



american **CAMP** association®

Youth Impact Study

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The American Camp Association's 5-Year Impact Study is a groundbreaking national study exploring how camp prepares youth for college, career, and life. Specifically, the study examines . . .



How families choose and prepare for camp



Camp practices that lead to lasting learning



Unique outcomes of camp that prepare campers to thrive in . . .

CAREER ACADEMICS LIFE

ACA's Impact Study is conducted by researchers at the University of Utah and is under the direction of an all-volunteer research advisory committee. Participants are former campers, current campers, staff, and parents affiliated with a sample of approximately 70 ACA-accredited camps selected based on location, camp type, and clientele.

PHASE 1 — Themes from the Exploratory Phase



- Former campers report that relationship skills, appreciation for others' differences, emotional regulation, and responsibility were among the things they learned at camp that they consider most important in their lives today.
- Former campers say that camp helped prepare them for school and the workplace.
- Opportunities to be present in the moment, to explore one's identity, and to learn through direct experiences were reported as key factors that make camp a distinct learning context.

PHASE 2 — Findings from the Mapping Phase



- Relationship skills, appreciation for living in the moment, independence, responsibility, and appreciation for individual differences are among the things participants reported learning at camp that are most important in their lives today and learning outcomes that appear to be most unique to camp.
- When compared to school, camp appears to uniquely promote an appreciation for living in the moment, an affinity for nature, and a willingness to try new things, among other outcomes.
- Participants reported that the most powerful source of lasting learning was the people at camp — camp staff and their peers. Opportunities for active engagement and, at overnight camps, the separation from home were also identified as mechanisms for growth.

PHASE 3 — Status of the Multi-Year Phase



- Recruited 460 campers (nine- and ten-year-olds) and their parents from about 50 ACA-accredited camps to participate in this three-year phase.
- Surveyed and interviewed campers and parents in fall 2018 to learn more about decision-making related to camp during the past summer, learning outcomes of the camper's time at camp, and features of the campers' time at camp that were most impactful.
- Participants will continue to complete surveys and interviews up to four times a year for the next three years.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT THE 5-YEAR CAMP IMPACT STUDY](#)