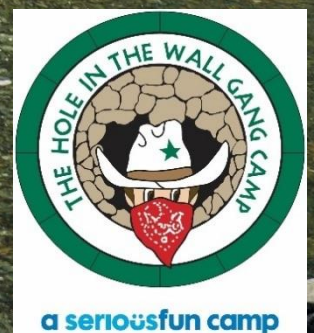


2018 The Hero's Journey® Program Outcomes Evaluation Report



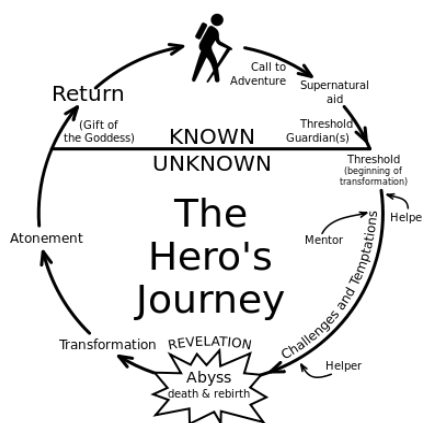
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The Hero's Journey® program at The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp is a seven-day, wilderness-based program for young adults whose lives have been impacted by a chronic or life-threatening illness, especially cancer and blood disorders.

As part of their experience, campers live outdoors for a week. They practice low-impact camping skills, search and rescue, and wilderness first aid. They face an increasing level of challenge throughout the week, both individually and as a group, helping to foster interpersonal communication skills and leadership.

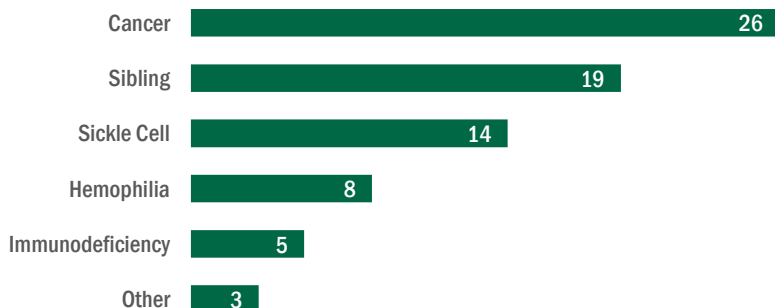
“Some of these youngsters have come to Camp over the course of many years,” notes Chief Executive Officer Jimmy Canton. “It is very moving to see them build their confidence level over the course of the week and take on the role of caregivers and helpers – given that they themselves had been the ones being cared for in the past.”

The Hero's Journey program is grounded in Joseph Campbell's 1949 book, “The Hero With A Thousand Faces.” Crafted as a rite of passage to help youth answer “what's next?”, the Hero's Journey program mirrors the journey taken by mythological and real heroes as they heed the call to adventure and move from the known into the unknown (containing challenges, revelations and transformations) and return to the known. The Hero's Journey® mark is used under license from the Joseph Campbell Foundation (www.jcf.org).



In 2018, the Hero's Journey program served 75 youth aged 16-18 in groups of 6-19 over six sessions of seven days each, and 64 participants completed surveys. Two nurses, seven counselors, two program administrators, two volunteers, and one volunteer nurse supervised each session of Hero's Journey.

2018 Hero's Journey Participant Diagnoses



Activities in the Hero's Journey program included a variety and progression of activities designed to support participants' personal growth and teamwork. Examples of activities include the solo, journaling, the maze, tyrolean, nighttime tower climb, fire council, overnight backpacking trip, key and mask ceremonies, wilderness first aid, and search and rescue.

This summer, we focused on evaluating the short-term outcomes, as identified in the Hero's Journey program theory of change (see Appendix). The purpose of the evaluation was to understand potential changes in "comfort zones," self-discovery, teamwork, social skills, and appreciation of nature and simple living from the perspectives of participants and parents/caregivers. We added a new set of questions this year asking participants to identify which short-term outcome was most influenced by each program activity.

Methods

Parents and caregivers gave their children permission to participate in the evaluation. Evaluation participants completed the questionnaires on their last afternoon at the Hero's Journey program, using iPads with the iSurvey app. A collaborative approach toward scale creation included conversations and review with key program staff.

Sixty-four of 75 Hero's Journey participants completed surveys on their last full day of the program, and 48 parents/caregivers completed online surveys after the program.

This evaluation covers the six sessions of the Hero's Journey program held during summer 2018. It does not include the canoe trip or Strides programs.

RESULTS

Overview

Participants reported increasing in self-discovery, stepping outside their comfort zones, teamwork, appreciation of nature and simple living, and social skills.

Self-discovery was most influenced by fire council, journaling, key ceremony, mask ceremony, maze, night climb and river of life.

Teamwork was most influenced by meal task groups, mock rescue, multi-swing, search and rescue, solo, and wilderness first aid.

Stepping outside of comfort zones was most influenced by tyrolean, expedition to remote sites and maze.

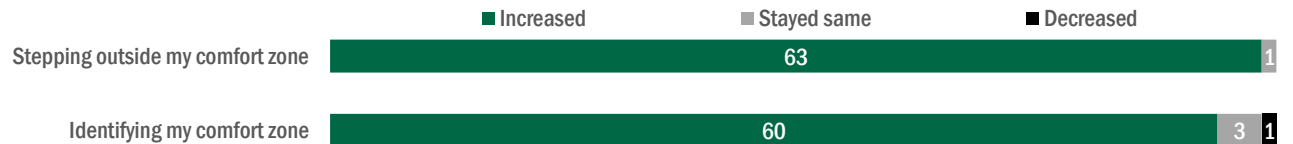
Parents and caregivers reported high satisfaction with the Hero's Journey program and remarked on many positive changes they saw in their children after the program.

Participants engaged in self-discovery at the Hero's Journey program.



Self-discovery average: 2.6 (SD: .63) on a scale of -1 (decreased) to 3 (increased a lot).

Participants stepped outside their comfort zones at the Hero's Journey program.



Comfort zone average: 2.7 (SD: .71) on a scale of -1 (decreased) to 3 (increased a lot).

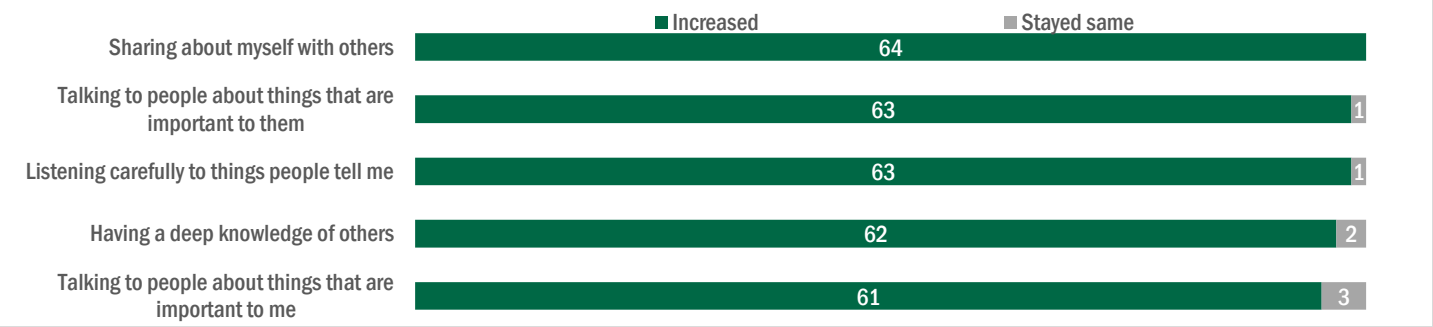


Participants practiced teamwork at the Hero's Journey program.



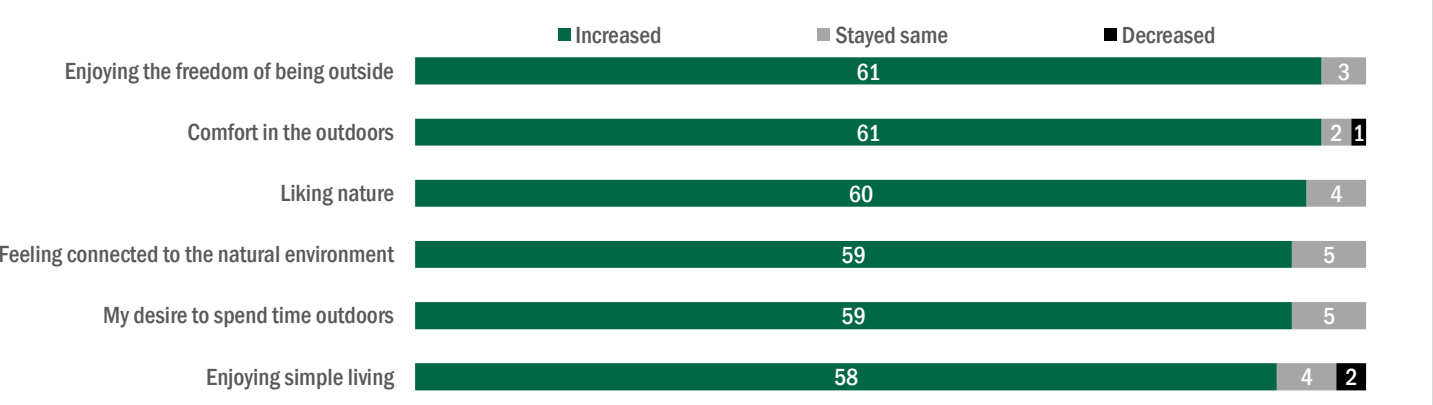
Teamwork average: 2.7 (SD: .67) on a scale of -1 (decreased) to 3 (increased a lot).

Participants learned **social skills** at the Hero's Journey program.

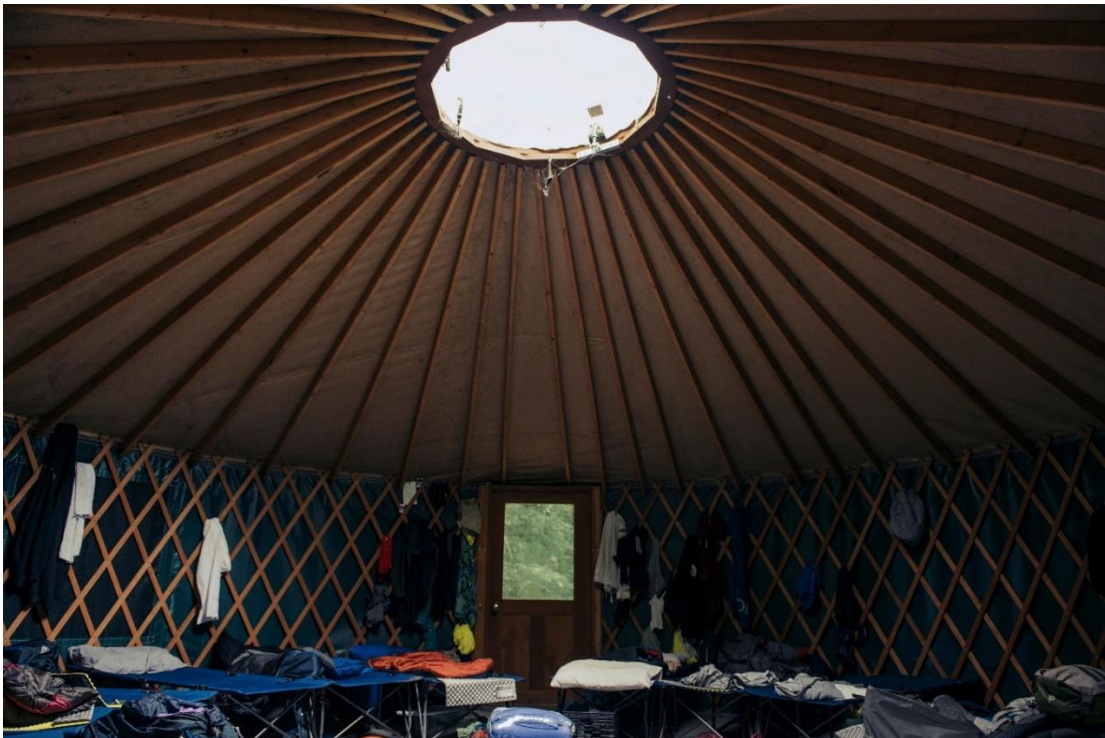


Social skills average: 2.6 (SD: .61) on a scale of -1 (decreased) to 3 (increased a lot).

Participants appreciated **nature and simple living** at the Hero's Journey program.



Appreciation average: 2.8 (SD: .83) on a scale of -1 (decreased) to 3 (increased a lot).



What activities affected what participant outcomes?

Stepping outside my comfort zone	Teamwork skills	Social skills	Self-discovery
Appreciation of nature and simple living	Other		

The *Expedition to Remote Sites* most affected...



Other (blue): It affected me in the way where I could open up myself and created lifetime friendships, so it opened me up in a way I really can't describe.

The *Fire Council* most affected...



Other (blue): learning to listen to others personal stories; listening to other's stories; my appreciation of other people and their stories; understanding others' problems; opening up about myself.

Journaling most affected...



Other (blue): appreciation of journaling; enjoying other things outside of technology; taking my life in a different perspective and thinking about my day; taking the time to think for myself; I couldn't write.

Stepping outside my comfort zone	Teamwork skills	Social skills	Self-discovery
Appreciation of nature and simple living	Other		

The *Key Ceremony* most affected...



Other (blue): learning things that other people liked about me; hearing about myself.

The *Mask Ceremony* most affected...



Meal Task Groups most affected...



The *Maze* most affected...



Other (blue): my determination; my ability to ask for help; my inability to ask for help (2); my confidence to ask for help; to learn how to asking for help is not a bad thing or makes me weak; my realization that it's ok to ask for help.

Stepping outside my comfort zone	Teamwork skills	Social skills	Self-discovery
Appreciation of nature and simple living	Other		

The *Mock Rescue* most affected...



Other (blue): helping people out; learning my leadership skills; my confidence in helping.

The *Multi-Swing* most affected...



Other (blue): it didn't really affect me at all but if you're talking about the aftermath it did affect.

The *Night Climb* most affected...



Other (blue): we didn't get to do this (6); trusting the people around me; my love for adventure.

The *River of Life* most affected...



Other (blue): learning to open up to others

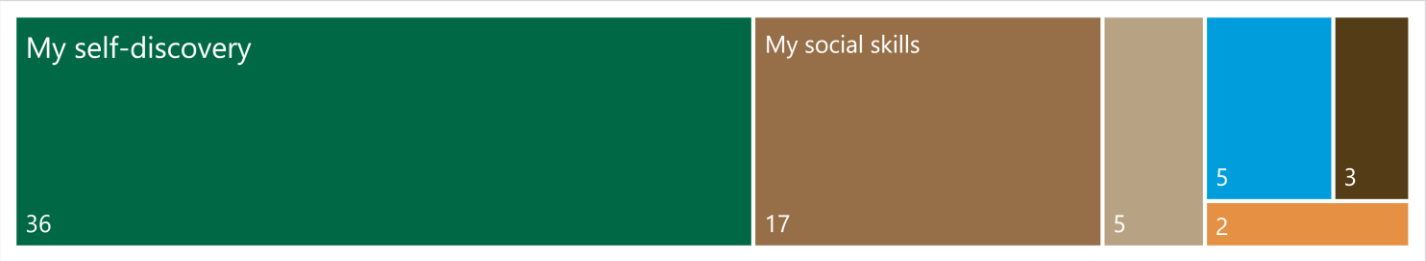
Stepping outside my comfort zone	Teamwork skills	Social skills	Self-discovery
Appreciation of nature and simple living	Other		

Search and Rescue most affected...



Other (blue): both teamwork and social skills were strongly affected.

Solo most affected...



Other (blue): my communication skills; my mentality.

Tyrolean most affected...



Other (blue): teamwork and stepping outside of my comfort zone; my love for adventure.

Wilderness First Aid most affected...



Other (blue): my knowledge skills; It helped me learn who to keep someone safe; basics in medical safety; my caring; social and teamwork skills were greatly impacted; being able to help others.

What were participants' favorite moments?

Six main themes emerged: *Night Climb*; *Bonding and connecting with new friends*; *Outdoor and simple living*; *Key ceremony*; *Going through the dining hall*, and; *Tyrolean*. Some participants chose more than one thing they liked best.

Night Climb (n = 20)

My favorite moment was the night climb, it was something I'll never forget. I'll never forget my friends who helped me get up.

Standing atop the tower after the night climb before the zip into the dark was an amazing moment where I got to really take in the moment and my life in general.

My favorite part is what [counselor] said to me at the top of night climb before I was allowed to fly. He told me to look at the past and that it represented my past, well known and familiar. But the zip was into my future and it was dark because I didn't know what it held and he wouldn't tell me either and finally he asked me to look at my feet and told me that they are what carry me through everything. He then freed me and said nothing is holding you back take your time but when you're ready take a leap into faith and leave behind your masks and worries as well as anything holding you back so be brave trust in the words of Joseph Campbell and become who I want to be and leave behind who I was. This was so impactful and put me tears and the moment when my weight went into the harness off the platform I had this huge gasp for air and it was so fresh and reviving.

Bonding and connecting with new friends (n = 15)

Having a great time laughing with my friends about some dumb things.

The last day when we are doing the survey, watching everyone mesh is pretty amazing.

Meeting new people and learning new things.

Outdoor and simple living (n = 9)

My favorite moment at Hero's journey was the first night with the Luna moths at the woods remote because everyone sat beside the fire and everyone had a deep convo and all I could think was how much of a family everyone was to me.

Going in the river after the trial of trials and washing myself off.

Key Ceremony (n = 9)

My favorite part of the Hero's Journey was the key ceremony. It was helpful in my self discovery and helped me figure out what I want in my future life.

The key ceremony and hearing what other people think about me.

Going Through the Dining Hall (n = 6)

Running through the dining hall with every one cheering for me and my team.

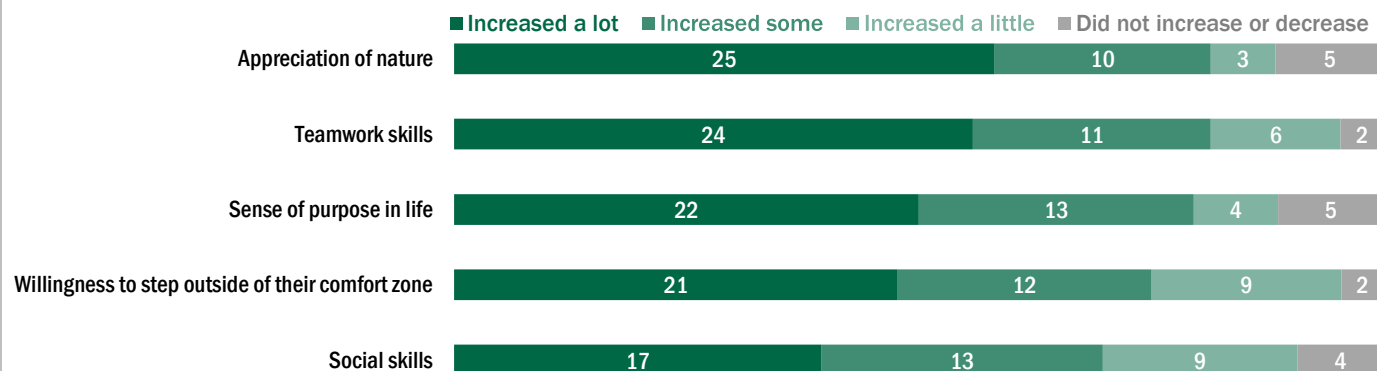
My favorite moment at Hero's journey is when we went back to camp and went to the dining hall and saw all of the counselors that been there for me when I was young and partiality grew up with they been by my side and I was so happy when I got to see their faces I came a long way 11 years and I felt so proud about it all.

Tyrolean (n = 5)

Others: downtime games, fire council, journaling and the maze.

Parents and Caregivers of Hero's Journey participants agreed.

Parents/caregivers reported their children increased in many psychosocial areas.



Numbers above reflect the number of responses for each question, not percentages.

Other areas of changed noticed by parents/caregivers included confidence, appreciation and feelings of accomplishment.

Confidence

My son had been going through some anxieties during the school year. As soon as he arrived at camp and upon his returning home, I had my happy and confident kid back!

My daughter is a quiet girl and was very happy with the rock name that was given to her. It was great blue heron which signified sitting quietly observing until taking off in strong flight. She was appreciated for who she is instead of being forced to be someone else. I think that helped her confidence.

Much more happier, more positive, stronger minder, braver about unknown future!

He is walking with a lot more self-assurance. We are able to cry together, and our conversations are more emotionally connected and meaningful. When he deviates from my expectations, I just have to remind him to act like the HERO he discovered at Hero's Journey and he snaps back into maturity. I remind him that he carries his HERO in his heart.

She is more empowered and inspired to be a better version of herself.

Her smile is brighter, and she has vowed to be more outgoing and social. I hope my daughter continues to be the Hero of her own story.

Appreciation

Empathy, happier, appreciates family more.

He said going to camp is feeling like he is home. He is so thankful.

He is happier. He is more content with who he is. He is deeply appreciative of camp.

This is the first year that our daughter talks non-stop about her experience at Camp. We have a 90 minute ride and she talked for about 70 them. It was great. No prodding or persuading: she just talked. She talked about how much she learned about herself and how much she changed even from the first day. She talked about her counselors and how supportive they were of her and how she felt strong being out there. She talked about her shock at not going to Lulu's cabin at the end of the first day and how she overcame that shock and just dived right into the experience. She talked about happy she is that she experienced Hero's Journey and has committed herself even more to Hole in the Wall. Thank you again.

Feelings of accomplishment

My son was able to reach goals at camp despite mobility issues, while he did come back exhausted and in need of a chiropractic adjustment (had back pain due to walking so much with a limp) he did get stronger, and his gait was noticeably more even after camp due to all the extra physical exercise. This meant/means a lot as he had plateaued in his healing and was frustrated with his limits. Though his reconstructed leg will never be the same as the original it was encouraging for him (and me) to see that he could keep up with the group/program while at Hero's Journey.

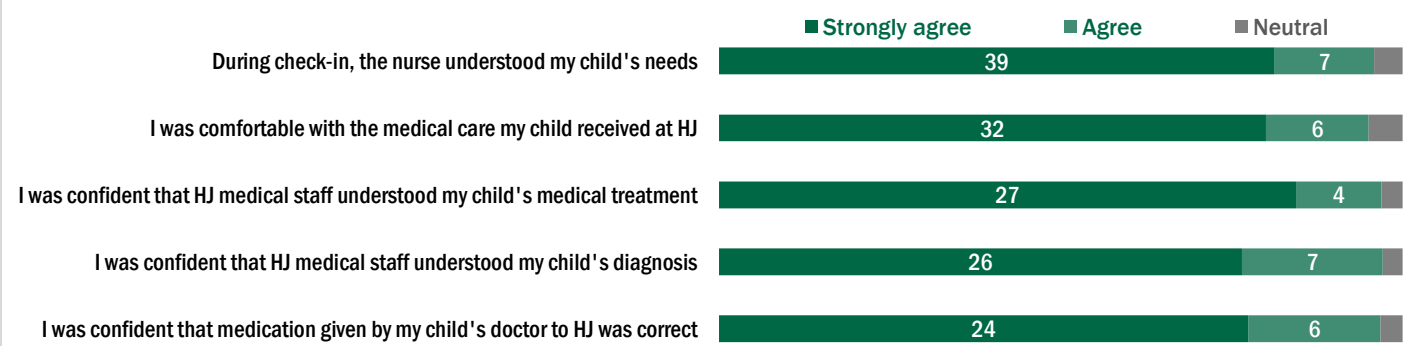
He was willing to try a new experience in the woods and he did so while dealing with some headaches. I don't think he would enjoy it so much and feel so connected to others.

Zak is a city kid who never went camping before. This was a game changer!

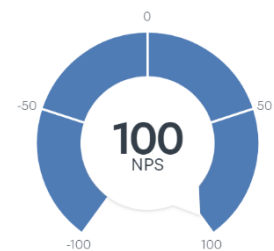
Although it's only been 1 day back home, my child made some college decisions for the next 2 years.

He wants to do much better at school this year. He has a business plan for his future.

Parents/caregivers had great confidence in the medical care of their children.



The Net Promoter Score (NPS) from parents/caregivers was 100. The NPS is an index ranging from -100 to 100 that measures the willingness of customers (in this case, the parents and caregivers of the Hero's Journey program participants) to recommend an organization's services to others. It is used as a proxy for gauging the customer's overall satisfaction with an organization's service and the customer's loyalty to the brand. All respondents to this survey were "promoters," and scored the Hero's Journey program as 10 out of 10.



Although there were a few suggestions for better communication before and during the program, most parents/caregivers also expressed gratitude for the positive experiences their children had during the Hero's Journey program.

The staff are so energetic, thorough, positive and motivated each camper. My child is so thankful that she participated in the program. My child left the program more empowered, inspired and to be a better version of herself. Thank you.

My Son had an amazing, life-altering time, you have an amazing camp, staff, volunteers.... Thank you!!!

He has now aged out of camp. Camp, including Hero's Journey, has significantly contributed to his life outlook, enthusiasm, confidence and desire to pay it forward - and to continue to "raise a little hell"!

As always my child had an awesome time. He was able to share with me many of his experiences. He spoke to me about his vulnerable fear, and consequently, came home acting somewhat more mature and self-assured. He was very proud of himself for bonding with his peers, sharing the responsibilities of camping in the wilderness, and learning to confront his fears. Thank you forever for unforgettable memories. I am proud to be able to call my son a Hole in the Wall Gang Camp alumni.

Our son absolutely loved his experience. My mom asked him if he made new friends, and he said he has a new family members. I think experiences like the ones he had will help him deal with his illness and with any life challenges. We can not convey in words the sense of gratitude we have for everyone involved with his experience. In the face of a devastating illness we have all been lucky to see the best in people. Thank you to all of the volunteers and staff for bringing so much joy to him and the other campers.

My daughter just told me about a group chat that the kids made. They really make a special bond. My other daughter that did it 3 years ago still wears her key on occasion. I am so grateful for the positive impact this has been for both of my daughters Thank you so much.

As my child said Hero's Journey is a magic place with so much positive mindset, encouragement, kindness, trust and inspiration! Thank you so much, Hero's Journey team and the entire Hole in the wall gang camp staff for giving us the opportunity to be in such a wonderful place. My child walked away with a healthier, stronger, happier mindset getting ready to contribute back to the community.

What were the most common words parents/caregivers used to describe the Hero's Journey program?



DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Hero's Journey program provides participants with strong opportunities to increase in self-discovery, going outside their comfort zones, teamwork, social skills, and appreciation of nature and simple living. Further, this evaluation showed which program activities most related to these positive outcomes.

The night climb is a particularly important activity within Hero's Journey.

The Hero's Journey program theory of change is supported by the positive outcomes expressed by participants and their parents/caregivers.

Certainly, some limitations exist for this evaluation. First, participants reported about themselves, which can sometimes be unreliable and inaccurate. Second, because participants did the surveys at the end of their sessions, they might have been experiencing an elation that inflated their answers. Third, parents/caregivers might have inflated their answers because they wanted to believe that their investment of time and effort to get their children to the Hero's Journey program was worthwhile.

Actionable Insights



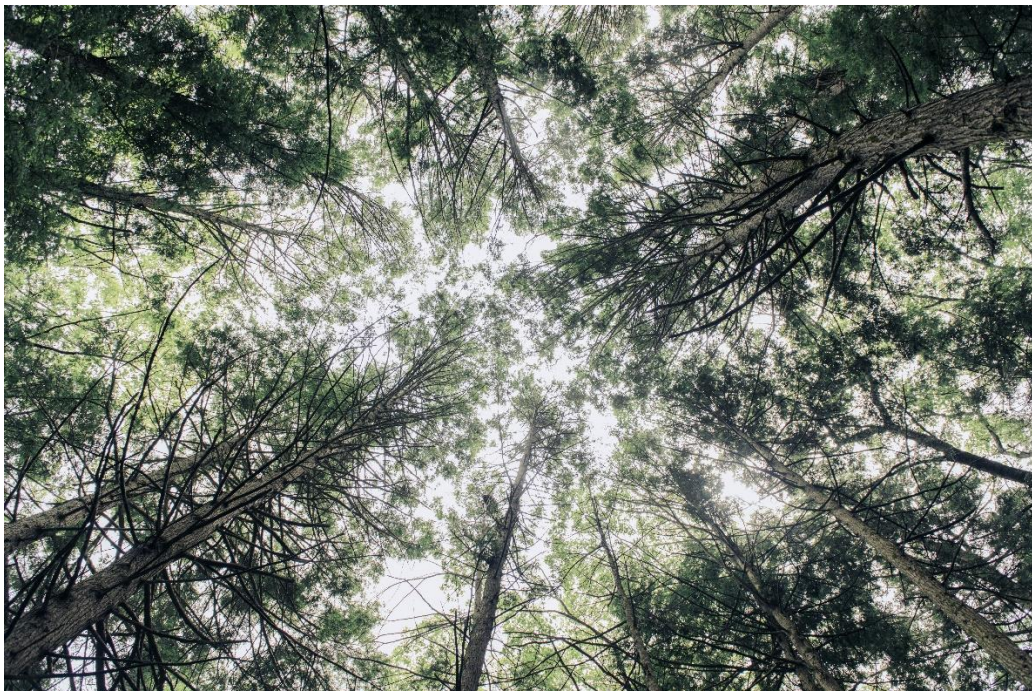
#1 Continue the activities in the Hero's Journey program, especially the night climb.



#2 Continue creating a space for participants to experience self-discovery, go outside their comfort zones, practice teamwork, increase social skills, and appreciate nature and simple living.



#3 Continue supporting the engagement and inclusion of participants with disabilities and illnesses in an outdoor setting.



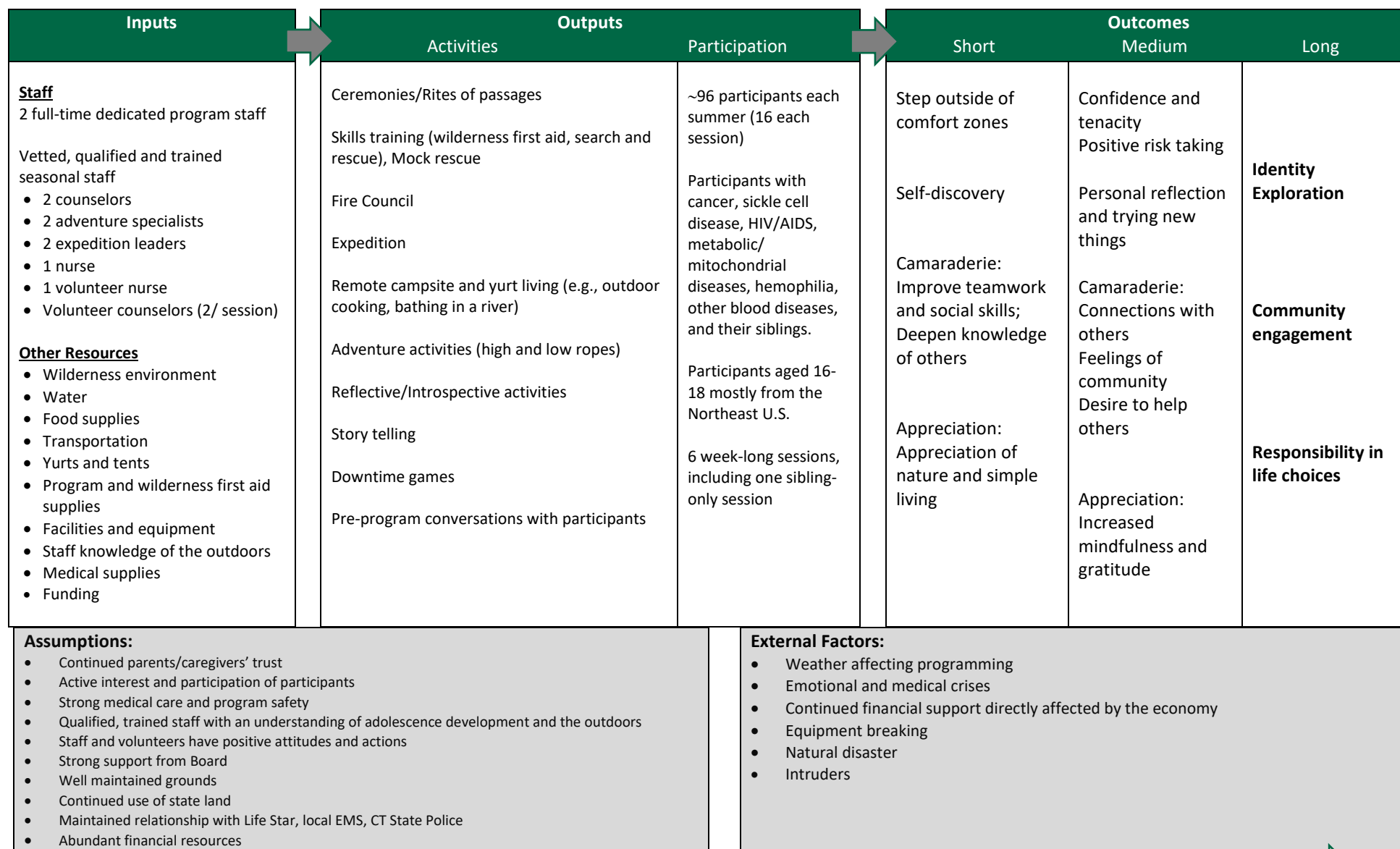
APPENDIX

Participant Scale Performance and Items

Scale	Item	Mean	SD
Self-Discovery (range: -1 - 3) M = 2.6; SD = .63 α = .709 Inter-item range .370-.571	Thinking about my future	2.8	.912
	Thinking about who I am	2.37	.655
	Having a sense of purpose in my life	2.63	.807
Comfort Zone (range: -1 - 3) M = 2.72; SD = .71 α = .523 Inter-item range .373	Identifying my comfort zone	2.48	.983
	Stepping outside my comfort zone	2.48	.713
Teamwork (range: -1 - 3) M = 2.7; SD = .67 α = .908 Inter-item range .439-.760	Placing group goals above the things that I want	2.89	.838
	Working well with others	2.7	.810
	Helping others succeed	2.64	.804
	Cooperating with others	2.67	.837
	Helping a group be successful	2.56	.687
	Appreciating opinions that are different from my own	2.73	.859
Social skills (range: -1 - 3) M = 2.63; SD = .61 α = .825 Inter-item range .410-.705	Having a deep knowledge of others	2.58	.752
	Sharing about myself with others	2.55	.711
	Listening carefully to things people tell me	2.64	.804
	Talking to people about things that are important to them	2.63	.766
	Talking to people about things that are important to me	2.78	.899
Appreciation of nature and simple living (range: -1 - 3) M = 2.79; SD = .83 α = .905 Inter-item range .440-.759	Liking nature	2.94	1
	My desire to spend time outdoors	2.94	1
	Comfort in the outdoors	2.81	1
	Enjoying the freedom of being outside	2.69	.941
	Feeling connected to the natural environment	2.7	.987
	Enjoying simple living	2.69	.941

Hero's Journey: Theory of Change

Situation: A serious illness for 16-18 year-old adolescents impacts their natural social, emotional and physical autonomous transition into adulthood through experiencing isolation, fewer opportunities to discover their personal identities, and a decreased feeling of personal responsibility.



Evaluate: Process – Satisfaction – Outcomes

