



camphappydays.org



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CAMP HAPPY DAYS

2021 Camp Proposal for Funding

January 29, 2020

Names of Presenters and Supporters at Presentation

Douglas Jennings – Camp Happy Days Board member

Jamie Westendorff – Board member and 26 Years as Volunteer

Cindy Hay Johnson – Executive Director

Iain Riddle – Camp Happy Days Program and Camp Director

Bill Ellis – Camp Happy Days Volunteer and Supporter

Presentation Packet includes:

Proposal for Camp 2021

Camp Budget 2021

Map of SC with Children Served

Children Served by County

Letters of Support:

Volunteer Camp Medical Director

MUSC Children's Hospital

Palmetto Health Children's Hospital

Greenville Children's Hospital

Camp Happy Days Board of Directors



MISSION & HISTORY

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.

Year Founded: October 1983 ♦ 2019-2020 Annual Budget: \$1,318,427 ♦ 2021 Camp Budget: \$367,197
♦ Number Served: 1,923 children battling cancer, siblings and parent/guardians served in FY2018-2019 ♦
75% of all funds raised goes directly to children and families with 25% goes towards Admin and Fundraising ♦ CHD serves the largest number of children with cancer and their families and is the only organization that offers these services to children with cancer and their families across the entire state.

NEED

Have you or anyone in your family ever heard the “C” word from your doctor? Imagine hearing that your child or a family member’s child has cancer. The average age of a child diagnosed with cancer is only 6 years old. You can imagine the kind of emotions that you would feel, but do you really know what it means to a parent to hear their child has cancer? For 250-300 families in South Carolina this year, they will hear this devastating news and for over 5,200 families, they are already dealing with the shock. Camp Happy Days understands what these children and their families go through because we have been at their side providing emotional and psychological support for the last 36 years. The children and their families are a part of a much bigger family of staff, volunteers, and the community who come together for one another and fight against the enemy, Cancer. We are asking for funding for the 2020 -2021 fiscal year for \$150,000 to go towards funding the Camp Happy Days Summer Camp 2020 Program for over 275 children with cancer and their siblings.

CAMP

At Camp, children are able to experience feelings of social acceptance and inclusion as they meet others who are facing similar battles. They can engage in sports and social activities that may not otherwise be available to them. Peer interactions are important because they look to one another to see what milestones they should be reaching. Children with cancer often undergo treatment causing them to miss months of school and other important events. Camp activities are designed to push physical boundaries giving the children a sense of freedom and accomplishment. The support and relationships formed during Camp provide the children with a priceless experience and support to take with them on the journey ahead. Children with well-developed social and emotional skills are more likely to have higher self-esteem and lead happy, more productive lives. By focusing this week around team-building, social inclusion and emotional and physical support, we can improve the overall health of children battling cancer in South Carolina by increasing the campers’ measures of independence, friendship, confidence, hope, and teamwork.

IMPACT

Attending CHD Camp & Programs:

Increased Physical Activity: 100% agreed slightly or strongly
Connected families to support: 99% agreed slightly or strongly
Created sense of hope: 99% agreed slightly or strongly

Campers surveyed over week of Camp 2018-2019

Independence in campers increased by 10.6%
Friendship in campers increased by 4.3%
Confidence in campers increased by 4.3%
Hope in campers increased by 1.2%
Teamwork in campers increased by 6.1%

Proposal for Funding for Camp Happy Days Summer Camp 2020

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.

We are asking for funding for the 2020-2021 fiscal year for \$150,000 to go towards the Camp Happy Days Summer Camp 2021 Program for over 275 children with cancer and their siblings. South Carolina has more than 5,200 children diagnosed with cancer and this number grows each year by 250 to 300 new cases. 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 ACCO, two-thirds of children diagnosed with cancer will experience late effects affecting their memory and learning, growth and development, social and psychological adjustment, secondary cancers and many other health issues. One out of every four will have severe or life-threatening effects. They also suffer from high levels of anxiety, body changes and low self-esteem. The funds will allow us to reach out across the state of SC 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 offered to them. 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 Camp Happy Days offers.

The funds requested will go towards our Camp budget of \$367,197 to pay for children to attend our week-long residential camp to address the specific needs of children who have been diagnosed with cancer as well as their siblings. Camp Happy Days ended a 20 year lease with Camp Bob Cooper in summer 2019. The base rate in 2019 was \$32,000, and the renegotiated lease rate for 2020 will be \$77,500 and in 2021 it will be \$83,700.

Our goal is to continue to reach and meet the needs of families battling pediatric cancer throughout South Carolina especially in the rural areas. We seek to restore a sense of normalcy and provide opportunities for these families to connect with others who are facing similar challenges. Our objectives are to help these children and their families find a renewed sense of hope, form new supportive relationships, experience respite and relief from stress, create lasting memories, and find encouragement and inspiration as they continue their fight against pediatric cancer. We seek to achieve these goals through our Summer Camp program.

A cancer diagnosis can impact all aspects of a family's life including 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. According to the CDC, "Behaviors that influence excess weight gain include eating high-calorie, low-nutrient foods and beverages, not getting enough physical activity, sedentary activities such as watching television or other screen devices, medication use, and sleep routines." Due to the limitations on a child battling cancers' activities, many of the children become sedentary and at risk for weight related issues later on. Through team building activities,

counseling and cabin chats these children will meet others with similar problems. The bonds that are formed through group participation give everyone a feeling of inclusion. All Camp events create an environment that fosters positive social and emotional interactions. With social and emotional needs met and skills learned from Camp, children are happier and better equipped to handle life challenges and stresses. In a 2019 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 in 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 other CHD families. Parents/Guardians also agreed at 100% that their family feels more hopeful and has overall better benefitted in their Quality of Life from attending CHD programs. We consider these survey results, evidence of how vital Camp is to these children and their families.

We made some slight changes to our camp survey last year to ensure we were receiving the most accurate results. We tracked the five measures that we want our campers to exhibit following camp participation. We surveyed the campers through self, parent, and counselor surveys. We tracked the measures: independence, friendship, confidence, hope, and teamwork. Over a five-year period, we expect to see campers that start out with a lower measure in any of these five measures will increase over time through continued camp participation. From the counselor surveys on campers attending Camp 2018 and 2019, our data shows the improvement of all five measures in campers over the week as seen through the following results:

Independence increased 10.6%

Friendship increased 4.3%

Confidence increased 4.3%

Hope increased 1.2%

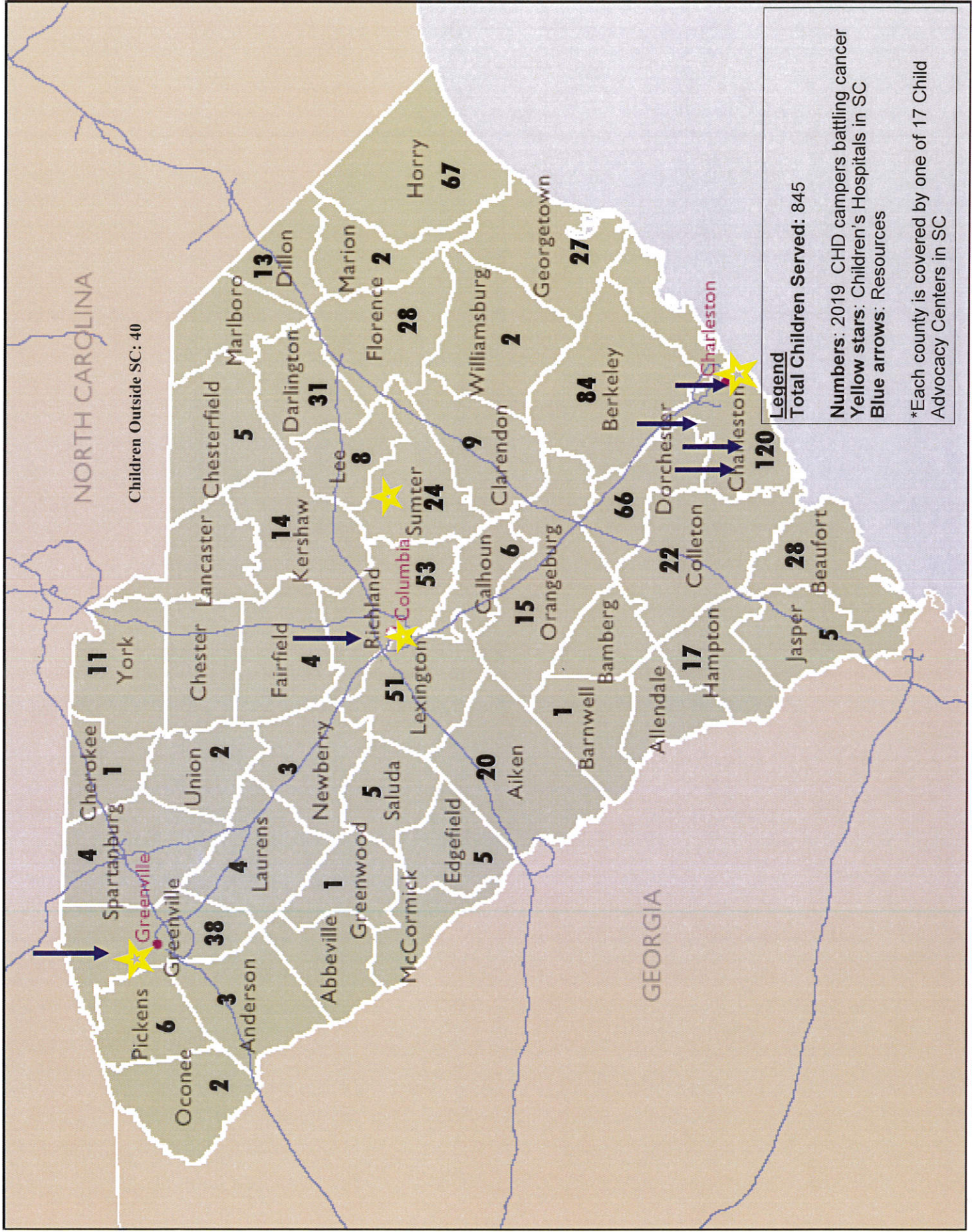
Teamwork increased 6.1%

At Camp Happy Days, children will experience feelings of social acceptance and inclusion as they meet others who are facing similar battles. They will have the opportunity to engage in sports and social activities that may not otherwise be available to them. Peer interactions are important because they look to one another to see what milestones they should be reaching. Children with cancer often undergo treatments causing them to miss months of school and other important events. These children often feel like their whole world has moved on without them, which can be distressing. Camp activities are designed to push physical boundaries giving the children a sense of freedom and accomplishment that will last well beyond the week of Camp. The support network and relationships formed during Camp provide the children with a priceless experience and support network to take with them on the journey ahead. Children with well-developed social and emotional skills are more likely to have higher self-esteem and lead happy more productive lives.

All funds awarded to Camp Happy Days will be used to offset the costs for room and board, travel to and from camp, medical and program expenses, and entertainment for children attending Camp. All of our programs are cost-free for the families we serve, so these funds

Camp Program Budget - FY2021

		Cash	In-Kind
Bank Charges	\$ 840	\$ 840	\$ -
Insurance	5,775	5,775	-
Event Entertainment	30,765	19,265	11,500
Space/Facility Rental	83,700	83,700	-
Vehicle Rental	6,825	6,300	525
Equipment Rental	18,690	8,690	10,000
Information Technology	5,460	5,460	-
Event Supplies	38,010	32,610	5,400
Food/Beverage	71,400	25,400	46,000
Postage/Mailing	525	525	-
Printing/Publications/Signage	2,667	2,667	-
Public Relations/Marketing	105	105	-
Professional Fees	87,000	-	87,000
Travel & Transportation	7,350	7,350	-
Mileage/Gas	2,310	2,310	-
Volunteer Appreciation/Recruitment	3,675	3,675	-
Background Checks	2,100	2,100	-
 Total	 \$ 367,197	 \$ 206,772	 \$ 160,425



CHD Children By County

Updated: 12/18/2018

2014	
County	Number
Abbeville	1
Aiken	9
Anderson	5
Beaufort	45
Berkeley	28
Calhoun	2
Charleston	77
Chesterfield	2
Clarendon	1
Colleton	16
Darlington	9
Dillon	13
Dorchester	73
Fairfield	2
Florence	22
Georgetown	6
Greenville	18
Hampton	7
Horry	42
Jasper	9
Kershaw	8
Lancaster	2
Laurens	2
Lee	9
Lexington	23
Marion	1
Marlboro	4
Orangeburg	18
Richland	30
Saluda	3
Spartanburg	6
Sumter	20
Williamsburg	2
York	9
Other	41
Total	565

2015	
County	Number
Aiken	17
Allendale	2
Anderson	2
Barnwell	1
Beaufort	15
Berkeley	62
Calhoun	1
Charleston	80
Cherokee	0
Chesterfield	2
Clarendon	5
Colleton	20
Darlington	23
Dillon	13
Dorchester	55
Edgefield	0
Fairfield	4
Florence	28
Georgetown	22
Greenville	25
Hampton	13
Horry	53
Jasper	5
Kershaw	10
Lancaster	3
Laurens	2
Lee	10
Lexington	53
Marion	6
Newberry	2
Oconee	2
Orangeburg	18
Pickens	0
Richland	54
Saluda	2
Spartanburg	6
Sumter	27
Williamsburg	2
York	7
Other	23
Total	675

2016	
County	Number
Aiken	15
Allendale	2
Anderson	3
Barnwell	1
Beaufort	21
Berkeley	68
Calhoun	9
Charleston	76
Cherokee	1
Chesterfield	3
Clarendon	8
Colleton	19
Darlington	23
Dillon	14
Dorchester	65
Edgefield	5
Fairfield	4
Florence	25
Georgetown	21
Greenville	33
Hampton	17
Horry	44
Jasper	5
Kershaw	15
Lancaster	2
Laurens	3
Lee	11
Lexington	47
Marion	4
Newberry	3
Oconee	2
Orangeburg	13
Pickens	6
Richland	53
Saluda	6
Spartanburg	2
Sumter	25
Williamsburg	2
York	7
Other	30
Total	713

2017	
County	Number
Abbeville	0
Aiken	20
Allendale	0
Anderson	3
Bamburg	0
Barnwell	1
Beaufort	22
Berkeley	69
Calhoun	6
Charleston	91
Cherokee	1
Chester	0
Chesterfield	3
Clarendon	10
Colleton	20
Darlington	28
Dillon	15
Dorchester	63
Edgefield	5
Fairfield	4
Florence	29
Georgetown	22
Greenville	37
Greenwood	0
Hampton	16
Horry	56
Jasper	5
Kershaw	14
Lancaster	2
Laurens	5
Lee	9
Lexington	58
Marion	4
Marlboro	2
McCormick	0
Newberry	3
Oconee	2
Orangeburg	14
Pickens	6
Richland	48
Saluda	6
Spartanburg	2
Sumter	26
Union	0
Williamsburg	2
York	6
Other	43
Total	778

2018	
County	Number
Abbeville	0
Aiken	20
Allendale	0
Anderson	3
Bamburg	0
Barnwell	1
Beaufort	22
Berkeley	71
Calhoun	6
Charleston	104
Cherokee	1
Chester	0
Chesterfield	4
Clarendon	9
Colleton	23
Darlington	28
Dillon	14
Dorchester	68
Edgefield	5
Fairfield	4
Florence	28
Georgetown	26
Greenville	37
Greenwood	0
Hampton	16
Horry	60
Jasper	5
Kershaw	13
Lancaster	1
Laurens	4
Lee	9
Lexington	56
Marion	3
Marlboro	1
McCormick	0
Newberry	3
Oconee	2
Orangeburg	14
Pickens	6
Richland	48
Saluda	6
Spartanburg	4
Sumter	25
Union	0
Williamsburg	1
York	8
Other	43
Total	802

2019	
County	Number
Abbeville	0
Aiken	20
Allendale	0
Anderson	3
Bamburg	0
Barnwell	1
Beaufort	28
Berkeley	84
Calhoun	6
Charleston	120
Cherokee	1
Chester	0
Chesterfield	5
Clarendon	9
Colleton	22
Darlington	31
Dillon	13
Dorchester	66
Edgefield	5
Fairfield	4
Florence	26
Georgetown	27
Greenville	38
Greenwood	1
Hampton	17
Horry	67
Jasper	5
Kershaw	14
Lancaster	0
Laurens	4
Lee	8
Lexington	51
Marion	2
Marlboro	0
McCormick	0
Newberry	3
Oconee	2
Orangeburg	15
Pickens	6
Richland	53
Saluda	5
Spartanburg	4
Sumter	24
Union	2
Williamsburg	2
York	11
Other	40
Total	845

CAMP HAPPY DAYS PROGRAMS

CAMP HAPPY DAYS ANNUAL WEEK-LONG CAMP

Family Requirement

Cancer Child

- Child diagnosed with cancer or relapsed within past 5 years and between the age of 4-16
- Once they have attended Camp can continue until age 16 (unless in an extremely rare occasion of misconduct that causes them to not be invited back)
- If child is pregnant they cannot attend during pregnancy, however they can come back in future years if they want, but their child cannot
 - o Siblings
 - First year siblings must attend with child battling cancer and can attend every year until they are 16 even if CC is not
 - If CC passes away the sibling becomes a REN and still gets to attend Camp until age 16

Camp is our flagship event and is one week where you stay overnight during the week of July 4th. It is in Summerton, SC at Camp Bob Cooper, which is owned by Clemson University. Campers are age 4-16. Counselors are assigned to have 1-5 campers depending on their needs. Program areas are ran by volunteers as well so typically 170 – 200 volunteers are needed. This powerful, life changing experience helps these children build self-esteem, courage, confidence and trust in an incredibly active, high energy environment created just for them.

CHD CHECK UP

Family Requirement – (CC) Available for all children battling cancer (visits must be requested by family or medical staff) (Ages 0-18)

Request a special visit from a Camp Happy Days team member while you are in the hospital. You will get to choose from one of four restaurants to receive a nice meal, make a craft, play games or have a story time just for you.

COUNSELOR IN TRAINING

Family Requirement – (CC/SIB/REN) Previous camper who is now 17 years old or by CHD staff discretion a newly diagnosed child who is 17 years old and would be a good candidate. Former campers ages 18-19 are eligible to be Junior Counselors.

After being a camper until the age of 16 we have a special program for our former campers to become junior counselors. Campers will skip camp when they are 17 and be a part of the Counselor in Training program. The program focuses on team building, responsibility, leadership and team work skills. When these teens are 18 and 19 they are fully prepared to be junior counselors.

Junior Counselor

Family Requirement – (CC/SIB/REN) Former campers ages 18-19 are eligible to be Junior Counselors.

Former campers age 18 and 19 are eligible to be Junior Counselors at Camp working with campers or in a program area under supervision of a seasoned counselor.

DOODLEBUG ACTIVITIES

Family Requirement – (CC/SIB/REN) All CHD families with a child age 9 & under.

Outings designed for cancer children and siblings ages preschool to 3rd grade. During this time, parents and children engage in a fun activity with volunteers and summer camp counselors.

DREAM DATES

Family Requirement – (CC) Child diagnosed or relapsed within the past 5 years and the family gets to enjoy the day with the child. (Ages 0-18)

A very special, customized day or night created to make dreams come true for children struggling with their cancer treatments or are celebrating the end of treatment. The activities are geared toward the child's interest.

EXTREME TEENS

Family Requirement – (CC) The Adela Water Weekend event is for teens who have been diagnosed with cancer at any stage of their life. .

(CC/SIB/REN) One day events and lock-ins are for Child battling cancer and siblings. (Ages 13-18)

Specifically designed for teenagers diagnosed with cancer, this program allows teens to interact with one another, share experiences, and enjoy fun unlike they can anywhere else. This program also shares a special partnership with the Medical university of South Carolinas' Can-Teen Program, serving newly diagnosed teenagers.

F.A.C.T. CLINIC

Family Requirement – (CC) Children are scheduled via MUSC for this program.

Follow-up After Cancer Treatment or F.A.C.T at the Medical University of South Carolina is therapy program for youth and young adult cancer survivors. Camp Happy Days provides a substantial and healthy meal for patients who must fast for 24 hours in preparation for medical tests and for families who have traveled a far distance. Nutritious meals are provided 24 times a year to over 350 pediatric cancer survivors.

FAMILY ASSISTANCE

Family Requirement – (CC/REN) Child diagnosed or relapsed within past 5 years or child passed away within past 2 years. (Ages 0-18)

The first five years of diagnosis or relapse the family has direct access to financial assistance with bills, food cards, fuel cards and other resources to help the family through that time.

FAMILY WEEKEND

Family Requirement – (CC) Child diagnosed or relapsed within past 5 years. (Ages 0-18)

A special weekend designed for the entire family. This invaluable opportunity is for parents to connect with others, where they learn, share and develop tools to cope with the stress and anxiety of their child's diagnosis.

FAMILY REUNION

Family Requirement – (CC/SIB/REN) All CHD families.

This day event is for all families who have had a child diagnosed with cancer. This is traditionally held in the spring and gives the children, siblings, and parents a chance to reconnect, share in a fun activity, eat lunch and bond with others who are going through a similar experience.

HOLIDAY FESTIVAL

Family Requirement – (CC/SIB/REN) All CHD families.

This festivity is an opportunity for all Camp Happy Days families to gather and celebrate the upcoming holidays. It's a special time with a catered meal, arts and crafts, music, games, and a visit from Santa Claus.

HOLIDAY GIVING

Family Requirement – (CC/SIB/REN) Child diagnosed or relapsed within 5 years or child passed away within past 2 years. (Ages 0-18)

Volunteers, donors and friends of Camp Happy Days join forces to adopt a family of a child diagnosed with cancer, helping the parents to fulfill their children's Christmas wishes.

Valentine's Day

Family Requirement – (CC) Children are on HEM/ONC floors at MUSC, Prisma Health Upstate, and Prisma Health Midlands.

Volunteers, donors, & friends of Camp Happy Days join forces and sponsor a stuffed animal that sings and dances for each of the children who are in the HEM/ONC floors at Prisma Health Midlands, Prisma Health Upstate, and MUSC. Programs staff deliver the Valentine's Day gifts to the hospitals along with cards and candy.

January 24, 2020

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Jennifer Jaroscak, M.D.
Sandeep Kuril, MD
Jacqueline Kraveka, D.O

Dear SC Ways and Means Committee:

I am writing on behalf of my unwavering support and appreciation for the Camp Happy Days organization. As a native South Carolinian, Wofford graduate, and MUSC graduate, it has been my life's mission to ensure that the children of South Carolina have access to the best treatment options possible. As the Division Chief for Pediatric Hematology/Oncology and the Director of Pediatric Blood and Marrow Transplantation here at MUSC, I am privileged to work with children and families from all over our state. We are thrilled to be able to serve the children of our state as a top-ranked pediatric cancer center, recently ranked by US News and World Report.

I can tell you that looking into parents' eyes and telling them that their child has cancer is a soul-wrenching task. The emotions and hurt in that moment are beyond words. A childhood cancer diagnosis is life-changing for the entire family. While treating and guiding children and families through intense therapy, it is critical that they have positive support to help them keep fighting and sustain their battle. Their childhood innocence has been quickly stripped away, and they are thrown into a world of difficult treatments.

Camp Happy Days provides that shining light of support to keep them fighting. These are children who have to miss so much of normal childhood, and the week of camp provides them a chance to simply be a child again. The simple joys of things like fishing, camp games, and fun pranks on counselors in the dining hall are enough to keep them fighting for the battle they have to face. They also have a chance to be around a whole community "like them" where other children understand the fears and worries that they face. For many children, going back to school and their friends is very scary after feeling so different during cancer treatment. Camp builds their confidence and allows them to rejoin their communities and thrive.

Cancer indeed takes a toll on the whole family. Siblings are often left with conflicted emotions- scared that their brother or sister will die, sad because of their own loss of routine and uncertainty, as they are often back and forth between family, friends, and neighbors as the parents try to work and attend to the medical needs emergencies for the child with cancer, and then guilt that they are feeling sad. Their childhoods are also forever changed. Camp also gives these children a safe place to be with other siblings who are going through the same problems and receive support.

The look of sheer happiness in the faces of these children at camp is indescribable. Now, the parents shed tears of joy, instead of sadness to see their



child have a chance to be normal again. Camp Happy Days is a critical partner to help us take care of these special children and their families.

With Gratitude,

Michelle Hudspeth, MD

Associate Professor, Pediatrics

Director, Pediatric Blood & Marrow Transplantation

Division Chief, Pediatric Hematology/Oncology

Medical University of South Carolina Children's Hospital/Hollings

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Sandeep Kuril, M.D.



January 25, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

Greeting! I am writing to you to request your continued support for a cause very near and dear to my heart. Camp Happy Days is a life-changing organization that serves children with a diagnosis of cancer and their families. Not only do they support the patient, they offer their services and support to the entire family unit and continue to provide care long past diagnosis.

I first began working with Camp Happy Days 8 years ago when I served as the "camp doctor" at their week-long signature event held at Camp Bob Cooper in Summerton, SC. Children with cancer and their siblings attend a week of fun filled events – cost free – every year until the age out. At that point many become counselors themselves and use their prior experiences as campers to help a new generation of campers. Camp is a life-changing, eye opening experience to say the least. I cannot imagine my life without Camp Happy Days, and I know the campers and families would agree.

Camp is at its heart a camp for children with complex medical issues. Each year we open up a mini-clinic and hand out meds, wrap ankles, treat bug bites, administer types of chemotherapy, suture lacerations – the list is endless! I am amazed by what we are able to accomplish without having to remove the kids from the fun! All of our supplies are donated from members of the community or provided for by monetary donations – and without those donations we would not be able to provide the care that we do. Nurses and physicians from the community volunteer their time to come and be with the children at camp and care for them. It is a great honor and a humbling privilege for parents to give up their sometimes medically fragile children to us for a week – all so they can have an amazing week of fun – and hopefully forget for a little while that they are sick or different from other children.

Camp itself is a whirlwind! We pack up the wagons and head to Camp Bob Cooper and transform it into an awe-inspiring "fun factory"! Activities abound for these children – from rock wall climbing and the ropes course, boating, fishing, parasailing, arts and crafts, giant inflatable water slides, paintball, ice-skating (IN South Caroline... IN JULY!), and even our own fireworks display for July 4th! There isn't enough time to get in all the activities and each year the planning committee works their tails off to make this year the best year yet! Everyone participates! No matter a child's health status, if they want to do an activity, we figure out a way to make it happen – our volunteers make those dreams come true for them!



Camp is a gift for everyone, but as a medical provider, I speak for all the nurses and physicians and other integral parts of our team who care for these kids when I say it is a true gift for us. We take care of these children in the hospital, when they are sick or getting treatments, and in clinic when we are hoping for good scan results after another round of chemo – we don't get to see them having fun and playing like kids should – until we come to Camp! At camp we see these children full of life and being their true selves. It renews our commitment to our profession and gives us the “positive vibes” we need to tackle the really hard days.

The entire family is served by camp. Patients get to come and be amongst their peers who understand what it's like to be sick with a complex diagnosis. They are treated like “normal” children. Siblings who come to camp are surrounded by other kids who know exactly how it feels to have their family's life turned upside down by this diagnosis. Watching these children form lifelong relationships with their “camp family” is magical. The parents get a week of respite– no doctor's appointments, no medicines to give out, no having to go to work and worry if they will have to leave because their child is sick in the hospital. Parents tell me they look forward to this week just like the kids do – sometimes I think even more so. They work around the clock to care for their children and keep them healthy and safe, often at the expense of their own health, self-care and relationships – Camp gives them the renewed energy and inspiration to take on another year of caring and advocating for their kids. These parents hand us their greatest gifts – their children – and say, “we trust you with our babies....now go have fun.”

Not only is camp a huge undertaking – turning Camp Bob Cooper into a fun park of activities that many of these children would otherwise not get the opportunity to do, but Camp Happy Days offers support to these families year-round. Whether through financial assistance, holiday giving, family retreats, teen weekends and young adult programs, the giving doesn't end when camp ends in July. They are constantly expanding and adding additional ways to help these families and that requires significant funding for sure. Without the generous donations and funding made to Camp Happy Days each year, these programs would not be able to be offered. They are a wonderful organization that truly strives to be available, in whatever capacity, for these children and their families.

I appreciate your time consideration of this wonderful organization.

Best,

Rebecca Cafiero, MD
Volunteer Medical Director
Camp Happy Days



January 24, 2020

To the members of the South Carolina Ways and Means Committee:

We are writing this letter on behalf of Camp Happy Days in recognition of the ways in which they generously provide support to the patients and families with whom we work. We are both Certified Child Life Specialists for the BI-LO Charities Children's Cancer Center in Greenville, SC. Our role in the care of these patients is to promote positive coping with hospitalization, medical experiences, and overall diagnosis in a way that is developmentally informed. With this goal in mind, Camp Happy Days makes a huge contribution in providing support to these families in the hospital, as well as outside of the medical environment.

In the world of childhood cancer, nearly every facet of family life is impacted. One of the unique and most impactful qualities about Camp Happy Days is the recognition of this need and the wide range of programs designed to support our patients, and additionally their parents and siblings. This type of holistic support is truly valuable and meaningful to the families served. The programs with which we are most familiar include the hospital outreach visits. Such visits provide fun and normalizing experiences for our patients and families who are in the hospital. Oftentimes, the visits coincide with holidays, which can be an incredibly difficult time for families to experience hospitalization. For example, Camp Happy Days provides valuable assistance during Christmas to families of children dealing with chronic medical issues. Additionally, Camp Happy Days frequently visits the inpatient hematology/oncology unit during the week of Valentine's Day to deliver stuffed animals to each of the patients. We are so grateful to have Camp Happy Days acknowledge our families during this time and to provide support accordingly.

We also are very appreciative of the annual Camp Happy Days family camp, which several of our families have attended in the past. The family camp model offers a unique opportunity for families to attend camp together and engage in fun and meaningful experiences. Our families are oftentimes committed to a whirlwind of hospital admissions, chemotherapy treatments, and doctor's appointments which ultimately, tend to postpone quality family time. Camp Happy Days is incredibly intentional and empathetic in the programming that they offer, and we have the pleasure of witnessing the benefits through our patients and families experiences.

We are incredibly grateful to consider Camp Happy Days a community partner and we look forward to future collaboration.

With appreciation,
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