

Youth Outcomes at Camp

Overview and Purpose

Recent research suggests that camp participation results in a range of positive outcomes for youth. Camp outcomes can be short term, medium term, and long term. For example, short-term outcomes are the learning outcomes that result from the Camp Chandler experience and include changes in awareness, knowledge, attitudes, skills, opinions, aspirations, and motivations, and long-term outcomes are the positive results that you expect after one year such as changes in youth achievement or civic behavior. Camp Chandler has targeted specific outcomes that they hope youth will achieve through our programs.

I. Relationship Goals

A. Increase peer knowledge and emotional support of campers

Short Term Outcomes

- Campers choose to spend time with diverse group of peers
- Campers resolve difference with discussion
- Campers demonstrate positive behaviors modeled by counselors
- Campers try new things without fear of failure or teasing
- Campers make new friends in relatively short time frame
- Campers make supportive comments about peers

Long Term Outcomes

- Campers establish proactive patterns for dealing with complex issues by asking for help when appropriate
- Campers resolve differences without resorting to violence
- Campers know how to build friendships to have a social support network
- Campers understand how to build and maintain healthy relationships

B. Increase adult staff knowledge and emotional support of campers

Short Term Outcomes

- Campers share their ideas, stories, and feelings with their counselors
- Campers feel safe asking questions to staff about issues with which they struggle
- Campers mirror the types of interactions they see in staff with peers
- Campers are sincerely excited about seeing their counselors or saying goodbye to them
- Campers easily approach their counselors when they have questions or concerns.

- Campers respect and follow directions from staff
- Campers will feel confident that someone cares about them
- Campers will initiate conversations with peers and other adults
- Campers know constructive ways express feelings and disagreements
- Campers feel secure in their relationships with adults at camp

Long Term Outcomes

- Campers establish proactive patterns for dealing with complex issues by asking for help when appropriate
- Campers are able to establish trusting relationships with other adults in their lives

C. Improve practical support and guidance from adult staff

Short Term Outcomes

- Campers will feel secure and confident in their surroundings
- Campers have awareness and buy-in of safety rules and the meaning behind them
- Campers have space to experiment with governing their own group

Long Term Outcomes

- Campers will see the positive effects of planning ahead and having responsibility for making a schedule
- Campers will have healthy, productive relationships with others

II. Safety Goals

A. Increase physical safety of campers

Short Term Goals

- Campers feel safe about the camp environment
- Campers trust the staff to value their physical safety.
- Campers learn to use appropriate equipment and materials for activities.
- Campers self-enforce the rules of safety.

Long Term Goals

- Campers develop increased level of confidence in facing new situations.
- Campers develop patterns of analyzing a situation for risk factors and making safe choices.
- Campers develop lifelong recreation skills using conventional safety systems.
- Campers recognize situations that are unsafe and know how to correct or disengage.

B. Increase emotional safety of campers

Short Term Goals

- Campers feel respected.
- Campers explore proactive ways of expressing feelings and resolving conflict.

- Campers feel they are important.
- Campers feel a sense of belonging.

Long Term Goals

- Campers experience a strengthened sense of independence.
- Campers increase a sense of self-worth.
- Campers increase level of self-confidence.
- Campers experience understanding and tolerance.
- Campers understand how to maintain an emotionally safe relationship.

III. Youth Involvement Goals

A. Increase leadership opportunities for campers

Short Term Goals

- Campers demonstrate willingness to “step up” with their ideas while at camp.
- Campers accept responsibility for their actions.
- Campers seek and/or initiate opportunities for meaningful actions on their own motivation.
- Campers will begin to identify their own leadership actions taken at camp.
- Campers accept “failures” as learning experiences to help them be more successful in the future

Long Term Goals

- Campers have increased belief that “I can make a difference” (personal efficacy grows).
- Campers exhibit confidence in their ability to handle challenges.
- Leadership styles promote empowerment rather than control.
- Campers develop citizenship behaviors that apply to home, school, and community.

B. Increase decision-making opportunities for campers

Short Term Goals

- Campers can make decisions that satisfy them when given opportunities for choice.
- Campers will feel a greater sense of control over their camp experience.
- Campers will be comfortable when presented with opportunities for personal and group decision making.
- Campers will know how to generate and/or consider options and alternatives.
- Campers understand that decision making results in accepting responsibility for their choices.
- Campers will make thoughtful decisions when given opportunities to decide how to spend their free time.

Long Term Goals

- Campers become more skilled and confident in individual decision making in other areas of their lives.
- Campers will value perspectives and opinions different from their own when making a group decision.
- Campers become more independent in their decision making and rely less on adults.

C. Increase sense of belonging of campers

Short Term Goals

- Opportunities exist for a camper to have ownership of her camp experience that results from the camper's leadership and decision-making experiences.
- Staff have been trained in how to build a sense of camp community.
- Camp organizational structures allow for input and action that reflect campers' ideas and suggestions so that campers feel their input is valued.

Long Term Goals

- Campers talk about "my camp."
- Campers feel valued.
- Campers believe they contribute to the camp.

IV. Skill Building Goals

A. Provide opportunities for campers to experience challenging activities

Short Term Goals

- Campers try activities they have never done before and stretch their skills, knowledge, and abilities.
- Campers learn new activities to improve their physical and cognitive abilities.
- Campers feel a sense of enjoyment and accomplishment from their involvement.
- Campers have the option of passing or opting out of an activity.
- Campers are not afraid to ask for guidance in undertaking challenging activities.
- Campers know safety procedures while participating in challenging activities.
- Campers talk with pride about their accomplishments.
- Campers understand their mental and physical abilities as well as their limitations

Long Term Goals

- Campers believe that success is possible with training, effort, and practice
- Campers take risks to try new healthy experiences
- Campers develop lifelong recreation skills

B. Provide opportunities for campers to experience growth and progression in skills, knowledge, and abilities

Short Term Goals

- Campers learn advanced skills in program areas.
- Campers internalize a sense of mastery and competence.
- Campers develop an I-can-do-it attitude.
- Campers are able to identify goals for improvement.
- Campers recognize the importance of safety in undertaking advanced skills.

Long Term Goals

- Campers recognize effort and practice is needed to become “good” in any aspect of life.
- Campers gain lifelong recreational skills they can use independently after camp.
- Campers are able to teach activity skills they learned at camp.
- Success fuels desire and motivation for future opportunities in the skill area.

C. Provide interesting learning experiences that help campers build an array of skills

Short Term Goals

- Campers have fun
- Campers get to do activities at camp that they do not get to try at home.
- Campers learn new skills and improve physical and cognitive abilities.
- Campers recognize the importance of safety in undertaking all activities.
- Campers initiate activities at camp outside the scheduled program structure

Long Term Goals

- Campers avoid high-risk behaviors because they have other healthy choices.
- Campers see learning as lifelong endeavor.