indian or Alaska Natives, or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. About 75% of participants were from middle or high income families.

*Estimate the percent of your day camp participants that fall into the following categories:*

171 Responses

Age	Min	Max	Mean	Median
5 years old or younger	0.00	75.00	16.92	15.00
6-9 years old	8.00	90.00	45.49	45.00
10-12 years old	0.00	75.00	28.03	25.00
13-17 years old	0.00	59.00	8.93	5.00
18 years old or older	0.00	25.00	0.63	0.00

Race/Ethnicity	Min	Max	Mean	Median
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.00	20.00	0.70	0.00
Asian	0.00	45.00	6.35	5.00
Biracial or multiracial	0.00	100.00	8.09	5.00
Black/African American	0.00	95.00	12.49	5.00
Caucasian/White	0.00	100.00	64.80	70.00
Hispanic/Latinx	0.00	60.00	7.15	5.00
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.00	10.00	0.41	0.00

Income	Min	Max	Mean	Median
No income/poverty	0.00	50.00	3.48	0.00
Low income	0.00	90.00	17.06	10.00
Middle income	0.00	100.00	47.44	50.00
High income	0.00	100.00	32.01	25.00

## 2019 Enrollment - Total Participants

The median\* number of unique participants served by day camp only camps was 400. The largest number of participants served was 12,000. Camps in the New England and Western regions served the most unique campers in 2019. Independent for-profit camps served the greatest number of unique participants in 2019.

*Total unique participants (do not count repeat campers more than once) - 2019 enrollment*

*\*Median was used because of large variance and extreme values.*

167 Responses

All	Min	Max	Median	Mean
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Total unique participants (do not count repeat campers more than once) - 2019 enrollment	0.00	12000.00	400.00	691.08
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Region	Min	Max	Median	Mean
New England	0.00	1800.00	500.00	579.74
Western	45.00	12000.00	497.00	1116.37
Mid-American	16.00	6300.00	425.00	861.85
Mid-Atlantic	0.00	2250.00	364.50	490.96
Southern	0.00	1599.00	253.50	478.63

Business Model	Min	Max	Median	Mean
Independent for-profit	45.00	12000.00	647.00	1085.23
For-profit affiliated with another entity	16.00	1150.00	433.00	490.88
Not-for-profit affiliated with another entity	0.00	4000.00	400.00	616.58
Independent not-for-profit	0.00	6300.00	293.00	616.67

## Enrollment Per Session in 2019

The median\* enrollment per session for day camp only camps that responded to this survey was 200 participants. Independent for-profit camps had the greatest enrollment per session. The Mid-Atlantic region served the most participants per session during 2019.

*Average enrollment per session (count repeat campers more than once if they attended more than one session) - 2019 enrollment*

*\*Median was used because of large variance and extreme values.*

167 Responses

All	Min	Max	Median	Mean
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Average enrollment per session (count repeat campers more than once if they attended more than one session) - 2019 enrollment	0.00	8078.00	200.00	428.70
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Region	Min	Max	Median	Mean
Mid-Atlantic	0.00	1500.00	268.00	316.74
New England	0.00	1350.00	210.00	284.17
Western	3.00	1900.00	200.00	337.30
Mid-American	0.00	8078.00	145.00	647.10
Southern	0.00	4000.00	115.50	738.06

Business Model	Min	Max	Median	Mean
Independent for-profit	25.00	2300.00	325.00	425.20
For-profit affiliated with another entity	6.00	1900.00	260.00	506.38
Not-for-profit affiliated with another entity	0.00	8078.00	160.00	465.47
Independent not-for-profit	0.00	3500.00	120.00	381.36

### Enrollment in 2019 - Year-round Camps

The median\* enrollment per session for day camp only camps that reported offering *year-round programming* was 255 unique participants during the summer and 78 the rest of the year. The most common enrollment per session for this group of day camps was 152 during the summer and 13 for the rest of the year.

*Average enrollment per session (count repeat campers more than once if they attended more than one session) - 2019 enrollment*

*\*Median was used because of large variance and extreme values.*

14 Responses

All	Min	Max	Median	Mean
Total unique participants (do not count repeat campers more than once) - Summer only	50.00	1900.00	255.00	415.57
Total unique participants (do not count repeat campers more than once) - All other (not including summer)	0.00	5000.00	78.00	612.92

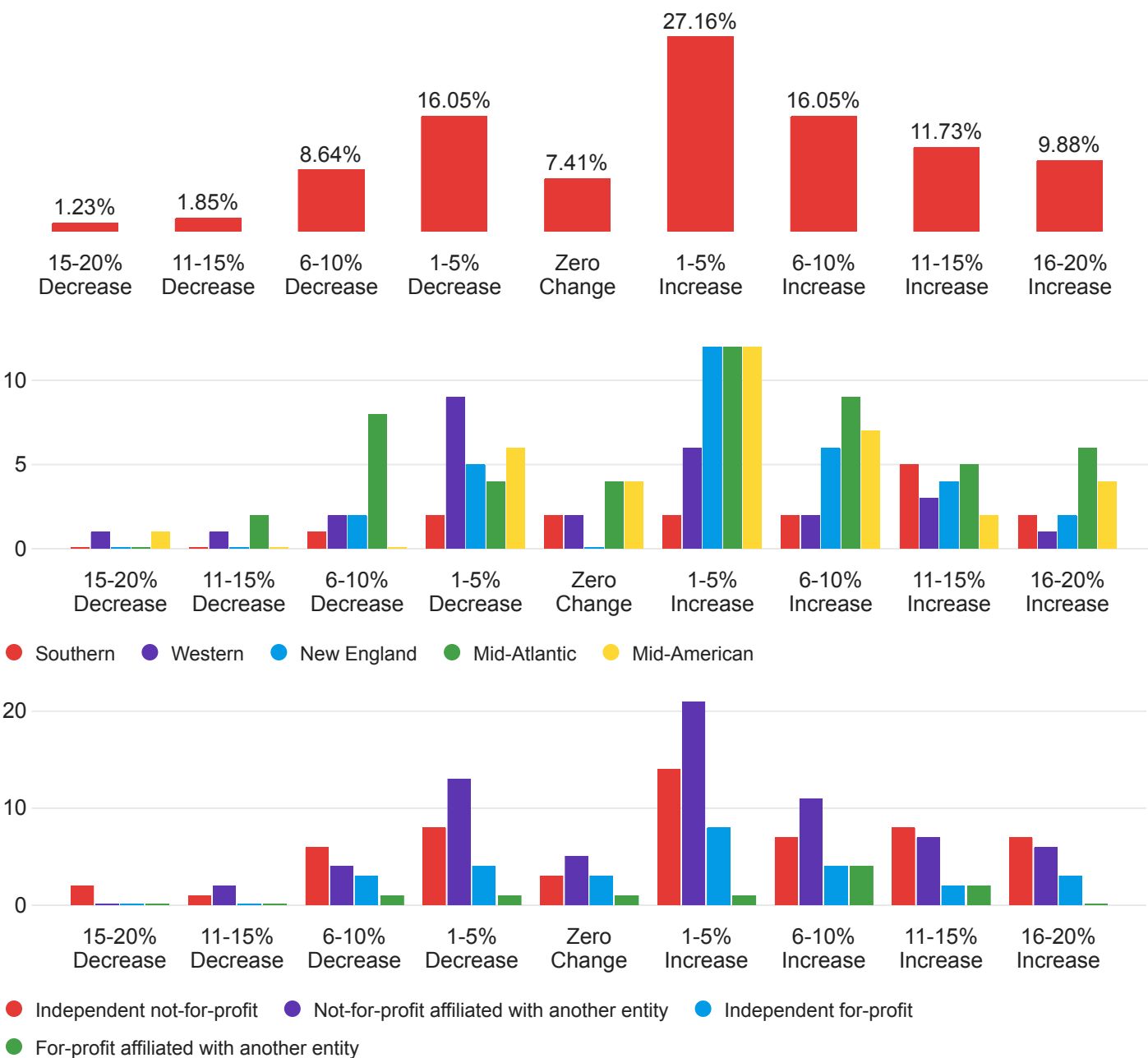
All	Min	Max	Mean	Median
Average enrollment per session (count repeat campers more than once if they attended more than one session) - Summer only	12.00	1100.00	318.07	152.50
Average enrollment per session (count repeat campers more than once if they attended more than one session) - All other (not including summer)	0.00	5000.00	393.71	13.50

### Change in Enrollment

Overall, day camp only camps that responded to this survey reported growth in their enrollment. When compared to the other regions, camps in the southern and western regions appear to have experienced the broadest range of changes in enrollment in 2019. Camps in the Mid-Atlantic region experienced the most growth in enrollment in 2019. Independent not-for-profit camps reported the broadest range of changes and decrease in enrollment in 2019.

*Which of the following best represents your overall changes in day camp enrollment in 2019?*

162 Responses



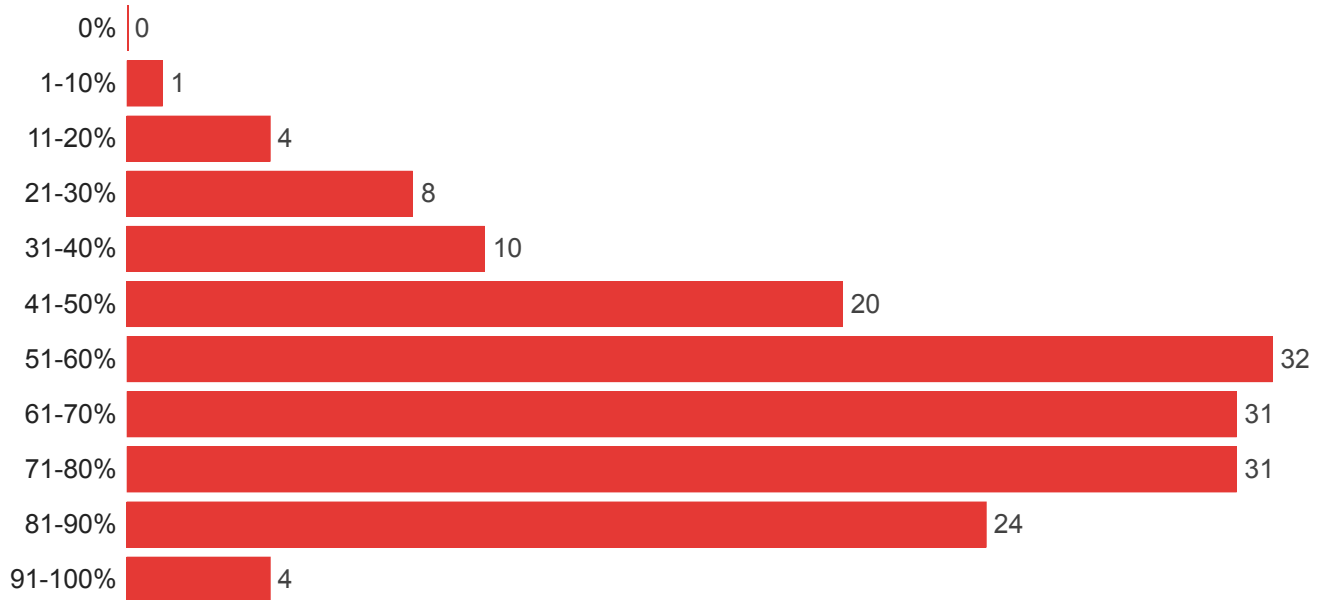


### Participant Retention after First Year

Most day camp only camps said 51%-90% of their participants returned after their first year.

*What percentage of day and overnight camp participants typically return after their first year?*

165 Responses



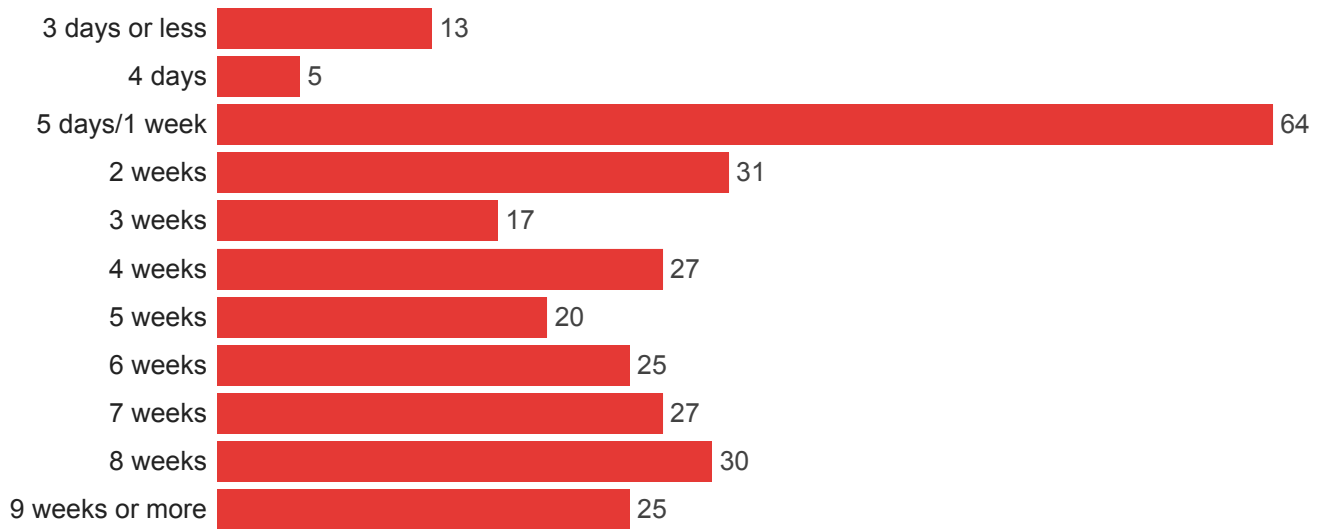
% Return	Percentage
0%	0.00%
1-10%	0.61%
11-20%	2.42%
21-30%	4.85%
31-40%	6.06%
41-50%	12.12%
51-60%	19.39%
61-70%	18.79%
71-80%	18.79%
81-90%	14.55%
91-100%	2.42%

### Length of Session Offerings

Over half of the day camps that responded to this survey said they offered weeklong (5-7 days) sessions. Many camps (27%) also indicated that they offered two-week sessions. Others also reported offering multi-week sessions, lasting 2-9 weeks or more.

*Select the option(s) that represent length of your session offerings:*

116 Responses



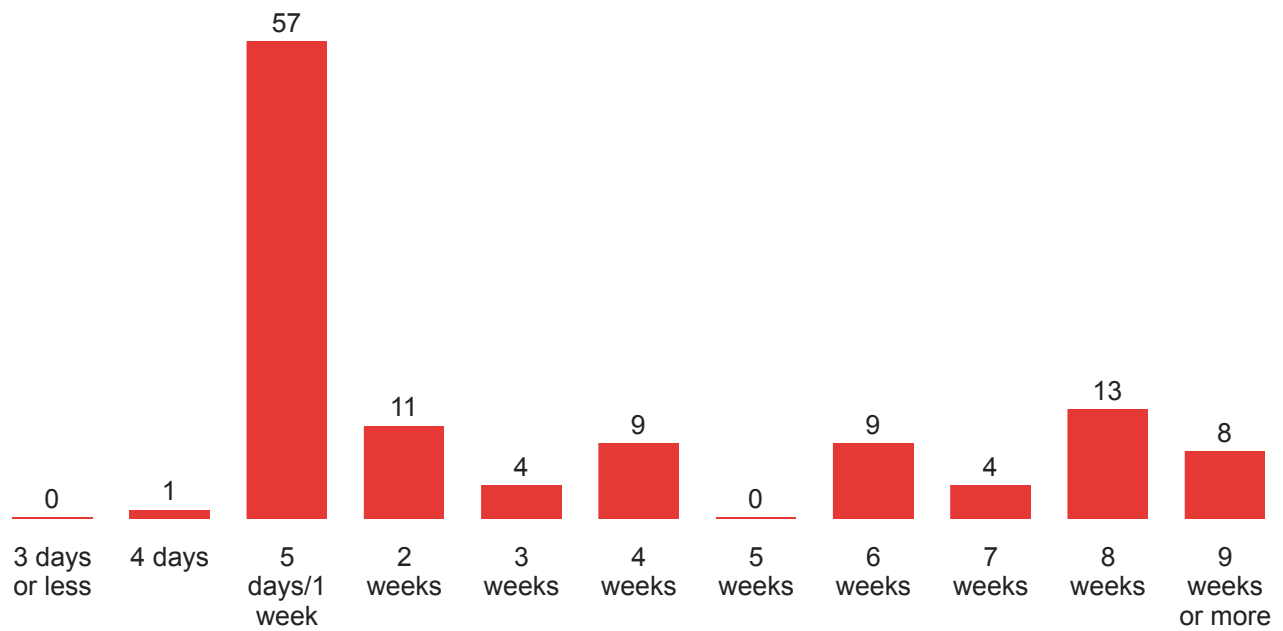
Length of Session Offerings	Percentage of Responses
3 days or less	11.21%
4 days	4.31%
5 days/1 week	55.17%
2 weeks	26.72%
3 weeks	14.66%
4 weeks	23.28%
5 weeks	17.24%
6 weeks	21.55%
7 weeks	23.28%
8 weeks	25.86%
9 weeks or more	21.55%

### Most Typical Session Offering

The most typical session offering among the day camps that responded to this survey was one week. A little over a quarter of day camps reported a typical session offering of five weeks or more.

*Which of the following is your most typical session offering?*

116 Responses



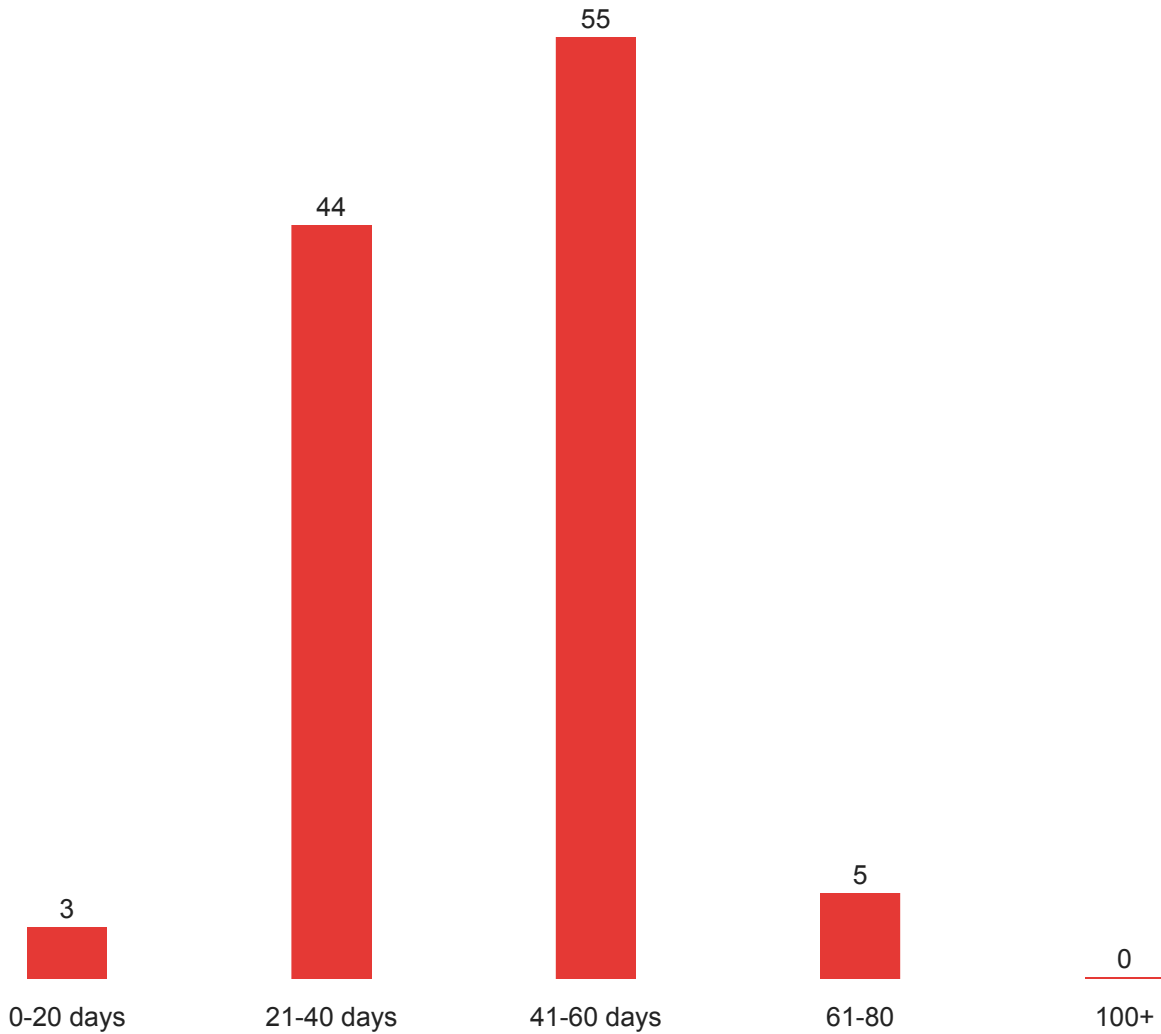
Length of Session	Percentage
3 days or less	0.00%
4 days	0.86%
5 days/1 week	49.14%
2 weeks	9.48%
3 weeks	3.45%
4 weeks	7.76%
5 weeks	0.00%
6 weeks	7.76%
7 weeks	3.45%
8 weeks	11.21%
9 weeks or more	6.90%

### Total Days of Active Programming Summer 2019

Most day camp only camps reported 21-60 days of active programming during the 2019 summer. The greatest number of day camp only camps reported that they offered 41-60 days of active programming. Many other camps reported offering 21-40 days of active programming.

*How many total days of active programming did you offer in Summer 2019?*

107 Responses



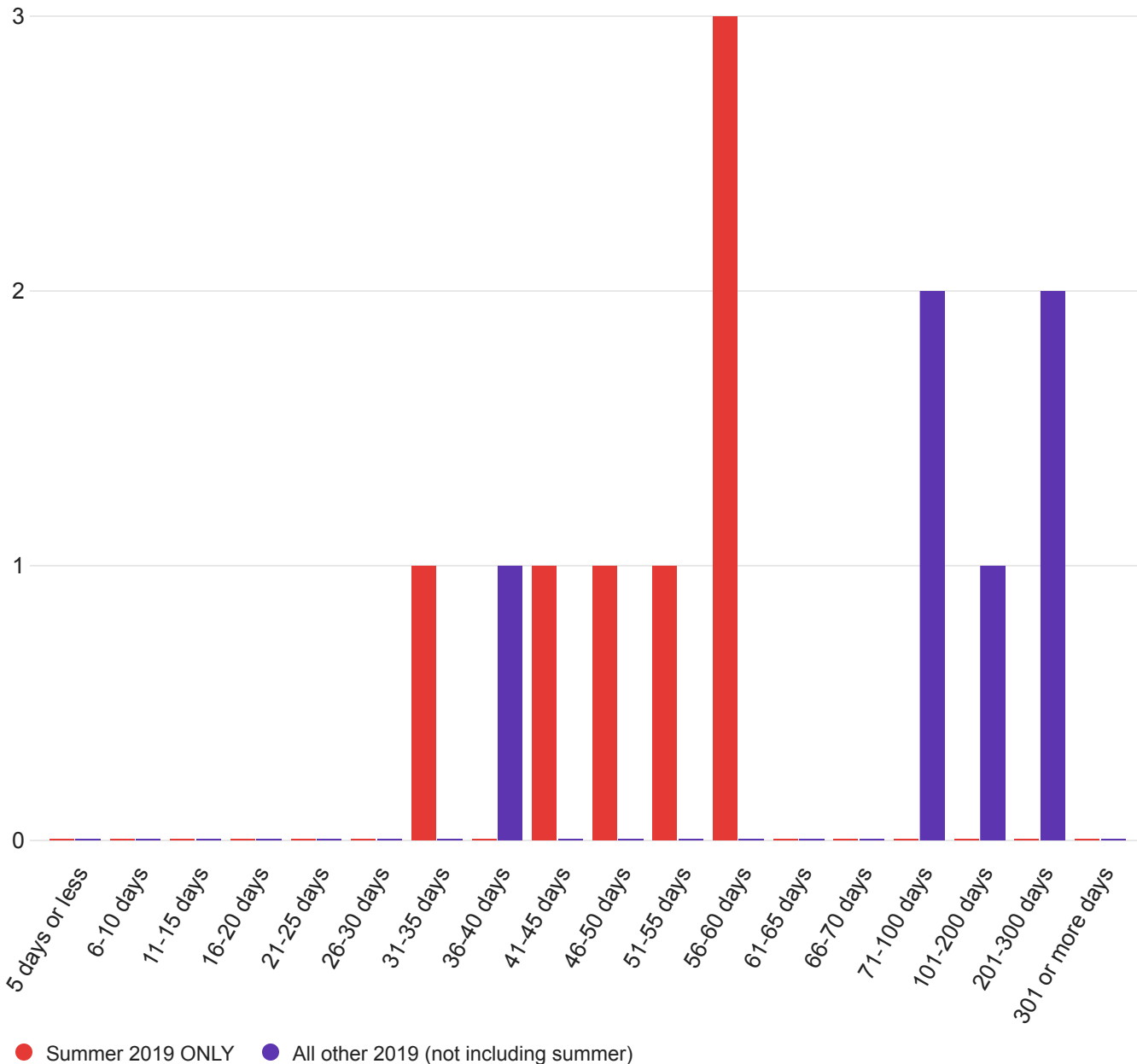
Days	Percentage of Choices
0-20 days	2.80%
21-40 days	41.12%
41-60 days	51.40%
61-80	4.67%
100+	0.00%

### Camps that Operate Year-round - Total Days of Programming

Some day camp only camps reported that they operated year-round. Of the camps that reported operating year-round, many camps reported offering over 71 days of programming during the rest of the year (excluding summer). This same group of camps reported anticipating offering 31-60 days of programming during the summer, with the most common being 56-60 days.

*How many total days of programming do you anticipate offering in 2019?*

7 Responses

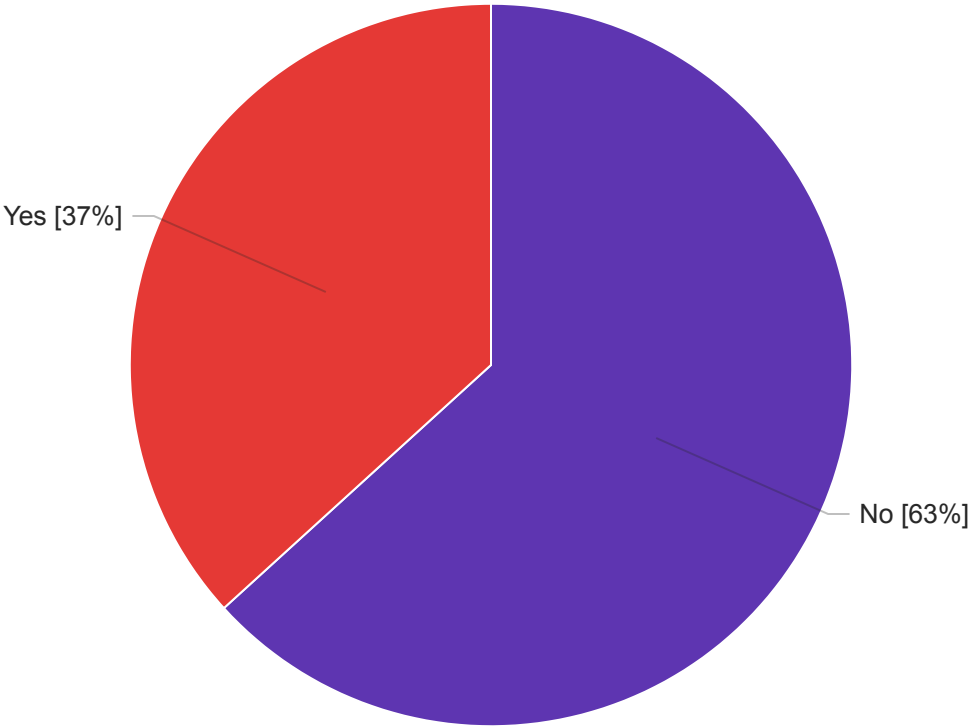


### Partnership with Outside Organizations

Around two-thirds of day camps that responded to this survey did not partner with outside organizations for programming or recruitment.

*Do you partner with one or more outside organizations (e.g., for programming or recruitment)?  
Note: Partnership is defined as a collaborative, mutually beneficial arrangement between two organizations.*

117 Responses



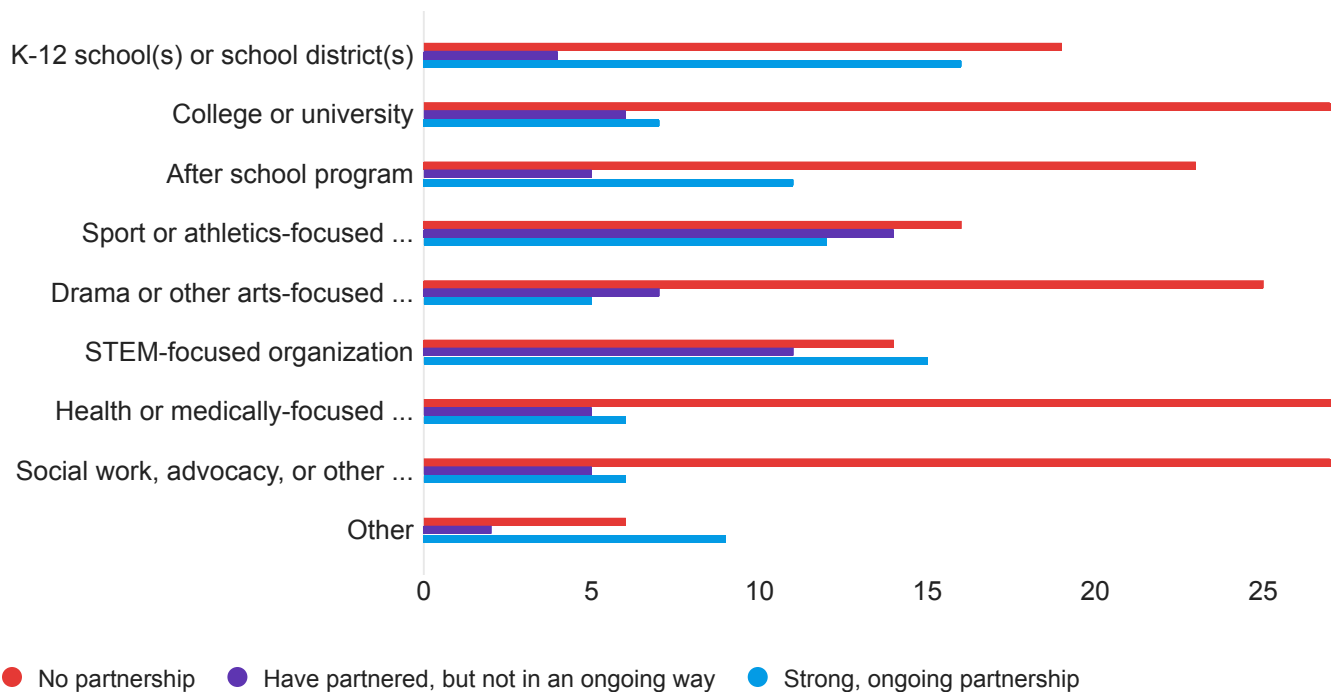
Partnership?	Choice Count
Yes	43
No	74

## Partnership Organization Type

Day camp only camps reported having partnerships with a variety of organizations. The most commonly reported organization that day camp only camps had strong, ongoing partnerships with was a K-12 school or school district. Day camps also said they have had partnerships with STEM-focused and sports organization.

*Please tell us if and how your camp partners with the following organizations*

43 Responses



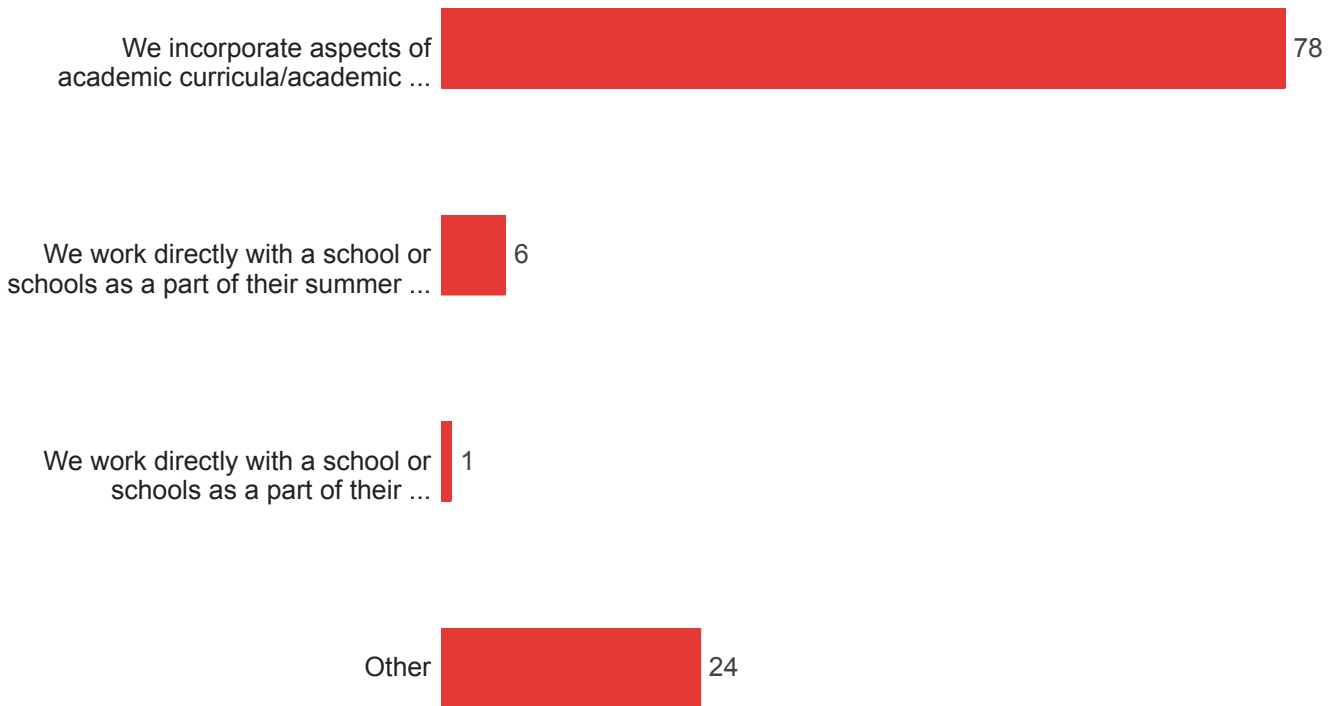
Partnership Organization	No partnership	Have partnered, but not in an ongoing way	Strong, ongoing partnership
K-12 school(s) or school district(s)	48.72%	10.26%	41.03%
STEM-focused organization	35.00%	27.50%	37.50%
Sport or athletics-focused organization	38.10%	33.33%	28.57%
After school program	58.97%	12.82%	28.21%
College or university	67.50%	15.00%	17.50%
Social work, advocacy, or other youth support organization	71.05%	13.16%	15.79%
Health or medically-focused organization	71.05%	13.16%	15.79%
Drama or other arts-focused organization	67.57%	18.92%	13.51%
Other	35.29%	11.76%	52.94%

### Camp's Relationship to Academic Curricula and/or School

Almost three-quarters of day camps that responded to this survey reported incorporating aspects of academic curricula/academic standards into their camp programming. Very few camps said they worked directly with schools during the summer or school year.

*Select the option that best describes your camp's relationship to academic curricula and/or school: - Selected Choice*

109 Responses



Relationship to Academics	Percentage
We incorporate aspects of academic curricula/academic standards into camp programming	71.56%
We work directly with a school or schools as a part of their academic program during the school year	0.92%
We work directly with a school or schools as a part of their summer program	5.50%
Other	22.02%

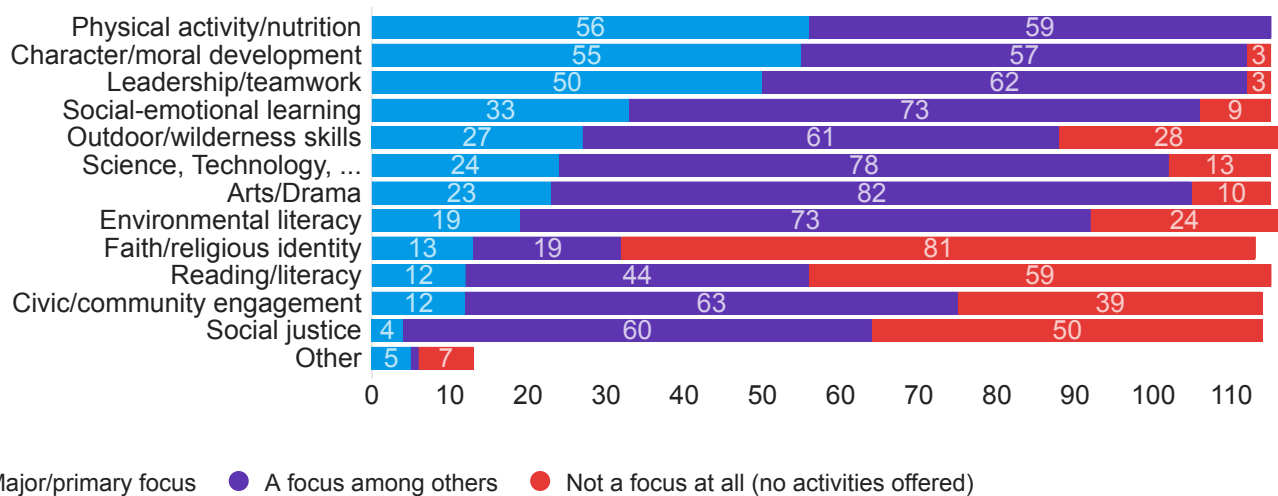


## Focus of Programming

About half of day camp only camps said that physical activity/nutrition (49%) and character/moral development (47%) were major focuses of their programming. Another large number of camps reported leadership/teamwork (43%) and social-emotional learning (29%) as other major programming foci. Very few camps reported civic/community engagement, social justice, and reading/literacy as foci of their programming.

*Describe if and to what extent the following represent a focus of your programming:*

116 Responses



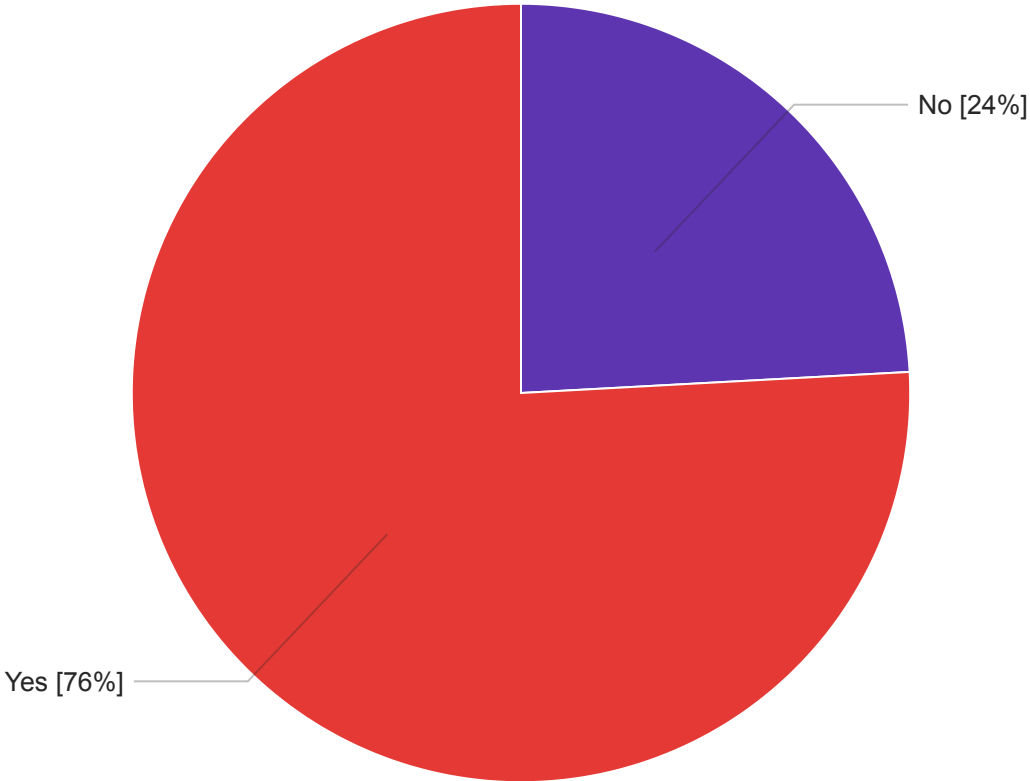
Focus	Not a focus at all (no activities offered)	A focus among others	Major/primary focus
Physical activity/nutrition	0.00%	51.30%	48.70%
Character/moral development	2.61%	49.57%	47.83%
Leadership/teamwork	2.61%	53.91%	43.48%
Social-emotional learning	7.83%	63.48%	28.70%
Outdoor/wilderness skills	24.14%	52.59%	23.28%
Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM)	11.30%	67.83%	20.87%
Arts/Drama	8.70%	71.30%	20.00%
Environmental literacy	20.69%	62.93%	16.38%
Faith/religious identity	71.68%	16.81%	11.50%
Civic/community engagement	34.21%	55.26%	10.53%
Reading/literacy	51.30%	38.26%	10.43%
Social justice	43.86%	52.63%	3.51%
Other	53.85%	7.69%	38.46%

### Counselor or Leader-in-training Programs

About three-quarters of day camp only camps reported having a CIT or LIT program.

*Do you have a counselor- or leader-in-training type program (e.g., CIT, LIT)?*

116 Responses



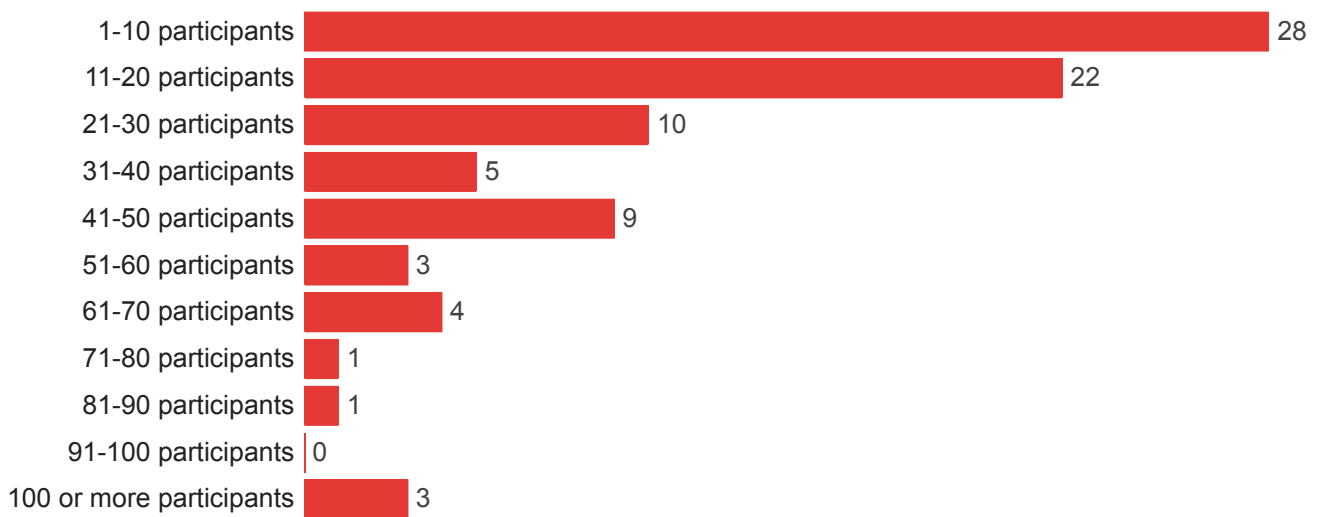
CIT/LIT Program?	Choice Count
Yes	88
No	28

### Total CIT/LIT 2019 Enrollment

Most day camp only camps that reported having a CIT/LIT program said they had 1-20 participants. About 33% of day camps with CIT/LIT programs had 1-10 participants.

*What is the approximate enrollment in your CIT program? Please estimate total unique individuals across all CIT programs/sessions in 2019 (do not count repeat participants more than once).*

86 Responses



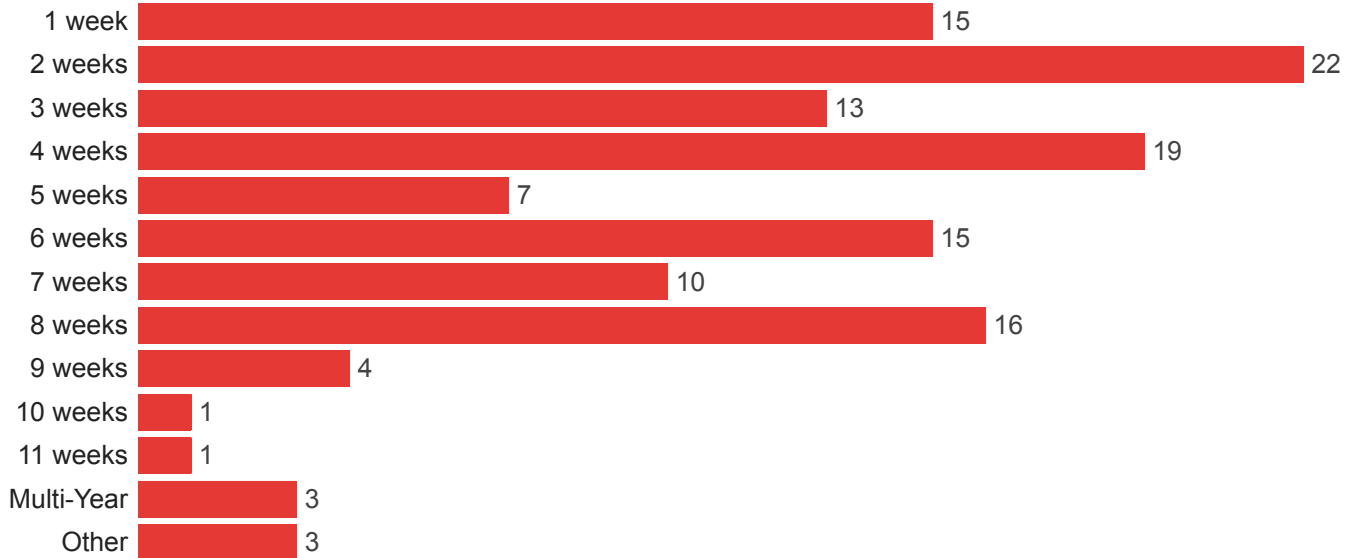
# of Participants	Percentage
1-10 participants	32.56%
11-20 participants	25.58%
21-30 participants	11.63%
31-40 participants	5.81%
41-50 participants	10.47%
51-60 participants	3.49%
61-70 participants	4.65%
71-80 participants	1.16%
81-90 participants	1.16%
91-100 participants	0.00%
100 or more participants	3.49%

### Typical CIT/LIT Program Length

Most day camp only camps said their CIT/LIT programs were 1-8 weeks in length. The most frequently reported program length was 2 weeks. The next most common length was 4 weeks.

*About how long is a typical CIT session/program duration? Select all that apply. - Selected Choice*

88 Responses



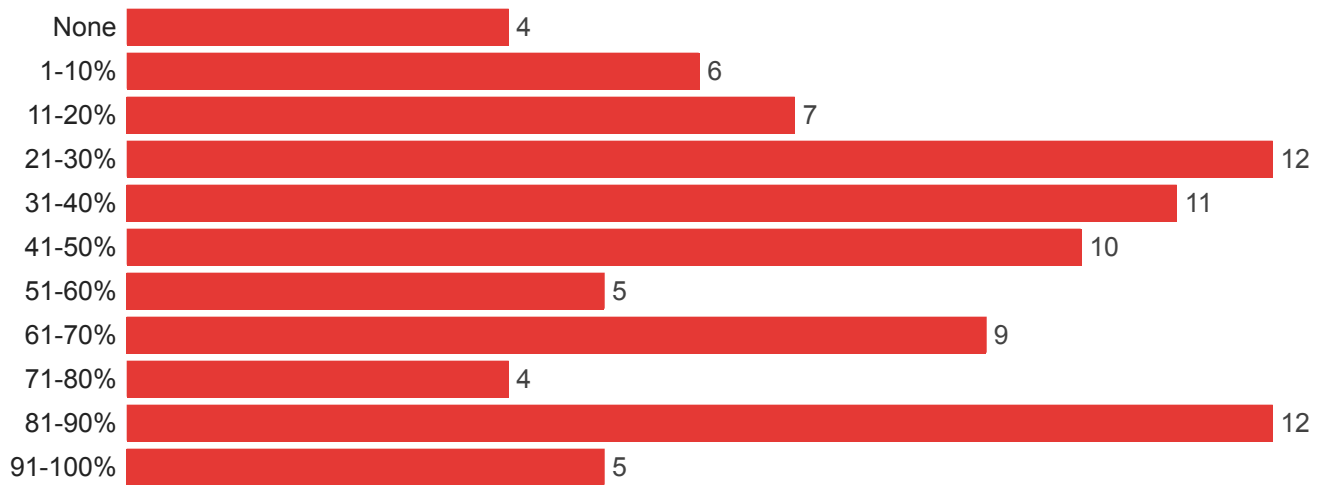
Length of Session	Percentage of Responses
1 week	17.05%
2 weeks	25.00%
3 weeks	14.77%
4 weeks	21.59%
5 weeks	7.95%
6 weeks	17.05%
7 weeks	11.36%
8 weeks	18.18%
9 weeks	4.55%
10 weeks	1.14%
11 weeks	1.14%
Multi-Year	3.41%
Other	3.41%

### Percentage of CIT/LIT Participants that Become Staff

Day camp only camps that have CIT/LIT programs said that many of their participants became a staff member at their camps. About 39% of camps said that 21%-50% returned as staff. Another large number of camps reported that 81%-90% of CIT/LIT participants returned as staff.

*About what percent of 2019 CIT program participants go on to become a staff member at your camp?*

85 Responses



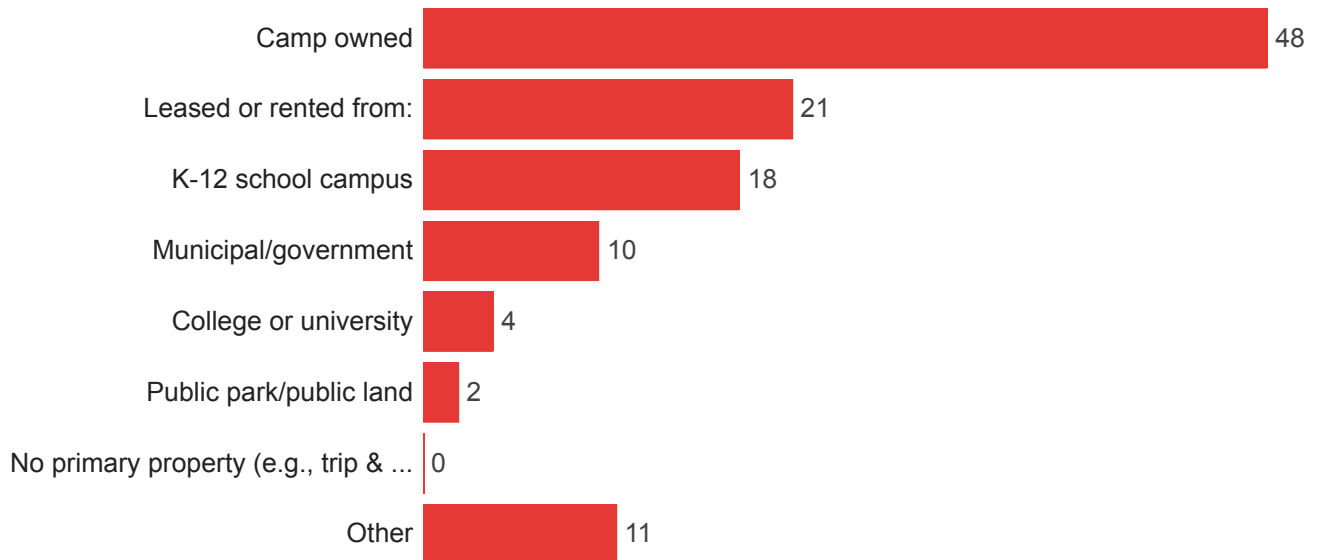
% of Participants that Become Staff	Percentage
None	4.71%
1-10%	7.06%
11-20%	8.24%
21-30%	14.12%
31-40%	12.94%
41-50%	11.76%
51-60%	5.88%
61-70%	10.59%
71-80%	4.71%
81-90%	14.12%
91-100%	5.88%

## Property Ownership of Programming Location

About 42% of day camp only camps owned the property where they provide programming. Other day camp only camps leased the property where they provided programming (18%) or operated on a K-12 school campus (16%).

*Who owns the property on which your primary camp programming occurs? - Selected Choice*

114 Responses



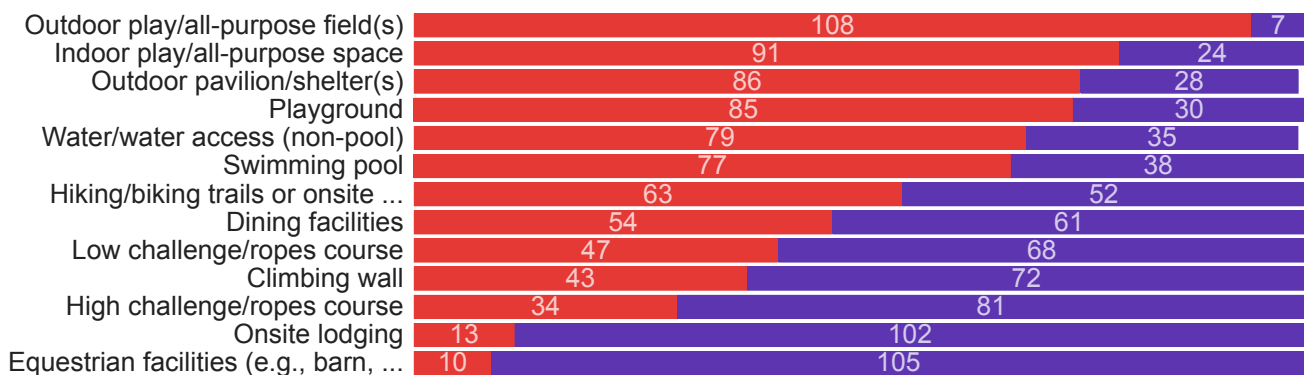
Property Owner	Percentage
Camp owned	42%
Leased or rented from:	18%
K-12 school campus	16%
Municipal/government	9%
College or university	4%
Public park/public land	2%
No primary property (e.g., trip & travel program)	0%
Other	10%

## Features Available on Property

Day camp only camps have many features available on properties where they provide programming. The most frequently reported features included: outdoor/all purpose fields, indoor all-purpose space, outdoor pavilions, playgrounds, access to non-pool water, and swimming pools. Relatively few camps reported having equestrian facilities, onsite lodging, and challenge courses.

*Indicate whether you do or do not have access to the following features on your camp property or the property on which your camp programming occurs.*

115 Responses



● Yes ● No

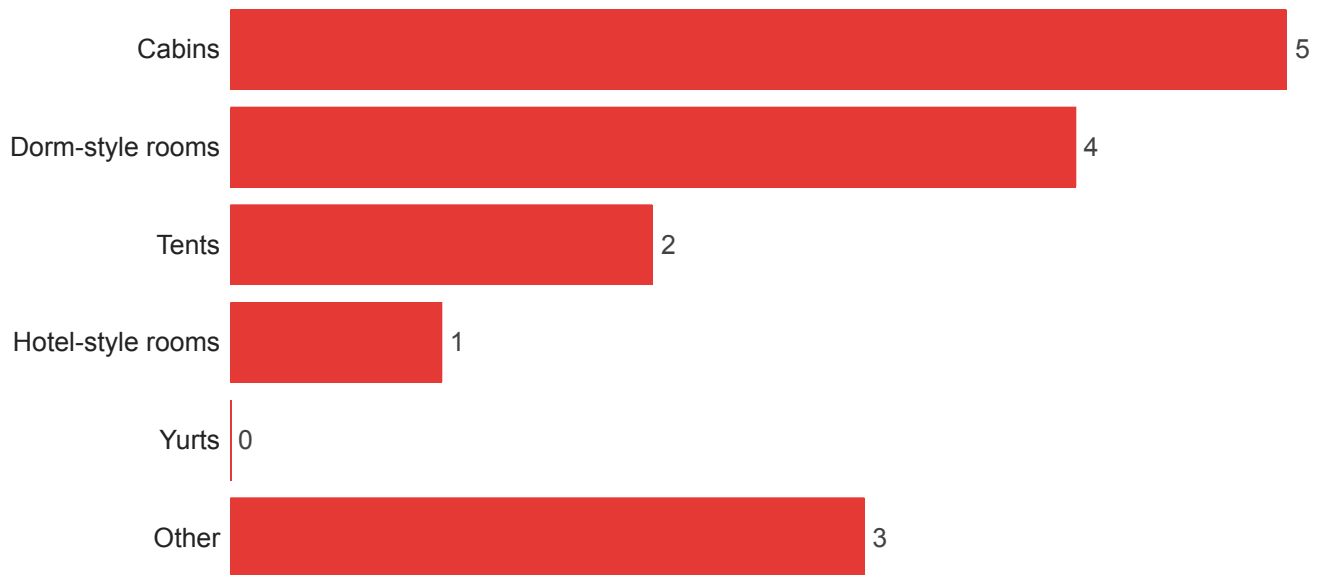
Feature	Yes	No
Onsite lodging	11.30%	88.70%
Dining facilities	46.96%	53.04%
Outdoor pavilion/shelter(s)	75.44%	24.56%
Outdoor play/all-purpose field(s)	93.91%	6.09%
Water/water access (non-pool)	69.30%	30.70%
Swimming pool	66.96%	33.04%
Climbing wall	37.39%	62.61%
High challenge/ropes course	29.57%	70.43%
Low challenge/ropes course	40.87%	59.13%
Indoor play/all-purpose space	79.13%	20.87%
Equestrian facilities (e.g., barn, riding ring)	8.70%	91.30%
Hiking/biking trails or onsite access to trails	54.78%	45.22%
Playground	73.91%	26.09%

## Type of Onsite Lodging

Very few camps reported having onsite lodging. Of the camps that reported having onsite lodging, the most common type of onsite lodging was cabins. Some camps also reported having dorm-style rooms and tents as types of onsite lodging.

*What type of onsite lodging do you have? Please select all that apply. - Selected Choice*

11 Responses



Type of Onsite Lodging	Percentage of Responses
Cabins	45.45%
Dorm-style rooms	36.36%
Tents	18.18%
Hotel-style rooms	9.09%
Yurts	0.00%
Other	27.27%

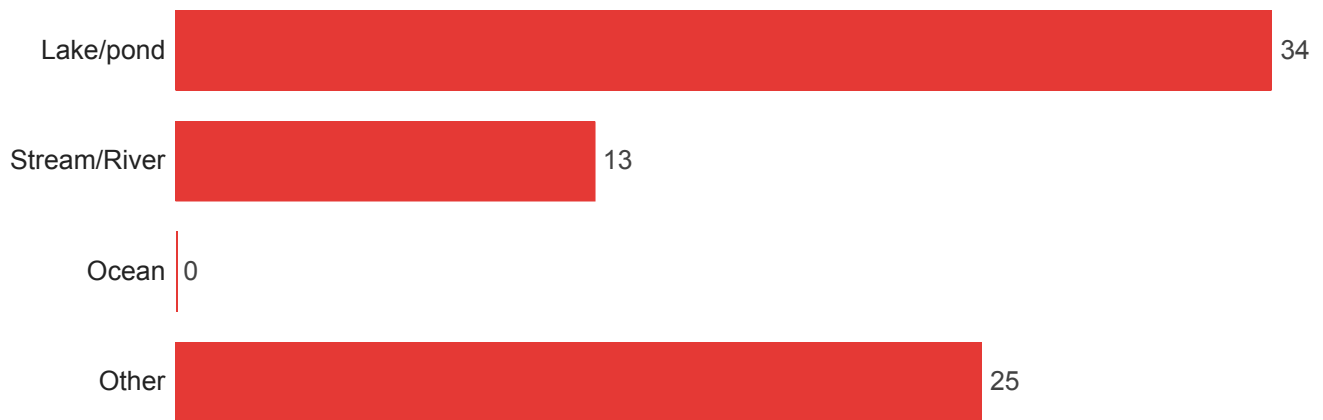


### Type of Non-pool Water Access

About 47% of day camp only camps indicated that they had access to a lake or pond on their property. About 18% reported having access to a river or stream. No camps reported having access to the ocean.

*Which of the following best describes water access on your camp property: - Selected Choice*

72 Responses



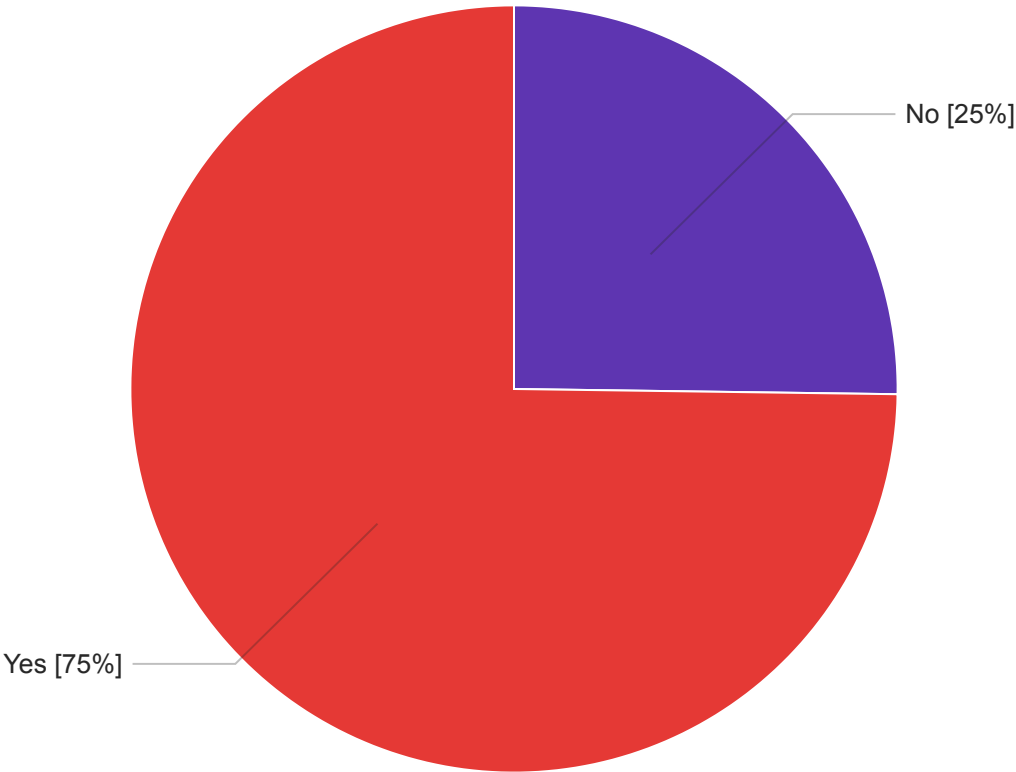
Type of Non-pool Water	Percentage
Lake/pond	47.22%
Stream/River	18.06%
Ocean	0.00%
Other	34.72%

### Travel from Camp for Programming

Three quarters of day camp only camps said that their participants travel away from the primary camp location at some point during the session.

*Do your participants travel away from your primary camp location (e.g., for field trips or for regular programming)?*

115 Responses



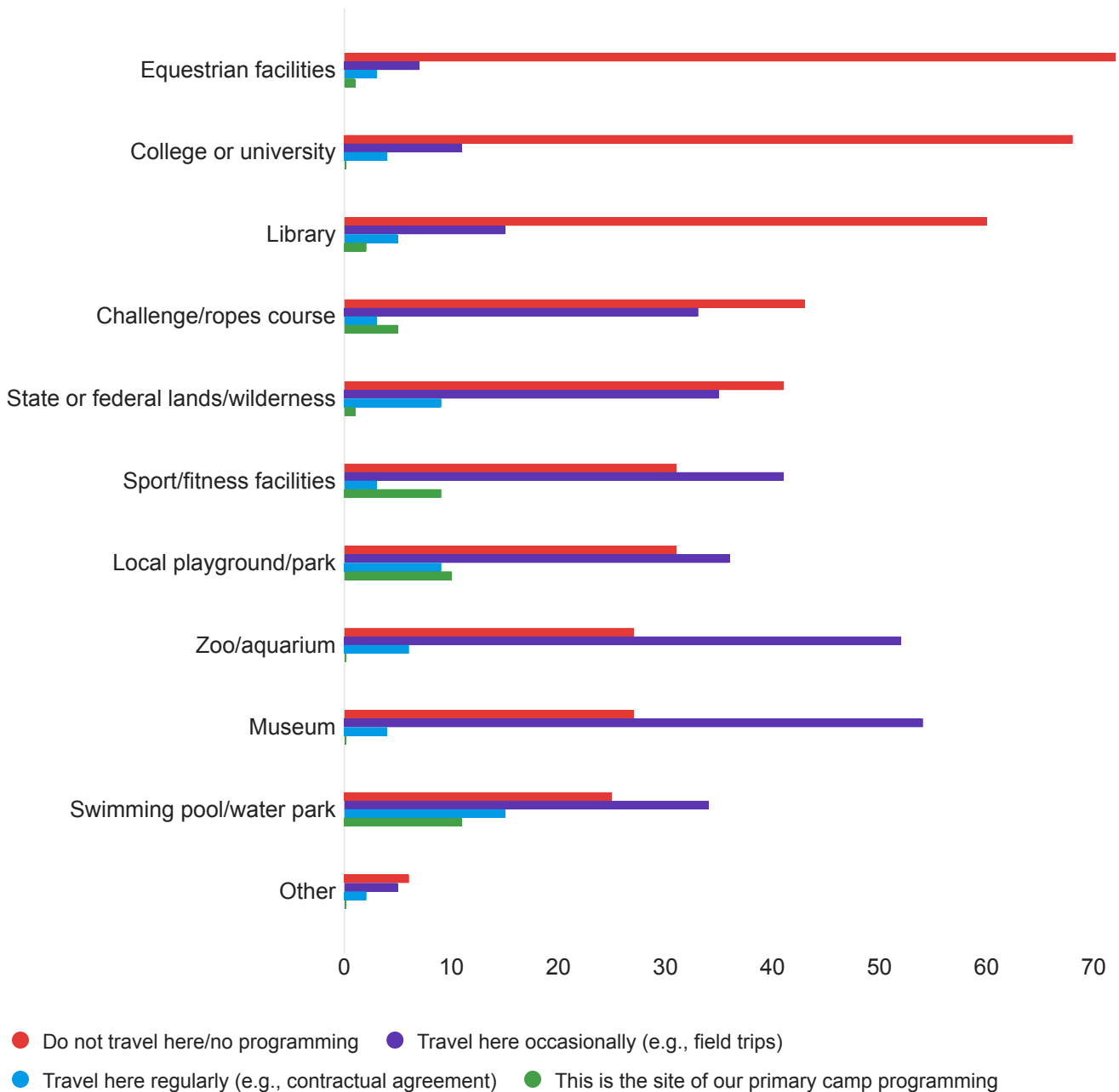
Travel?	Choice Count
Yes	86
No	29

### Off-site Programming Location

Some day camp only camps travel from their primary camp property to do various types of programming with their participants. The most commonly reported location visited for off-site programming were museums, zoos, and sports facilities. Day camp only camps seldom traveled to equestrian facilities.

*Please describe if and how you use the following sites/facilities for off-site programming:*

86 Responses



Off-site Location	Do not travel here/no programming	Travel here occasionally (e.g., field trips)	Travel here regularly (e.g., contractual agreement)	This is the site of our primary camp programming
Equestrian facilities	86.75%	8.43%	3.61%	1.20%
College or university	81.93%	13.25%	4.82%	0.00%
Library	73.17%	18.29%	6.10%	2.44%
Challenge/ropes course	51.19%	39.29%	3.57%	5.95%
State or federal lands/wilderness	47.67%	40.70%	10.47%	1.16%
Sport/fitness facilities	36.90%	48.81%	3.57%	10.71%
Local playground/park	36.05%	41.86%	10.47%	11.63%
Zoo/aquarium	31.76%	61.18%	7.06%	0.00%
Museum	31.76%	63.53%	4.71%	0.00%
Swimming pool/water park	29.41%	40.00%	17.65%	12.94%
Other	46.15%	38.46%	15.38%	0.00%