

2022-2023



PEOPLE & IMPACT

report



A NOTE FROM

greg

The desire for connection is something we all feel, but there is an inherent vulnerability tied to it. To connect, we must put ourselves out there in one way or another. Connection doesn't just happen, and it doesn't happen "to" us passively -- we must take an active role -- no matter who we are. Connecting to ourselves, others, and the outdoors takes courage and openness.

Camp Fire aims to be a safe place for all. It is only when that safety exists and youth can "simply be" that real connection and growth is possible ([see our holistic definition of thriving](#)). This is our mission. Over the past program year (Sept. 2022-Aug. 2023), we've brought our mission to life through more than 94 in-school and afterschool programs, 79 environmental and outdoor programs, 32 teen leadership programs, forged innovative partnerships, and continued to prioritize and equity youth voice.

You'll find in this report the many ways that we continued to learn and grow as an organization. Advancing equity will remain a priority as we move forward as a values-led organization and strive to be relevant to today's youth and families, meeting the current moment we all find ourselves in.



Camp Fire



Our 46 affiliates in 24 states served more than 713,000 youth, adults and families across 5,100+ program sites over the past eight years. Numbers are important, but what really matters are the individual stories of impact at the local level.

We share the following snapshot of Camp Fire's impact across the country to connect you with the work you make possible. Thank you for being with us on this journey.

Wishing you more courage for more connection,

Greg Zweber, CEO | Camp Fire National Headquarters



WHO WE ARE

GROWING UP IS




hard.

That's why Camp Fire connects young people to the outdoors, to others, and to themselves.



our vision:

We envision a world where all young people thrive and have equitable opportunities for:

-  Self-Discovery
-  Community connection
-  Engagement with Nature

LEARN MORE



STRENGTHENING CONNECTIONS



Young people need to belong and to be connected to the communities to thrive. But high rates of loneliness are negatively impacting millions across the U.S.



Disconnection fundamentally affects our mental, physical, and societal health. In fact, loneliness and isolation increase the risk for individuals to develop mental health challenges in their lives, and lacking connection can increase the risk for premature death to levels comparable to smoking daily.

- U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services

That's where Camp Fire comes in. If we want youth to learn, develop, and interact with the world, we must nurture connection. Having meaningful relationships with others is at the root of well-being. In the data that follows, you can see the impact of Camp Fire programs where connection flourished.

CONNECTING THROUGH IN-SCHOOL AND AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS



youth served through in-school and afterschool programs

3,272 youth served in in-school programs

6,085 youth served in before/afterschool programs

4,100 youth served in school break programs

2,330 youth served in club programs

1,397 youth served in teen service programs

829 youth served in other out of school programs



Camp Fire *heartland*



Trauma Informed Care Fosters Connections

Here at Camp Fire Heartland, we have a strong dedication to apply our T.I.C (Trauma Informed Care) approach in our afterschool sites and in our Justice-Involved Youth program.

While we don't ask youth about their traumas, we work with youth in ways that help create safe physical and emotional spaces, empower youth choice and collaboration, build trust, be culturally sensitive, and emphasize youth's strengths and abilities to be resilient.

By recognizing and reinforcing the positive attributes of youth, we have seen [our approach] contribute to the development of a more positive self-identity.

Our staff's ability to use the Trauma Informed Care approach has fostered strong connections with staff that have allowed youth to better self-regulate and make quality connections.

akeem curms

Senior Director, Programs at Camp Fire Heartland



Camp Fire

golden empire



Intergenerational Programming Expands Connections

At Camp Gold Hollow, the connection that happens during overnight camp is anchored by a group of deeply caring volunteers who were themselves campers at Gold Hollow in the sixties and seventies. The intergenerational dynamic of this program provides a unique experience for campers to connect with people of different ages and perspectives.

Camp Gold Hollow creates an inclusive environment where individuals of all ages feel valued and respected. We create opportunities for adults and youth to engage with each other and make connections in all areas of camp, from meals together to participating in activities where all ages learn from each other.

patty mcculley

**Camp Director,
Camp Fire Golden Empire**



CONNECTING THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL AND OUTDOOR PROGRAMS



41,631

youth served in environmental and outdoor programs

8,880 youth served in overnight camp programs

15,145 youth served in day camp programs

8,615 youth served in environmental education programs

8,565 youth served in outdoor school programs

426 youth served in other outdoor programs





ADVANCING EQUITY

Thriving isn't possible without equity. Over the past program year, Camp Fire continued to work internally on advancing equity and inclusion to bring our vision to life (equitable opportunities for young people to thrive). See more about this commitment in our strategic plan.

Doing this work has led us to shift the way we operate. The following information outlines specific ways Camp Fire is seeking to embed equity in all aspects of our work.

CAMP FIRE ALASKA



of staff were trained on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion



Camp Fire Alaska provides Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training for all of their staff, which has increased the staff's sense of belonging within our organization. This sense of belonging for staff has in turn created a space where youth who attend any Camp Fire Alaska program can also have a stronger sense of self and belonging. Staff note the DEI trainings as being among their favorite trainings they engage in throughout the year. What we have learned is that entering equity work is critical to creating inclusive spaces for all to thrive.

kendalyn mckisick

Director of Marketing and Communications, Camp Fire Alaska

CAMPER COHORT

Last year, a cohort of five CEOs and Executive Directors read the book *Design for Belonging* by Susie Wise. Those who participated were involved in the CAMPER initiative. This was an opportunity for affiliate leaders to gain a deeper understanding of what it means to design accessible and inclusive programs for young people.



I read *Design for Belonging* as part of our CAMPER cohort, and we discussed it in our monthly meetings. After defining belonging, the author wrote, "[I]t means being able to raise issues and confront harsh truths as a full member of a community." This statement made us consider how we give youth an opportunity to speak up, raise issues, and share their concerns in our programs. We thought about the ways we train our staff, and how to make sure they feel comfortable bringing their own ideas and opinions up for discussion, and how to train them to make space for youth in the programs to do the same. The book was very thought-provoking, and I have recommended it frequently in the past year.

amber grundy

CEO, Camp Fire River Bend

CAMP FIRE FRIENDSHIP FUND



affiliates received Friendship Funds!

Supporting Equity in Programming:

The goal of this fund was to extend existing scholarship programs at camps, as well as remove barriers to accessibility through the purchase of equipment needed for camper success.

7 affiliates used the funds primarily for camperships (camp scholarships), gear, and transportation to camp.

7 affiliates used the funds to help end cultural appropriation at camp, including, for example: updating signage, changing historical displays, or hiring local consultants.





PRIORITIZING YOUTH VOICE

Today's young people are facing challenges that today's adults have never had to navigate. The ubiquity of digital communication and social media, isolation of a global pandemic, social rejection of personal identities, and many other factors have contributed to a generation that demands more of the institutions traditionally dedicated to their development.

One of our eight organizational values is "honoring the power of young people" and sharing power with them, which is why we believe it is our duty and mission to heed those voices and rise to that challenge. In response, Camp Fire has leaned into an organizational pillar that goes back to 1910: youth voice.

NATIONAL YOUTH ADVISORY CABINET

87 HOURS

From Fall 2022 through Spring 2023, YAC members accumulated about 87 hours advising Camp Fire NHQ.

Topics they advised on included:

- ➔ Vetting a potential partner and making the final call on if Camp Fire would move forward with the partner.
- ➔ Informing the redesign of the Camp Fire website.
- ➔ Reviewing the entire YAC structure using Neutral Zone's Youth Adult Partnership rubric and advising Camp Fire National on how to improve YAC moving forward.
- ➔ Meeting with the Children and Nature Network to discuss environmental programming options.

To me, youth voice means change. The future is youth.

"Youth voice" means giving younger people a right to have their opinions and ideas heard on a subject that's typically decided by adults.

"Youth Voice" should just be "Voice". Each and every person has a voice and deserves to be heard, including youth.

- National Youth Advisory Cabinet Members

Camp Fire

first texas

Teens Advocate for their Community

On March 6, 2023, Camp Fire First Texas' Teens in Action staff and four students traveled to Austin, Texas to participate in TNOY's rally for youth advocacy at the state's capitol. TNOY's gave youth around the state of Texas an opportunity to come together to voice their concerns and experiences, asking for lawful improvement for those who may seem voiceless. Many students had experienced homelessness, neglect, and improper treatment in foster care.

Teens in Action students sat down with State Representative Ramon Romero, Jr. Students discussed the changes they would like to see within their communities, like safety and gun violence prevention within the community and school; trash collection and better landscaping on school properties; better roads; and the ability to report their concerns to someone without being judged.

Rep. Romero Jr. gave great feedback and expressed his motives to make improvements within the Fort Worth community and schools where the teens live.

alric arnett

Program Director,
Camp Fire First
Texas



State Representative Ramon Romero, Jr.; Program Director, Alric Arnett; Program Specialist: Connie Davila; Students: Delores Mills, Ruben Reyes, Estrella Olmos, Elizabeth Martinez



WHO WE SERVED



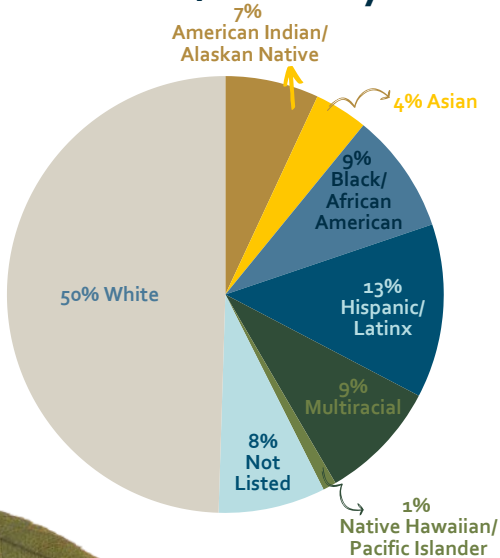
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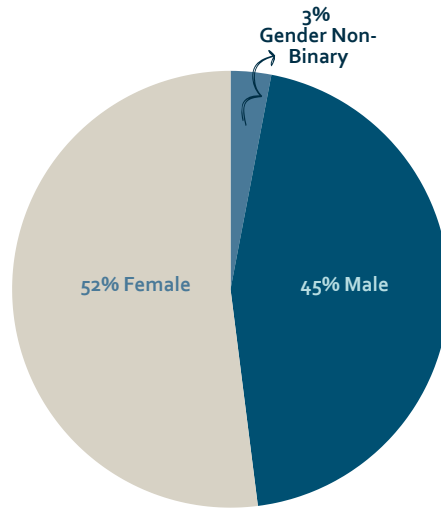
YOUTH, ADULTS & FAMILIES SERVED DURING THE 2022-23 PROGRAM YEAR

YOUTH DEMOGRAPHICS

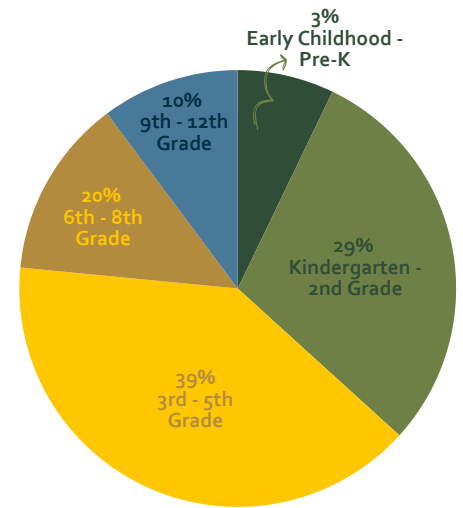
Race/Ethnicity



Gender



Age



Youth Participants qualified for Free and Reduced Lunch

30%

Youth Participants with a Disability

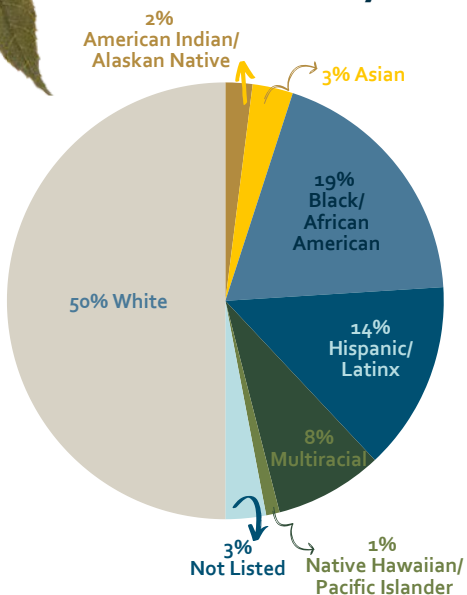
7%

Youth Participants who were English Language Learners

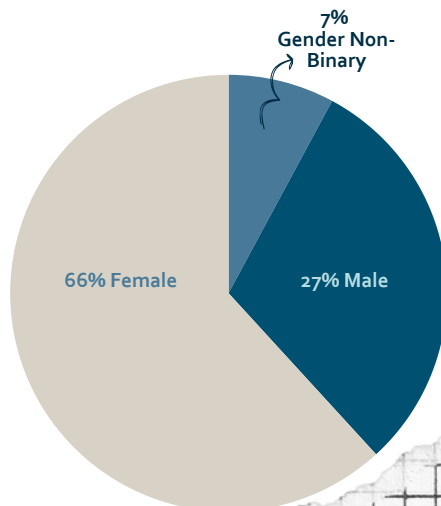
5%

DIRECT DELIVERY STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS

Race/Ethnicity



Gender



COLLABORATION BRINGS OUR IMPACT TO LIFE

We're a national organization with a local impact. National partners and collaborators to help us serve 46 affiliates and their communities across 24 states through thought leadership, resource sharing, and programmatic investment.

Last year we celebrated new strategic partnerships with 3M, AT&T, #startsmall, and Teva, that helped us expand and deepen our impact across our affiliate network.

Camp Fire is proud of all our partnerships that are helping young people foster a connection to the outdoors, to each other, and to themselves.

Be a part of Camp Fire's future. Contact Zach for partnership opportunities:

zach wheatley

Director of Fund Development, Camp Fire

zach.wheatley@campfire.org



Camp Fire

CAMPFIRE.ORG/DONATE

