

Camp Starlight

*Magic. Every Time A Child Smiles. Magic. Every Time A Friend Is Made.
Magic. Every Moment We Spend At Camp. Magic.*

Quarterly News

Issue 3 - 2014



Art by: Ernie, 16

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Aubrey's Story

I was seven when I learned what HIV was. At that age I didn't know much, but I knew that the society around me didn't accept HIV, so I understood that it was not something to speak of.

My own mother shunned my dad for something he simply couldn't control. He didn't know. He wasn't told. My mother told me that he was bad, gross, and a disappointment. I never listened to a word of the web of lies she told me.

I never spoke of it to others but when 6th grade came around and health class was required, we talked about HIV and other STD's. Every time someone made a comment regarding HIV/AIDS in a bad or joking manner I was upset, offended even.

I never knew how to express my feelings about this sensitive subject until I went to

Camp Starlight for the first time. It was there that my brother and I found refuge in the loving arms of everyone there. We learned ways to cope. Ways to understand. For a week we had a safe haven full of people who understood just what we were going through.

Nelson and I have been to Camp Starlight for 5 years now. Each year we have the same magical experience. We've made lifelong friends, and memories that will last an eternity. Camp Starlight can't take away the ugliness of the world but they brighten my world and for one week every year, I get to live in a world of beauty. A world of warm hugs, fun songs, caring friends with shoulders to cry on, and a family to lean on. A family where every single person knows what it's like to experience the ugly of the world but we all come together for a week to make our worlds beautiful again.

Camp Starlight changed my life for the better. Without my camp family, I don't know where I would be.

Thank you Camp Starlight for letting me live in a world free of worry for a week every year.

- Aubrey



To Answer Some of Your Most Common Questions...

1. *What qualifications are required to be a Camp Starlight counselor?*

Camp Starlight counselors must be at least 19 years old, have experience working with children and interested in working with children from diverse backgrounds. Counselors must demonstrate motivation to learn about the challenges children who are affected by HIV face and a willingness to live in community, working cooperatively with all staff and volunteers to make a magical camp week. All volunteers must be emotionally healthy and physically capable of engaging in camp activities. We complete background checks on all volunteers and call references to ensure that we are hiring safe, skilled, knowledgeable and inspired volunteers.

2. *What are the overall health and safety measures Camp Starlight has in place?*

Camp Starlight has a complete medical team, including a pediatrician and two nurses. We often also have medical students, residents and fellows who receive training in Club Med (Camp Starlight's infirmary). All medical providers are specifically trained in both HIV and in pediatrics. Camp Starlight has a comprehensive behavioral health team called the Twinkle Team that includes mental health professionals, case managers and behavioral specialists. We also often have students, interns and residents who receive training from this team while at Camp Starlight. As a foundation to safety and a matter of course, we have risk management policies and procedures, provide training to all staff and volunteers on risk management and work cooperatively with the camp facility to align all safety measures. At Camp Starlight, we have a 1:1 adult-to-child ratio so that we can ensure both the safety of your child while at Camp and their enjoyment.

3. *Is there a way to contact my child when they are at camp?*

Parents and guardians are always welcome to call us here at Camp Starlight in order to reach their child(ren). Our Twinkle Team Director and Twinkle Team Case Manager will coordinate calls with your child, while at Camp. We encourage families to support their camper(s) in focusing on their time at Camp with their Camp friends, and we work to minimize phone time so as to minimize home missing and promote the Camp experience. Every child is different and every family is different in terms of their communication needs. We work with each family to ensure a happy and healthy stay at Camp.

4. *How does your staff handle homesickness?*

All staff and volunteers are trained in working with campers who are missing home. Techniques such as reserving time in the day to talk about things a camper is missing often helps camper focus on Camp the rest of the day. Campers are often encouraged to make arts and crafts projects for people they are missing. With a 1:1 adult-to-child ratio, every child can receive the individual adult attention they need. At the same time, they are surrounded by other children with whom they may share experiences. Campers are encouraged to support one another through any home missing episodes. Campers may be given permission to talk with a parent or guardian by phone if the child, counselors and Twinkle Team feel this would be helpful.

5. *Will they get their medicine on time?*

Club Med is the name of our Camp infirmary. Club Med is staffed by a doctor and 2 nurses, and has a clear procedure for dispensing medications to all campers on time. Some campers have special needs around taking medication, which are informed by the family and implemented by the Club Med team. Personalized care for each child is the model we apply, where every camper gets the care and support they need to ensure medication compliance and adherence while at Camp Starlight.



6. *Can parents attend Camp Starlight?*

Parents are not permitted to attend Camp Starlight. Providing children with a space that is theirs and all about them is the goal of Camp, as well as providing respite to parents and guardians. We encourage families to take a break and enjoy the time that we are not only caring for their children, but teaching them, inspiring them and celebrating them.

So, You're Ready for Camp.

The week of Camp is almost here, and we're getting excited as we check more and more items off of our To-Do list. Campers and counselors will soon be putting together lists of their own, thinking about all the things they're going need to bring to camp. Here are a few things to keep in mind as you're trying to squeeze that suitcase shut:

- A sleeping bag, or blankets and sheets – While the cabins are clean and the bunks are comfy, we all need something to tuck ourselves into at night. We provide each first-time camper with a new sleeping bag that they can keep; everyone else should bring one from home. Perfect for sleeping outside under the stars!
- Swim suit and towel – Everybody loves the pool! So it's a good thing that we have pool-time on the schedule every day of camp. Be sure to pack your favorite beach towel to dry off and stay warm on the walk back to the cabin.
- Memento from home – Sometimes it's nice to have a little reminder from home while at camp. A small stuffed animal or a favorite blanket can make drifting off to sleep a little more comforting.
- Enough socks and underwear for a full week – Heck, let's throw in an extra pair of both, just in case.
- Toothbrush – keep those choppers in tip-top shape while away from home.

What happens if you get to Camp and you forgot something? We always make sure that campers have what they need. Kiddos can "shop" for free at Kit's Kaboodle, our "store" of new or gently used clothes, shoes, books, and lots of other good stuff. Happy packing!

Some of Camp's Wishes

Every year Camp Starlight goes above and beyond in not only providing the funnest week of the year for these kids, but also in returning campers to their families with new school supplies and clothes to share in welcoming them back to school! Here's a quick list of some of the items most useful to Camp and its Campers:

OPERATIONAL SUPPLIES

- Pillows
- Sleeping bags
- Bath and/or beach towels
- Swim suits

- Socks
- Large garbage bags
- 100% juice boxes/pouches
- Bags of popped movie popcorn
- Hershey's chocolate bars
- Graham Crackers

PROGRAMMING SUPPLIES

- Electric Drill w/bits
- Screw drivers flat/philips Rubber Mallet
- Batteries AAA, AA, C, D, 9V
- Tape – masking, clear
- Sharpies
- School Supplies – backpacks, paper, pens, pencils, crayons, tissue, folders, binders
- Rec supplies – cones, any sport equipment
- Balls (soccer, basketballs, softballs, kick balls)
- Badminton set
- Storable field games
- Toys – small in quantity -puzzles, board games
- Glow sticks (130)
- Staple guns/staples
- String lights (holiday /rope)
- Marshmallow sticks (metal)
- Pool toys (inflatables, foam)
- Ritz dye for tie dye
- Large size paper cutter

within each of its campers and volunteers, so will the mission and pride of our LGBTQ community. See you next year!



Camp's "Sweet 16": Sing a Song, Sing a Song!

New and old, old and new, Camp will definitely find stuff to do — to celebrate Camp's 16th year! One of our favorite ways to get in the spirit includes singing songs with wild and silly lyrics.

Here's "The Donut Song":

Well, I walked around the corner, and I walked around the block
And I walked right in to the donut shop
And I picked up a donut and I wiped off the grease
And I handed the lady my five-cent piece.
Well, she looked at the nickel and she looked at me,
And she said, "Kind friend you can plainly see
There's a hole in the nickel and it goes right through."
And I said, "There's a hole in the donut, too."
Thanks for the donut,
So long!



Fun at Pride 2014

We want to take a moment to express our sincere appreciation for all the folks who stuck it out through all the wacky weather on June 15th in order to march with Camp Starlight, or to simply cheer us on!

Our booth was a great success, and seemed to bring out the "child" within all of us! From tossing bags of corn through tiny holes, to perhaps a little zany "bubble-dancing", we sure enjoyed spending time with you all!

While pride lasts for just one month, short, too, is the experience of Camp Starlight. Yet, like the spirit of Camp living day to day



In Appreciation

There's a tradition at Camp of communing before each meal. The opportunity for praise and recognition emerges. This is our time to say "thank you" to each other. To everyone who contributes to this special week, we give our most sincere gratitude.

Red Ribbon Foundation

Jonathan Reitan

NetRippers FC

Sammy Rodriguez

Special Thank You

Rock and Pika

Mark Griffin

Alan Cassinelli

Department Stores

Costco

Target

Fred Meyer

Big 5 Sporting Goods

Bi-Mart

Corporate

Schwabe Williamson and Wyatt

Portland General Electric

Amica Mutual Insurance

Firehouse Subs - Beaverton, OR

Firehouse Subs - Vancouver, WA

Ace Hotel

Volunteers/Venues

Michelle Alonzo

Arthur Lindsey - Art Curator

Everyone Who Attends Camp

Project Linus

Media

Statesman Journal

Huffington Post

PQ Monthly

Jenny on the Page

98.7 The Bull

Needle Prick Project



PRIDE NORTHWEST
VISIBILITY • EDUCATION • CELEBRATION
OREGON & SW WASHINGTON'S LGBTQ PRIDE ORGANIZATION



Camp Starlight's Continued Mission

Founded in 1999, Camp Starlight provides a caring, safe, spiritual and fun week-long residential summer camp for children in Oregon and Washington whose lives are affected by HIV/AIDS. Some of our campers are HIV+ themselves, while others have someone in their immediate family – a parent, a sibling, a care-taker – who is infected. Camp Starlight brings forth a sense of safety, acceptance and friendship so that these children can cast aside the worries and fears they may have around HIV and enjoy a rich, rewarding and fun summer camp experience in an environment free from the burdens of stigma or shame. Children come to Camp Starlight at no cost to their families, and enjoy a one-to-one ratio with a staff of knowledgeable,

compassionate, and devoted volunteers, including medical, educational and mental health professionals. Activities at Camp Starlight include swimming, arts and crafts, music and dance, nature hikes, horseback riding, archery, sports and recreation, a camp-wide talent show, campfires, sleeping out under the stars, and a whole lot more. It's an incredibly fun and magical week focused solely on the kids.



Commission Members

Randall Bodkin — Chair

Ebony Frison — Co-Chair

Kit Noble — Treasurer

Melanie Smith-Wilusz — Secretary

Sarah Green — Camp Doctor

Committees

Camp Director - Randall Bodkin

Development - Kit Noble, Jesse Meida

Volunteer Coordinator - Joanne Brown

Social Media and Marketing - Scott Weimer and Greta Swanson

Outreach - Sandi Griffin and Janet Bailey

Programming - Mel Smith and Jenny Block

Camper Community - Ebony Frison

Mental Health ("Twinkle Team") - Mark Duell

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