

Impact Study Highlights Long-Term Outcomes of SeriousFun Camps

2018 Study Conducted by the American Camp Association and the University of Utah



SeriousFun Children's Network is a global community of 30 camps and programs serving children with serious illnesses and their families, always free of charge. Following the founding of The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp by Paul Newman in 1988, he and other like-hearted individuals opened similar camps around the world, ultimately joining together to form SeriousFun Children's Network. Thanks to a shared vision and collective contributions, the Network has evolved to become the leader in the field of medical specialty camps, delivering more than one million life-changing experiences to children and families from more than 50 countries.

Three decades after Paul Newman opened the first camp, the immediate impact of the SeriousFun camp experience is still as important as ever, but the lasting impact is truly changing lives. **In 2018, The American Camp Association (ACA) and the University of Utah worked with SeriousFun to carry out a Youth Impact Study to understand the long-term learning outcomes of the camp experiences on children living with serious illnesses who attended a SeriousFun camp.**

Alumni campers aged 18-25 from eight (8) SeriousFun camps across the United States, Hungary, and Ireland experienced a number of beneficial outcomes from camp that they now consider useful in their daily, adult lives. The most prominent of those outcomes were:

- Appreciation for diversity
- Living in the moment
- Empathy and compassion
- Perseverance
- Self-confidence
- Self-identity

They also conveyed that they learned these outcomes primarily at camp, compared to other environments like home or school. For them, camp was a unique experience that allowed them to develop these outcomes in a supportive and encouraging environment.



Alumni campers also responded that the aspect of camp that most supported the development of these outcomes was the people. Camp leaders, staff, and volunteers were the people who created the environment in which campers' positive experiences and outcomes thrived.