



Camp Happy Days' mission is to offer support and encouragement to children diagnosed with cancer and their families by providing cost free year-round programs, special events and access to crisis resources. Our goal is to improve the physical, emotional and psychological health of the entire family facing pediatric cancer.

Camp Happy Days was founded in 1982 and served more than 1,770 children battling cancer, siblings, and parents/guardians in 2021—more than any other nonprofit in South Carolina. We are the only organization that offers these services to children and families across the entire state. More than 76% of our annual revenue goes directly to programs for children and families with less than 24% supporting administration and fundraising.

Planned Use of Funds

South Carolina is home to more than 5,200 children diagnosed with cancer and this number grows by 250 to 300 new cases each year. While 78% of children diagnosed with cancer will survive, even survivors face numerous challenges and a future filled with fear and uncertainty. According to the American Child Cancer Organization, two-thirds of children diagnosed with cancer will experience late effects affecting their memory and learning, growth and development, and social and psychological adjustment, as well as being at risk for secondary cancers and many other health issues. One out of every four children diagnosed with cancer will have severe or life-threatening late effects. They may also suffer from high levels of anxiety, body changes such as weight gain, amputation, scarring, or disfigurement, and low self-esteem.

The requested funds will allow us to continue to reach out across South Carolina in a strategic and well-orchestrated manner to serve all of the children in our state so that they will be aware of the cost-free services, activities and resources Camp Happy Days offers. Many of these children live in areas that are not in close proximity to the three primary children's hospitals in the state and thus are unaware of the many services and programs available to them. Over the last five years, the number of families Camp Happy Days has served has increased over 14% each year. This year, we have an ambitious goal of serving more than 100 new families.

The funds requested will support children to attend our week-long residential summer camp and our other year-round programs. This will include expenses like facilities rentals for camp and other day and overnight events; food; transportation; activities and entertainment; outdoor equipment; and medical supplies. It will also help support the costs of launching and expanding programs at our new facility in Charleston, including improvements and maintenance for program areas, cooking and gardening equipment, and supplies for on-site activities.

List of upcoming events:

- August 3, 2022 - Cupcake challenge and pizza/meal making

- October 2022 - Tea Party
- October 7-9, 2022 – Teen Weekend
- September 2022 – Pediatric Cancer Awareness Day
- September 24, 2022 – Family Day/Weekend (Tentative Date)
- December 11-14, 2022 – Holiday Giving
- December 2022 – Holiday Festival
- March 2023 – Preteen Overnight
- May 2023 – Extreme Teen Weekend
- July 1-8, 2023 – Camp Week
- Monthly – Virtual Programming: Doodlebugs (9 and under), preteens and teens

Evidence of Public Benefit

The financial, medical, and psychological effects of a cancer diagnosis can impact all aspects of a family's life, including everything from their ability to buy groceries, participate in physical activities, and spend time outdoors. These limitations consequently can negatively impact a child's overall health and well-being. Due to limitations on physical activity, many become sedentary and are at risk for weight gain and weight-related issues later in life. In addition, normal social, emotional, and psychological development may be affected by the trauma of diagnosis and treatment, disruptions to school and regular social routines, and exposure to significantly increased stress on the child and the family. Disruptions in school, treatment, and other normal activities caused by Covid-19 have only exacerbated this for families facing pediatric cancer.

Camp Happy Days programs address all of these facets of need. Through team-building activities, counseling, and peer socialization and mentorship, children will meet others with similar experiences and difficulties. The bonds formed through group participation give each child a feeling of inclusion. Camp Happy Days programs create an environment that fosters positive social and emotional interactions, and leave children happier and better equipped to handle life challenges and stresses. In our most recent survey, parents were asked to rate the variables related to their children's overall health on a weighted scale and against relevant criteria. The results of the survey found:

- 100% of parents believed their child is more confident participating in physical activity after a Camp Happy Days experience.
- 99% of parents and/or caregivers agreed that they have a support system within Camp Happy Days and with other Camp Happy Days families.
- Parents/guardians also agreed at 100% that their family feels more hopeful and has overall benefitted in their quality of life from attending Camp Happy Days programs.

We consider these survey results evidence of how vital our programs are to these children and their families, and evidence of the public benefit Camp Happy Days provides.

If you have any questions about Camp Happy Days, please contact:

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