



**CAMP HOPE AMERICA AS A PATHWAY OF HOPE FOR CHILDREN EXPOSED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:  
AN IMPACT EVALUATION OF HOPE, RESILIENCE, AND CHARACTER STRENGTHS AMONG PARTICIPATING CAMPERS**

## **2023 NATIONAL IMPACT EVALUATION**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides the results of the 2023 annual impact evaluation of Camp HOPE America's summer overnight camp programming. Camp HOPE America is a program of the Alliance for HOPE International, and the first camping and mentoring program in the United States focused on children impacted by domestic violence and trauma. In 2023, there were 50 Camp HOPE America Affiliate Sites nationwide. Forty affiliated Sites led overnight camps. Please see [Appendix A](#) for a listing of these Sites.

For overnight camp, all participating Camp HOPE America Affiliate Sites gather data to evaluate the impact of the program on children's hope, resilience, and character development. To assess changes in hope, resilience, and character development, a matched pre-test, post-test, and post-camp assessment design was used to analyze data reported by campers. Additional observational data about campers were collected from camp counselors at the pre-camp and post-camp assessment points.

In 2023, a total of **1,341 campers** responded to the self-report survey for at least one data point. The average age of campers was **11.63 years** (SD = 2.67) with ages ranging from 6 to 18 years. Of the participating campers, 45% identified as female, 47.5% identified as male, and 2% identified as another gender identity.

Complete data across all three self-report assessment points (i.e., pre-test, post-test, and follow-up) were available for **650 campers**. Data analyses revealed that the campers reported statistically significant increases in both hope and resilience across all three assessment points: pre-test, post-test, and 30-day follow-up.

The observational data reported by Camp HOPE America Hope Counselors further support the positive impact of camp. Counselors' observational assessments were available for 1,096 campers on the first and last days of camp (i.e., pre-camp and post-test). Matched observational comparisons were made for hope and seven character strengths. Between the pre-camp and post-camp assessments, there were statistically significant increases in counselors' ratings of campers based on the following:

- Ability to create pathways and dedicate energy toward goals (**Hope**).
- Excitement and energy toward goals (**Zest**).
- Perseverance for goals (**Grit**).
- Capacity to control thoughts, feelings, and behaviors when in conflict (**Self-Control**).
- Positive future expectation (**Optimism**).
- Appreciation for the kindness received by others (**Gratitude**).
- Awareness of the feelings and motivations of others (**Social Intelligence**).
- Desire to learn and seek out new information (**Curiosity**).

Overall, the results of the 2023 impact evaluation of Camp HOPE America offer evidence that this camp has a positive impact on campers in the areas of increased hope, resilience, and character strengths.



## INTRODUCTION

Far too many children in the United States are impacted by domestic violence each year, and the consequences of this exposure can be significant and long-lasting. However, children who have been impacted by domestic violence and other adverse, traumatic experiences can benefit from supportive interventions that foster hope, resilience, and character strengths. Camp HOPE America ([camphopeamerica.com](http://camphopeamerica.com)) is a groundbreaking national intervention that aims to support children in the aftermath of domestic violence exposure, with a long-range vision of breaking intergenerational patterns of trauma and abuse.

### ABOUT CAMP HOPE AMERICA

[The mission of Camp HOPE America](#) is to **"help children who have been exposed to trauma find pathways to HOPE and healing."** Camp HOPE America is a program of Alliance for HOPE International. Alliance for HOPE International is the umbrella organization for Family Justice Centers and similar multi-agency models serving victims of domestic violence and their children throughout the United States.

Family Justice Center programs revolve around creating multi-disciplinary teams and Centers where adults and children can receive wraparound services under one roof. Since 2018, we have increased our focus on children impacted by trauma through the rapid expansion of Camp HOPE America, which is based on our commitment to breaking the generational cycle of family violence and the school-to-prison pipeline by changing the destinies of children. Too often, children in homes with violence feel isolated and alone. They need an intentional community. Our work blends FJC trauma experts and safety resources with camping, mentoring, and after-school professionals to create community, connection, and a safety net for families and children like none other. In addition, Camp HOPE establishes long-term relationships with children, moving beyond crisis response to thriving and well-being.

In addition to on-site services, Family Justice Centers foster greater collaboration and coordination with other community-based services and supports. Camp HOPE America is a valuable extension of the Family Justice Center model because it aims to expand even more supportive wraparound services to victims, survivors, and their children.

Camp HOPE America was founded in 2003 by Casey Gwinn, President of Alliance for HOPE International. Since that time, the program has grown exponentially, and in 2023, there were 50 Camp HOPE America Affiliate Sites in 24 states across the United States.

**"Our work, in partnership with our affiliated programs nationwide, changes the destinies of thousands of children impacted by domestic violence. Our 20-year track record of early intervention in the lives of youth ensures they are seen, equipped with new skills and tools to navigate through trauma, and become leaders and hope coaches to other trauma-impacted youth. I am so proud of our history and even more excited about our future!"**

Casey Gwinn, Founder of Camp HOPE America

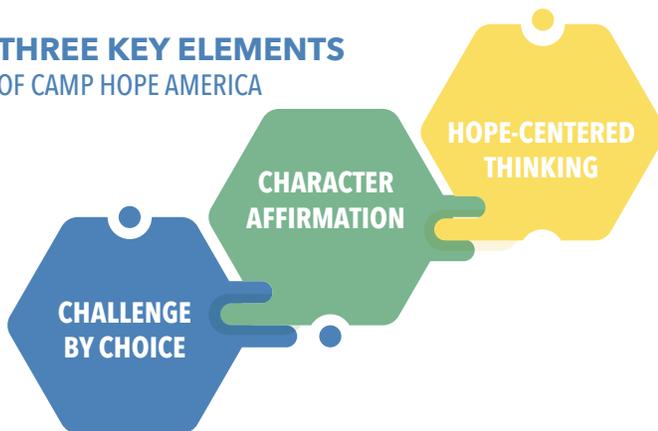


## THE CAMP HOPE AMERICA OVERNIGHT CAMPING MODEL

One primary intervention within the Camp HOPE America model is a strength- and character-based, six-day, overnight summer camp experience. The summer camp experience is further enhanced by a year-round Pathways mentoring program that provides ongoing engagement, post-camp activities, and support to participants and their caregivers.

Camp HOPE America offers two types of camps: Classic and High Adventure. Classic camps are geared to younger children ages 7 to 11, and High Adventure camps are for adolescents ages 12 to 17. High Adventure camps include more rigorous, developmentally appropriate activities for adolescents, such as whitewater rafting and zip lining.

### THREE KEY ELEMENTS OF CAMP HOPE AMERICA



Camp HOPE America focuses on three key elements: 1) Challenge by Choice activities, 2) affirmation and praise for observed and developing character strengths in campers, and 3) themed, small group discussions and activities focused on helping children set goals and then pursue those goals and the pathways to their goals.

Challenge by Choice refers to challenging children to set daily achievement goals by pursuing activities that have perceived risks and/or are outside of the campers' comfort zones (e.g., canoeing, zip line, rafting, etc.).

However, campers always have the choice to opt out of those activities if the challenge creates unmanageable stress or fear for them.

Campers are positively encouraged to engage in the personal challenges presented throughout the camp week. However, campers are never coerced, negatively pressured, or unconstructively persuaded to take part in any activities. All activities are designed to promote creative thinking, decision-making, problem-solving, teamwork and mutual support, reasoning, self-esteem, competency, self-management, group trust, organization, and goal setting. Even if campers do not participate in challenging activities, they are expected to cheer on and support their camp mates and peers participate in other daily camp activities.

Camp HOPE America program activities are site-specific and tailored to the age groups of campers, but examples of activities that programs across the United States have used include river rafting, wakeboarding, tubing, high and low ropes challenge courses, horseback riding, arts and crafts, kayaking and canoeing, recreational hiking, field games, skits and camp songs, nightly campfire songs, journaling, KBAR (kick back and relax) time in the cabins/tents each day with counselors and campers, eating three family-style meals each day, and other relationship-oriented activities.

Campers' safety and well-being are paramount through all Camp HOPE America activities, and campers are expected to follow all safety and group protocols. For safety reasons, campers cannot leave the group setting or be alone at any time (except for toileting or showering). When children arrive pre-camp, they turn in their phones or electronics to eliminate distractions and focus on relational interactions with other campers and adults. Electronic items are returned to campers after the conclusion of the camp.

Each Camp HOPE America Affiliate across the U.S. collaborates with a partner camp facility, which is typically an overnight camp facility, such as those hosted by local or regional YMCA organizations. A unique aspect of the Camp HOPE America model is the partnerships among the traditional camp facility staff and specially trained Camp HOPE America staff and volunteers, who are called **Hope Counselors**. The traditional camp facility staff are responsible for supervising all recreational activities. Camp HOPE America Affiliate staff and volunteers have the primary responsibility for overseeing the therapeutic components of the program, such as core program activities.

Camp HOPE America's individualized, child-centered approach utilizes a 1:3 adult-to-camper ratio, which is known as the **Rule of Three**. Rule of three is that there is never a camper alone with another kid or adult--there should always be three people (one adult). There are two counselors (i.e., one traditional camp facility staff and one Hope Counselor) per each 6-camper cabin group, which are referred to as **Hope Circles**. Throughout the week, in addition to large group activities, each Hope Circle participates in various camp activities together and works to build relationships within the smaller group. This small-group format allows for deeper connections and conversations than would be possible with exclusively large group activities (Gwinn, 2015; Gwinn & Hellman, 2018).

All Hope Counselors involved in Camp HOPE America programs receive specialized training in trauma-informed, hope-centered mentoring and support strategies. This "**Hope Team**" training provides practical strategies to encourage and support trauma-impacted youth during the camping week and in the follow-up, year-round monthly programs and mentoring activities.

Traditional camp facility staff members also receive training in trauma-informed, hope-centered work with trauma-impacted youth before the start of camp.

Camp HOPE America aims to provide affirmation and encouragement throughout each day of camp, including nightly campfires where campers receive **Character Trait Awards** each day from the Hope Counselors. These nightly campfires also include group discussions in which children are asked the question, "**Where did you see hope today?**"

Another daily practice that is included in the Camp HOPE America curriculum is the use of positive truth statements the campers memorize. Some statements the campers have memorized include the following: "**We need each other,**" "**I choose to grow here,**" "**I am standing strong,**" and "**My dreams go with me.**"

A related curriculum-based activity is sharing biographical stories of **Hope Heroes**, who are individuals who have overcome similar traumas or adversity as those faced by campers. By associating a truth statement with a Hope Hero, campers can internalize their uniqueness, personal progress, need for others, future-oriented focus, and perseverance. These tools are also designed to help campers relate their experiences to inspiring adults or youth with similar stories to their own.

Existing evaluation data, along with national recognitions that have been granted to Camp HOPE America, support the impact that this model has on participating youth. In 2017, Hellman and Gwinn published the first evaluation of Camp HOPE America based on data from several Camp HOPE America programs run by Family Justice Centers and other Multi-Agency Sites across California.

The findings of this evaluation showed that children's hope increased among campers between the pre-camp and post-camp assessments. Two significant national recognitions the Camp HOPE America has received include (1) being named the 2022 Outstanding Youth Initiative of the Year from [DomesticShelters.org](https://www.DomesticShelters.org) and (2) being recognized by the [National Summer Learning Association](https://www.NationalSummerLearningAssociation.org) as a 2022 Summer Learning Champion, as featured at their National Youth Leadership Institute.

Camp HOPE America now conducts an annual impact evaluation in which data are collected from campers and counselors from participating Sites across the United States.

This report includes findings from the 2023 impact evaluation of the camp during its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. The next section of this report includes a brief review of research examining the impacts of exposure to domestic violence on children, along with the importance of interventions like Camp HOPE America that focus on fostering hope, resilience, and character strengths among impacted youth. Then, the methods and results of the 2023 impact evaluation are presented. The findings of this evaluation support the value of the Camp HOPE America model for children who have been impacted by domestic violence and other traumas, with a long-range vision of breaking intergenerational cycles of trauma and abuse.

## THE IMPACTS OF EXPOSURE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN

Domestic violence—also referred to as intimate partner violence—is defined as any form of abuse (e.g., emotional, psychological, verbal, physical, and sexual) between current or former intimate relationship partners (Centers for Disease Control, 2018). Despite domestic violence often being viewed as a stigmatized, marginal issue, abusive relationships affect a substantial portion of the population in the United States and internationally each year.

According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV, 2024), as many as 10 million women and men in the United States experience physical violence in an intimate relationship each year. The consequences of domestic violence ripple out to impact many others than its direct victims. Children who witness or are otherwise exposed to domestic violence in their families are often among the most significantly impacted. The NCADV (2024) further reports that, annually, 1 in 15 children experience exposure to domestic violence.

Children who are exposed to domestic violence are at an increased risk for negative consequences in the short- and long-term, and this includes effects on their emotional, social, and behavioral well-being (Evans, Davies, & DiLillo, 2008; Kitzmann, Gaylord, Holt, & Kenny, 2003; Walker-Descartes, Mineo, Condado, & Agrawal, 2021; Wolfe, Crooks, Lee, McIntyre-Smith, & Jaffe, 2003). The potential negative impacts of domestic violence are often exacerbated by other related stressors, such as separations from their parents, hostile custody court cases, and isolation from extended family members. Research also has documented a higher risk for child maltreatment victimization among children in homes in which domestic violence is present (Fantuzzo & Mohr, 1999).

There is a large and growing body of research examining the potential long-term negative consequences of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) throughout the lifespan.



Early longitudinal research on ACEs was groundbreaking because it showed that children’s ACE scores (i.e., a summed tally of the number of types of ACEs they experienced in their first 18 years of life) were associated with negative outcomes in adulthood in a range of life domains. These included physical and mental health challenges, increased engagement in delinquency and criminal behavior, and poor educational, employment, and economic outcomes (Anda et al., 2007; Bellis, Lowey, Leckenby, Hughes & Harrison, 2013; Briggs, Amaya-Jackson, Putnam, & Putnam, 2021; Currie & Wisdom, 2010; Dube et al., 2001a; Dube et al., 2001b; Giano, Wheeler, & Hubach, 2020; Gwinn, 2015; Hillis, Anda, Felitti & Marchbanks, 2001; Lanier, Kohl, Raghavan, & Auslander, 2015; Reavis, Looman, Franco, & Rojas, 2013).

ACE scores of 4 or more are especially linked to heightened risks of negative outcomes in adulthood, including the potential for drug and alcohol abuse and addiction, mental health challenges (e.g., depression and suicide), negative health behaviors, and physical illness and disease (Felitti et al., 1998).

Additional existing research studies have further linked children’s exposure to domestic violence to several other potential challenges, including those listed below:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Bullying or being bullied
- Increased risk for drug or alcohol abuse
- Oppositional or rebellious behaviors
- Problems in school, including truancy and declining grades
- Physical health issues
- Reduced self-esteem

(American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 2019; Carlson, 1990; Dodaj, 2020; Lichter & McClosky, 2004; Litrownik, Newton, & Hunter, 2003; National Child Traumatic Stress Network, 2024; US DHHS Office on Women’s Health, 2024; Sharratt et al., 2022)

The list above highlights the potential long-term impacts of witnessing domestic violence on children and youth. Unfortunately, many families experience intergenerational patterns of abuse, especially when children and their families do not have access to adequate support, resources, and trauma-informed services.



## HOPE, RESILIENCE, AND CHARACTER STRENGTHS

Despite the potential for negative outcomes for children who have been exposed to domestic violence and other traumatic or adverse experiences, all children can rise above challenges and live full, healthy, meaningful lives, as well as make valuable contributions to the world around them. **Three factors that can impact children's life trajectories in the aftermath of adverse experiences are foundational to the Camp HOPE America program: hope, resilience, and character strengths.** A full literature review on each of these factors is beyond the scope of this impact evaluation report, but a brief overview of each factor and recent related research findings among children impacted by domestic violence is presented below.

### HOPE

According to the Hope Research Center at the University of Oklahoma (2024), **"Hope is the belief that the future will be better and you have the power to make it so. Hope is based on three main ideas: desirable goals, pathways to goal attainment, and agency (willpower) to pursue those pathways."** When people experience hope, it can contribute positively toward their overall health and well-being (Hellman & Gwinn, 2017). Regarding hope among children, Snyder (2002) described hope as a cognitive-based motivational theory in which children learn to create strategies to attain their desired goals. Esteves et al. (2013) conducted an integrative literature review on the subject of hope among adolescents. Their review identified ten possible consequences of hope for youth:

- Greater life satisfaction
- Increased health practices
- Increased well-being
- Greater sense of purpose
- Improved academic achievement
- Reduced internalizing behaviors
- Reduced externalizing behaviors
- Decreased substance use
- Increased positive affect
- Decreased negative affect

Marques and Lopez (2014) further summarized the existing body of two decades worth of research on youth hope by stating, **"Put simply, research demonstrates that more hopeful students do better in school and life than less hopeful students."** They went on to note that children's hope can be promoted through positive relationships with adults (e.g., teachers and parents), as well as through interventions that focus on building children's character strengths. Research also points to the benefits of fostering hope especially among children impacted by domestic violence. In 2019, Arai and colleagues conducted a systematic review of research on children exposed to domestic violence. One of the key themes they found in existing research was the importance of children's hope for the future in the aftermath of being impacted by domestic violence. They noted that "these children often express a belief in being able to transition from a violent present or past to a safer, more hopeful future." They went on to add that children's spiritual, religious, and/or cultural beliefs may help children make meaning of their experiences and foster greater hope for their futures.



## RESILIENCE

Resilience describes “the process and outcome of successfully adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences, especially through mental, emotional, and behavioral flexibility and adjustment to external and internal demands” (American Psychological Association, 2024). Among children exposed to domestic violence, a variety of risk and protective factors can impact the extent to which these children demonstrate resilience in response to the challenges they face (Martinez-Torteya, Bogat, Von Eye, & Levendosky, 2009).

In a 2019 meta-analysis of research on protective factors among children exposed to violence, Yule, Houston, and Grych reported that a number of protective factors have been shown to foster resilience, including self-regulation (i.e., “individuals’

capacity to manage their emotions, impulses, and behavior”), school support, family support, community cohesion, and peer support. The relational protective factors were especially meaningful in contributing to youths’ resilience, leading Yule et al. to write, **“Warm and caring relationships with parents, other family members, peers, and school personnel can provide critical emotional and instrumental support to children to bolster their self-worth.”**

Overall, existing research points to the fact that while children who are exposed to domestic violence can face many challenges, many of them display resilience and positive functioning, especially when protective factors are present in their lives (Howell, 2011; Martinez et al., 2009; Yule et al., 2019).

## CHARACTER STRENGTHS

Positive psychology offers an overarching framework for understanding how children and families can build hope and resilience even after experiencing domestic violence. Positive psychology is an area of research and practice within the broader psychology field that focuses on flourishing, overcoming challenges, and optimal experiences and development (Park et al., 2014; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

One area of focus within positive psychology is fostering character strengths (American Psychological Association, 2018; Park et al., 2014). Character strengths are also a key focus of our approach within Camp HOPE America (Hellman & Gwinn, 2017).

The VIA Institute on Character, which is based in Cincinnati, Ohio, has developed a free, online assessment of 24 character strengths that has been taken by over 30 million people at the time of writing this 2023 Camp Hope America Impact Evaluation Report (VIA Impact on Character, 2024). This assessment has shed light on the impact of character strengths for helping people to survive, thrive, and positively impact future generations (Mayerson, 2020). The VIA Institute on Character also has created an extensive summary of research showing the impacts of character strengths among children, adolescents, and schools, which can be found on their [website](#).

As will be discussed further in the Methods section, this Camp HOPE America impact evaluation focused on seven specific character strengths that are especially relevant to children who have been exposed to domestic violence and other adverse experiences. The seven character strengths are as follows, and they are the same ones that were assessed in the Hellman and Gwinn (2017) published evaluation of Camp HOPE America:

### ZEST

An approach to life filled with anticipation, excitement, and energy.

### GRIT

Perseverance and passion for long-term goals.

### SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

Being aware of the motives and feelings of other people.

### OPTIMISM

The expectation that the future holds positive possibilities and likelihoods.

### SELF-CONTROL

Capacity to regulate thoughts, feelings, and behaviors when they conflict with interpersonal goals.

### GRATITUDE

Appreciation for the benefits received from others and a desire to reciprocate with positive actions.

### CURIOSITY

Search for information for its own sake. Exploring a wide range of information when solving problems.

The KIPP (Knowledge is Power Program) Character Report Card (newer versions of this instrument appear to be called the KIPP Character Growth Card; Rand 2024) was adapted to measure these seven character strengths in the current evaluation.

## SUMMARY

Together, hope, resilience, and character strengths can serve as a powerful recipe for positively impacting the lives of children and youth who have been exposed to domestic violence. For this reason, Camp HOPE America's model is infused with a focus on hope, resilience, and character development throughout its activities, practices, and relational support among campers and with Hope Counselors. These three domains also are the primary focus of the annual impact evaluation of the Camp HOPE America model with all participating Affiliate Sites. The methodology used in the 2023 impact evaluation is described in the next section.



CHA - GA

## METHODS

### ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

Survey instruments were used to collect data from youth campers and their Hope Counselors from the 40 Camp HOPE America Affiliate Sites that are listed in [Appendix A](#).

For campers, a pre-test, at-camp, and post-camp survey design was utilized. Campers received the pre-camp survey 30 days before attending camp. Post-camp surveys were collected the last morning before departing from the camp, and post-camp surveys were collected approximately 30 days after the camp ended.

For Hope Counselors, a pre-camp (i.e., at the end of the first full day of camp) and post-camp (i.e., on the last day of camp) survey design was used. Hope Counselors filled out the respective surveys for each camper who was part of their Hope Circles during the camp week.

Individual Camp HOPE America Affiliate Sites, which are often affiliated with local Family Justice Centers or youth serving organizations, were responsible for recruiting selecting, and securing consent to participate in the evaluation from participating children and guardians. Affiliate Sites also were responsible for overseeing data collection from the campers and Hope Counselors at their Sites.

Once all data were collected, staff from each Camp HOPE America Affiliate site securely transmitted the completed surveys to Alliance for HOPE International (Alliance) staff members. The Alliance team engaged three contracted professionals to support the data entry, analyses, and reporting for this impact evaluation: A lead evaluator (Dr. Christine Murray), a statistician (Dr. Rick Bunch), and a data entry specialist. Only Alliance staff and the data entry specialist had access to the full set of raw data, and the lead evaluator and statistician only had access to a de-identified dataset that did not contain any identifying information.

Alliance staff maintained a codebook with unique identification codes for each camper that were used to link the data for the longitudinal data analyses. The lead evaluator created a database format to capture all of the data used on the assessment forms, which are described below and included in [Appendix C](#). The statistician completed data analyses using SPSS.



## CAMPER DEMOGRAPHICS AND ACE SCORES

### DEMOGRAPHICS

A total of 1,341 campers nationally provided responses to the self-report survey. Campers reported their age and gender. The average age of the respondent was 11.63 years (SD = 2.67). Ages ranged from a low of 6 to a high of 18 years. Age information was missing for 83 campers.

Of the campers who reported their gender, 47.5% identified as male (n = 637) and 45% (n = 603) as female. 2% (n = 27) of

participants reported a gender other than male or female. Gender data were missing for 74 campers.

Among the campers for whom data are available, 56% (n = 750) participated in the Classic format and 42% (n = 558) participated in the High Adventure Camp. For 33 campers (2%), data were missing regarding whether they participated in the Classic or High Adventure format.

### ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACES)

TABLE 1

Prevalence of ACEs Reported by 2023 Camp HOPE America Campers (n = 397).

ACE SCORE	CDC FINDINGS*	CAMP HOPE 2023
0	36.1%	7.3%
1	26.0%	18.4%
2	15.9%	12.6%
3	9.5%	13.4%
4+	12.5%	48.4%

Complete ACE score data were available for 397 older campers who attended High Adventure camps across the United States. The prevalence of ACE scores reported by the High Adventure campers in 2023 is shown in Table 1. One point to note about the data reported in Table 1 is that the fact that there were 7.3% of campers reporting ACE scores of zero may reflect campers under-reporting their experiences with ACEs for a variety of reasons (e.g., social desirability or not using the same wording to describe their experiences as is used in the ACE questionnaire).

Theoretically, because Camp HOPE America is a camp for children who have been exposed to domestic violence, virtually all campers should have an ACE score of at least one. This point should be considered in future evaluations, although it is also important from a trauma-informed perspective to always honor campers’ right to privacy and to decide what information they wish to disclose through evaluation assessments.

The average ACE score for Camp HOPE America High Adventure campers in 2023 was 3.69 (SD = 2.59). Nationally, the average ACE score among the general population is 1.61 (Ford et al., 2014). As such, High Adventure campers participating in Camp HOPE America report about 2 more ACEs on average as compared to the national population.

Almost half of Camp HOPE America High Adventure campers (48.4%) who were surveyed in 2023 had an ACE score of 4 or higher. As noted earlier in this report, ACE scores of 4 or more are considered to be an indicator of especially higher risk for a number of potential negative physical and emotional health outcomes (Felitti et al., 1998).

Table 2 displays the prevalence of specific ACEs for Camp HOPE America High Adventure campers in 2023. In addition to witnessing domestic violence, the most frequent ACEs for the Camp HOPE America campers included parental mental illness, parental incarceration, parental substance use/abuse, and verbal abuse.

Overall, participating High Adventure campers surveyed in this evaluation demonstrated a relatively high average ACE score (3.69), and almost half (48.4%) reported experiencing more than four ACEs. Thus, although Camp HOPE America is primarily an intervention focusing on children who have been exposed to domestic violence, program staff and leaders need to remember that many campers have faced additional challenging life experiences and other forms of abuse (i.e., polyvictimization) as well.

**MEASURES**

**CAMPER-REPORTED ASSESSMENTS: CHILDREN’S HOPE AND RESILIENCE**

**CHILDREN’S HOPE:**

The Children’s Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1997) assesses the extent to which children believe they can establish pathways to their goals, as well as develop and maintain the willpower to follow these pathways. The Children’s Hope Scale includes six self-report items with a six-point Likert-type response format (1 = none of the time; 6 = all of the time). Possible scores range from a low of 6 to a high of 36, with higher scores reflecting higher hope. Research demonstrates that the Children’s Hope Scale demonstrates good psychometric properties across different populations of children and adolescents (Bean, 2020; Dixon, 2017; Hellman, et al., 2018).

**TABLE 2**

Prevalence of Adverse Childhood Experience by Type.

TYPE OF ACE	FREQUENCY	%
Verbal abuse	149	37.5%
Physical abuse	98	24.7%
Sexual abuse	76	19.1%
Emotional neglect	142	35.8%
Physical neglect	73	18.4%
Witnessing domestic violence	327	82.4%
Parental divorce	122	30.7%
Parental mental illness	169	42.6%
Parental substance use/abuse	152	38.3%
Parental incarceration	157	39.5%

*Note: The total number of Camp Hope America High Adventure campers for who ACE questionnaires were completed was 397.*

**CHILDREN’S RESILIENCE:**

The Camp HOPE America (CHA) Resilience Scale was developed by the Oklahoma University (OU) Hope Research Center for prior-year evaluations of Camp HOPE America (Camp HOPE America, 2023). The CHA Resilience Scale is grounded in Camp Hope American’s focus on supporting campers in believing in themselves, others, and their dreams. The CHA Resilience Scale includes six items which also have response options in a Likert-type response format (1 = none of the time; 6 = all of the time). The possible range of scores for the CHA Resilience Scale is 6 to 36, with higher scores reflecting higher self-reported resilience. Previously, the OU Hope Research Center reported that the CHA Resilience Scale demonstrates internal consistency reliability across multiple test administrations (Camp HOPE America, 2023).

COUNSELOR-REPORTED ASSESSMENTS: CHILDREN’S HOPE AND CHARACTER STRENGTHS

COUNSELORS’ OBSERVATIONS OF CHILDREN’S HOPE:

Counselors were asked to complete evaluations of campers in their Hope Circles through an adapted version of the Children’s Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1997). Items on the counselor version of the Children’s Hope Scale were reworded to reflect their observations of the camper. For example, the item “I think I am doing pretty well” was reworded to “The camper is doing pretty well.”

The counselor version of the Children’s Hope Scale includes six items and is rated on a six-point Likert-type response format (1 = none of the time; 6 = all of the time). Possible scores range from 6 to 36, with higher scores reflecting higher hope. Previously, the OU Hope Research Center reported that the counselor version of the Children’s Hope Scale demonstrates internal consistency reliability across multiple test administrations (Camp HOPE America, 2023).

COUNSELORS’ OBSERVATIONS OF CAMPERS’ CHARACTER STRENGTHS

This impact evaluation assessed seven character strengths among Camp HOPE America campers based on counselors’ observations:

TABLE 3

Character strengths evaluated through observation

CHARACTER STRENGTH	DEFINITION
ZEST	An approach to life filled with anticipation, excitement, and energy.
GRIT	Perseverance and passion for long-term goals.
OPTIMISM	The expectation that the future holds positive possibilities and likelihoods.
SELF-CONTROL	Capacity to regulate thoughts, feelings, and behaviors when they conflict with interpersonal goals.
GRATITUDE	Appreciation for the benefits received from others and a desire to reciprocate with positive actions.
CURIOSITY	Search for information for its own sake. Exploring a wide range of information when solving problems.
SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE	Being aware of the motives and feelings of other people.

The KIPP (Knowledge is Power Program) Character Report Card (newer versions of this instrument appear to be called the KIPP Character Growth Card; Rand 2024) was used for counselors to report their observations of these strengths in the campers in their respective cabin groups on the first and last days of camp. This assessment was developed around 2014 by the Character Lab at the University of Pennsylvania in partnership with the KIPP charter school network, and the goal of this assessment was to assess children’s characteristics that lead to positive outcomes in schools (Sparks, 2014).

Limited psychometric evidence is available for the KIPP Character Report Card (Rand, 2024), and the Character Lab was slated to be sunsetted as of June 2024 (CharacterLab.org, 2024). However, this assessment has been used in prior-year Camp HOPE America impact evaluations, so its use was continued in 2023 to provide consistent data collection methods over time.

For each of the seven character strengths assessed in the 2023 impact evaluation, KIPP Character Report Card subscales were used. The specific items associated with each character strength are outlined in [Appendix C](#).

DATA ANALYSES

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize campers’ demographic characteristics and the means and standard deviations for each assessment completed by the campers and counselors. Longitudinal analyses included repeated measures ANOVAs and paired samples t-tests.

## RESULTS

A total of 1,341 campers nationally provided responses to the self-report survey. Of these 1,341 campers:

- 1,100 provided complete data at the pre-camp assessment
- 1,072 provided complete data on the final day of camp assessment
- 782 provided complete data at the 30-day post-camp assessment

For the pre-test, post-test, 30-day post-camp self-report assessments, matched comparisons were available for 650 campers across all three assessment periods.

For the counselor-reported data: 1,096 campers had complete counselor ratings at the pre-camp assessment, and 1,096 campers had complete counselor ratings at the post-camp assessment.

### CHILDREN'S HOPE

Campers and counselors both completed assessments of campers' hope via the Children's Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1997). For both the campers' self-reported data and the counselors' observational reports, data analyses revealed statistically significant, positive increases in children's hope across all data collection points. Additional details about each analysis are provided below.

#### CAMPERS' SELF-REPORTED HOPE:

Table 4 illustrates the changes in scores for the Children's Hope Scale as self-reported by campers. As seen in the chart, hope scores increased from the pre-camp to the post-camp and again at the post-camp assessment. A repeated measures ANOVA showed that the increase in Children's Hope Scale

scores, as self-reported by the campers, was statistically significant. These analyses demonstrate the campers reported increased levels of hope after participating in Camp HOPE America, and gains continued to be reported at the 30-day post-camp assessment point.

**TABLE 4** Analysis of Campers' Self-Reported Children's Hope Scale Scores Based on Pre-test, Post-test, and 30-Day Post-Camp Assessments

CAMPERS' CHILDREN'S HOPE SCALE SCORES	PRETEST MEAN & SD	POSTTEST MEAN & SD	30-DAY POST-CAMP MEAN & SD	STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE ANALYSIS (REPEATED MEASURES ANOVA)
	24.97 (SD = 5.733)	25.67 (SD = 5.924)	26.43 (SD = 5.725)	$F(2, 1289) = 26.696; p < .001;$ statistically significant increases

**COUNSELORS' OBSERVATIONS OF CAMPER'S HOPE:**

Table 5 depicts changes in scores for the Children's Hope Scale as rated by their counselors. There was a statistically significant, positive change in counselors' ratings on the Children's Hope Scale between

the pre-camp (i.e., first day) and post-camp (i.e., last day) assessments. Similar to the campers' self-reported data, the counselors' ratings of campers' hope increased after the children participated in Camp HOPE America.

**TABLE 5** Analysis of Counselors' Observational Reports for Children's Hope Scale Scores Based on Pre-camp and Post-camp Assessments

COUNSELORS' RATINGS OF CHILDREN'S HOPE SCALE SCORES	PRETEST MEAN & SD	POSTTEST MEAN & SD	STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE ANALYSIS (PAIRED-SAMPLES T-TEST)
	25.10 (SD = 5.775)	27.57 (SD = 6.007)	$t(1095) = -14.480, p < .001$ ; <b>statistically significant increase</b>

**COMPARING CHILDREN'S HOPE SCALE SCORES BETWEEN CLASSIC AND HIGH ADVENTURE CAMPERS**

To further explore the impact of Camp HOPE America on Children's Hope Scale scores (self-reported), analyses were done to analyze campers' changes in scores over time based on the type of camp they attended: Classic or High Adventure.

The list below shows changes in the mean Children's Hope Scale scores between the pre-test, post-test, and post-camp assessments for both Classic and High Adventure Campers.

Mean Children's Hope Scale Scores for **Classic** Participants (n = 398):

- Pre-camp mean: 24.59 (SD = 5.815)
- Post-camp mean: 25.39 (SD = .5999)
- 30-Day Post-camp Mean: 26.28 (SD = 5.803)

Mean Children's Hope Scale Scores for **High Adventure** Participants (n = 252):

- Pre-camp mean: 25.57 (SD = 5.562)
- Post-camp mean: 26.124 (SD = 5.788)
- 30-Day Post-camp Mean: 26.66

Two repeated measures ANOVA analyses were computed to examine mean hope scores for Classic and High Adventure Camps. Findings were statistically significant for both the Classic camp [ $F(2,794) = .19.431$ ;  $p < .001$ ] and High Adventure camp [ $F(2, 502) = .7.313$ ;  $p < .001$ ] indicating that changes were observed in pre-, post-, and post-camp mean hope scores.

Overall, the statistical analyses of Children's Hope Scale scores for both campers' self-reported data and the counselors' observational data showed findings that revealed statistically significant in campers' hope over time. This finding held true for the entire population of campers, as well as when separating campers based on participation in either the Classic or High Adventure format.

**This indicates that scores increased in a statistically significant way after students participated in Camp HOPE America for both camp types.**

CHILDREN’S RESILIENCE

Table 6 shows the changes in campers’ self-reported ratings on the CHA Resilience Scale between the pre-test, post-test, and post-camp assessments. A repeated measures ANOVA showed an increase in campers’ resilience from pre-camp to post-camp

and again from post-camp to follow-up. This increase in children’s resiliency was statistically significant. These results demonstrate thpre-camp ers reported increased levels of resilience after participating in Camp HOPE America.

**TABLE 6** Analyses of Campers’ Self-Reported Camp HOPE Resilience Scale Scores Based on Pre-test, Post-test, and 30-Day Post-camp Assessments

CAMPERS’ CAMP HOPE RESILIENCE SCALE SCORES	PRETEST MEAN & SD	POSTTEST MEAN & SD	30-DAY POST-CAMP MEAN & SD	STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE ANALYSIS (REPEATED MEASURES ANOVA)
	27.71 (SD = 5.710)	28.23 (SD = 5.704)	28.77 (SD = 5.390)	F(2, 1298) = 12.670; p < .001; statistically significant increases

COMPARING CHILDREN’S CAMP HOPE RESILIENCE SCALE SCORES BETWEEN CLASSIC AND HIGH ADVENTURE CAMPERS

To further explore the impact of Camp HOPE America on Camp HOPE Resilience Scale scores (self-reported), analyses were done to analyze campers’ changes in scores over time based on the type of camp: Classic or High Adventure.

The following list shows changes in mean Children’s Camp HOPE Resilience Scale scores between the pre-test, post-test, and post-camp assessments for both Classic and High Adventure Campers.

- Mean Resilience Scale Scores for **Classic** Participants (n = 398)
  - Pre-camp mean = 27.52 (SD = 5.765)
  - Post-camp mean = 28.24 (SD = 5.626)
  - 30-Day Post-camp mean = 28.66 (SD = 5.529)
- Mean Resilience Scale Scores for **High Adventure** Participants (n=252)
  - Pre-camp mean = 28.02 (SD = 5.618)
  - Post-camp mean = 28.22 (SD = 5.836)
  - 30-Day Post-camp Mean = 28.94 (SD = 5.171)

Two repeated measures ANOVA analyses were computed to examine mean resilience scores for Class and High Adventure Camps. Findings were statistically significant for both the Classic camp [F(2,794) = .7.915; p < .001] and High Adventure camp [F(2, 502) = .5648; p < .001] indicating that changes

were observed in pre-, post-, and post-camp mean resilience scores for both types of campers. **This indicates that resilience scores increased in a statistically significant way** after students participated in Camp HOPE America for both camp types.

COUNSELORS’ OBSERVATIONS OF CAMPERS’ CHARACTER STRENGTHS

Using subscales from the KIPP Character Report Card, counselors rated campers in their cabin groups on the first and last days of camp based on their observations of the following seven character strengths: Zest, Grit, Optimism, Self-Control, Gratitude, Curiosity, and Social Intelligence.

To summarize the findings that are presented in greater detail in Table 7 for each character strength, **all seven of the character strengths were rated by counselors as increasing to a statistically significant level** between the pre-camp and post-camp assessments. This means that, on average, campers’ levels of observable character strengths increased to a statistically significant degree after participating in Camp HOPE America.

**TABLE 7** Analyses of Campers’ Character Strengths from Pre-camp to Post-test, as Rated by Counselors

CHARACTER STRENGTH	POSSIBLE RANGE OF SCORES	OBSERVED RANGE OF SCORES (PRETEST; POSTTEST)	PRETEST MEAN & SD	POSTTEST MEAN & SD	STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE ANALYSIS (PAIRED SAMPLES T-TESTS)
ZEST	3 to 15	3-15; 3-15	11.30 (2.703)	12.46 (2.436)	$t(1095) = -15.170, p < .001$ ; <b>statistically significant increase</b>
GRIT	3 to 15	3-15; 3-15	11.16 (2.492)	12.20 (2.538)	$t(1095) = -14.211, p < .001$ ; <b>statistically significant increase</b>
OPTIMISM	2 to 10	2-10; 1-10	7.39 (1.645)	8.07 (1.687)	$t(1095) = -12.808, p < .001$ ; <b>statistically significant increase</b>
SELF-CONTROL	4 to 20	4-20; 4-20	15.73 (3.737)	16.40 (3.754)	$t(1095) = -7.133, p < .001$ ; <b>statistically significant increase</b>
GRATITUDE	2 to 10	2-10; 1-10	7.55 (1.764)	8.34 (1.718)	$t(1095) = -15.279, p < .001$ ; <b>statistically significant increase</b>
CURIOSITY	3 to 15	3-15; 4-15	11.13 (2.472)	12.26 (2.420)	$t(1095) = -15.252, p < .001$ ; <b>statistically significant increase</b>
SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE	3 to 15	3-15; 3-15	10.89 (2.556)	11.93 (2.686)	$t(1095) = -14.017, p < .001$ ; <b>statistically significant increase</b>



CHA - TX

## CONCLUSION

Camp HOPE America was founded in 2003, so 2023 represented the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the program's mission to impact the lives of children and youth who have been exposed to domestic violence and other forms of traumatic, adverse life experiences. This 2023 impact evaluation adds further evidence for the positive impact of the Camp HOPE America model on campers, especially in the areas of increasing hope, resilience, and character strengths.

In 2023, there were 40 Camp HOPE America affiliate Sites across the United States that held camp. Impact evaluation data were collected from 1,341 campers, and pre-test, post-test, and post-camp data were available for longitudinal data analyses across all three self-report assessment points for 650 of these campers. A summary of the key findings of this 2023 impact evaluation is as follows:

- The Children's Hope Scale was used to measure campers' levels of hope based on their own self-reported data at the pre-test, post-test, and 30-day post-camp assessments. **The results of this evaluation showed statistically significant increases in children's self-reported levels of hope over time.**
- An adapted version of the Children's Hope Scale was used for counselors to report their observational data about children's hope at the pre-camp and post-camp assessment. **The data analyses revealed a statistically significant increase in counselors' ratings of campers' hope levels between the pre-camp and post-camp assessments.**
- The Camp HOPE America Resilience Scale was used to measure campers' levels of resilience based on their own self-reported data at the pre-test, post-test, and 30-day post-camp assessments. **Data analyses revealed statistically significant increases over time in campers' self-reported levels of resilience.**
- Camp HOPE America counselors also rated campers using an adapted version of the KIPP Character Report Card based on their observations of campers' character strengths. The results of the data analyses revealed **statistically significant, positive increases in counselors' ratings** between the pre-camp and post-camp assessments for all seven of campers' character strengths that were rated (i.e., zest, grit, optimism, self-control, gratitude, curiosity, and social intelligence).

It is important to note that the current annual impact evaluation approach focuses only on the summer camp component of the overall Camp HOPE America model. Additional evaluation data are needed to examine the additional impacts of the ongoing, year-round activities involved in the overall Camp HOPE America model. However, the statistically significant, positive impacts of camp on 2023 campers' levels of hope, resilience, and character strengths show the value of the intensive summer camp experience. The year-round activities are likely to further contribute to these positive impacts, while also helping campers to maintain the gains they experience during their week pre-camp .

Existing research paints a bleak picture of the potential lasting, negative impacts of childhood exposure to domestic violence that can influence the life trajectories of affected youth throughout their lifespan. **Camp HOPE America—supported by its national network of Affiliated Sites—exists to offer hope, positive opportunities for peer and mentoring relationships, and growth to help youth move toward positive pathways in life and break intergenerational cycles of abuse in families.**

With its focus on hope, resilience, and character strengths, the Camp HOPE America model remains poised to continue to positively impact youth who have been impacted by domestic violence and help them move toward brighter futures.

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## APPENDICES

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## APPENDIX A: 2023 CAMP HOPE AMERICA AFFILIATED PROGRAMS

24 STATES AFFILIATED with Camp HOPE America of which 22 states held overnight camp.

50 AFFILIATED PROGRAMS of which with 40 programs hosted overnight camp.

### ALABAMA

- One Place Metro Alabama Family Justice Center

### ARKANSAS

- Women & Children First

### CALIFORNIA

- Alameda County Family Justice Center\*
- Crisis House San Diego
- Empower Tehama County
- Family Justice Center of Stanislaus
- Family Justice Center Sonoma County
- Pathways to Hope for Children
- Sacramento Regional Family Justice Center
- Ventura County Family Justice Center
- One Safe Place North County Family Justice Center

### COLORADO

- Rose Aodom Center

### CONNECTICUT

- Safe Futures
- The Center for Family Justice

### FLORIDA

- Harbor House of Central Florida
- Help Now
- Sunrise of Pasco County, Inc.
- The Spring of Tampa Bay
- CASA Pinellas

### GEORGIA

- Crisis Line & Safe House of Central Georgia, Inc.

### IDAHO

- Nampa Family Justice Center

### ILLINOIS

- Family Peace Center\*

### LOUISIANA

- Faith House\*
- New Orleans Family Justice Center

### MISSISSIPPI

- Hope Rising Mississippi\*

### NEVADA

- SafeNest

### NEW HAMPSHIRE

- Haven NH
- YWCA New Hampshire

### NEW YORK

- Sanctuary for Families –Bronx & Queens

### NORTH CAROLINA

- Guilford County Family Justice Center
- InterAct\*
- Safe Alliance

### OHIO

- Cuyahoga County Family Justice Center

### OKLAHOMA

- Canadian County Children's Justice Center
- Family Safety Center
- Palomar: Oklahoma City's Family Justice Center

### OREGON

- Clackamas Women's Services

### TENNESSEE

- Family Safety Center of Memphis and Shelby County
- Partnership for Families, Children & Adults

### TEXAS

- Denton County Friends of the Family
- One Safe Place
- The Heights: Ellis County Family Resources

### UTAH

- Salt Lake County District Attorney's Office

### VIRGINIA

- Norfolk's Sheriff's Office

### WISCONSIN

- Sojourner Family Peace Center

*\*Denotes programs that did not host overnight camp in 2023 but maintained affiliation.*

The following affiliates participated in Camp HOPE America's 2023 Readiness Program:

- Family Justice Center of Alamance County, NC
- Irving Family Advocacy Center, TX
- Prince George's County Family Justice Center, MD
- The HOPE585, NY
- Safelight, Inc., NC

## APPENDIX B: ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTATION

## CAMPER: PRE-CAMP HOPE INDEX

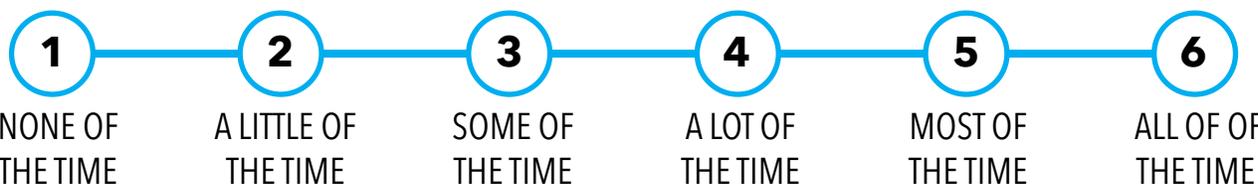
First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: Male Female Other: \_\_\_\_\_ How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_

What month were you born? \_\_\_\_\_ What year were you born? \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** Read each sentence carefully. For each sentence, please think about how you are in most situations. Using the scale below, please choose the number that best describes YOU, and put that number in the blank provided.

**There are no right or wrong answers.**



\_\_\_\_\_ 1. I think I am doing pretty well.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to me.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. I am doing just as well as other kids my age.

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. When I have a problem, I can come up with lots of ways to solve it.

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. I think the things I have done in the past will help me in the future.

\_\_\_\_\_ 6. Even when others want to quit, I know that I can find ways to solve the problem.

\_\_\_\_\_ 7. I have friends that really care about me.

\_\_\_\_\_ 8. I feel like I'm part of a group of people that care about each other.

\_\_\_\_\_ 9. I like to encourage and support others.

\_\_\_\_\_ 10. Others like me just the way I am.

\_\_\_\_\_ 11. Even when bad things happen to me, I still feel hopeful about the future.

\_\_\_\_\_ 12. I think I will achieve my dreams.

# CAMPER: AT-CAMP HOPE INDEX

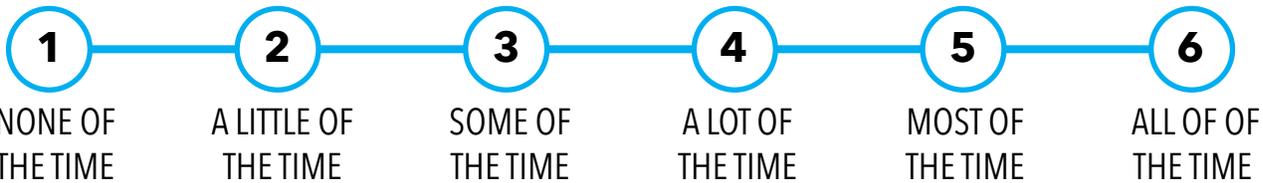
First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender:    Male            Female            Other: \_\_\_\_\_            How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_

What month were you born? \_\_\_\_\_ What year were you born? \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** Read each sentence carefully. For each sentence, please think about how you are in most situations. Using the scale below, please choose the number that best describes YOU, and put that number in the blank provided.

**There are no right or wrong answers.**



\_\_\_\_\_ 1. I think I am doing pretty well.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to me.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. I am doing just as well as other kids my age.

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. When I have a problem, I can come up with lots of ways to solve it.

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. I think the things I have done in the past will help me in the future.

\_\_\_\_\_ 6. Even when others want to quit, I know that I can find ways to solve the problem.

\_\_\_\_\_ 7. I have friends that really care about me.

\_\_\_\_\_ 8. I feel like I'm part of a group of people that care about each other.

\_\_\_\_\_ 9. I like to encourage and support others.

\_\_\_\_\_ 10. Others like me just the way I am.

\_\_\_\_\_ 11. Even when bad things happen to me, I still feel hopeful about the future.

\_\_\_\_\_ 12. I think I will achieve my dreams.

# CAMPER: 30-DAY HOPE INDEX

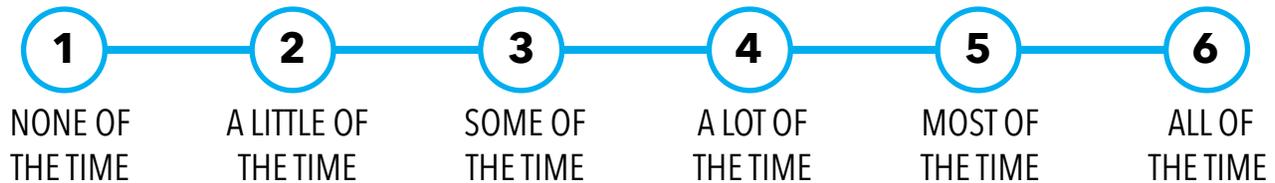
First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: Male Female Other: \_\_\_\_\_ How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_

What month were you born? \_\_\_\_\_ What year were you born? \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS:** Read each sentence carefully. For each sentence, please think about how you are in most situations. Using the scale below, please choose the number that best describes YOU, and put that number in the blank provided.

**There are no right or wrong answers.**



- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I think I am doing pretty well.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are most important to me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I am doing just as well as other kids my age.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. When I have a problem, I can come up with lots of ways to solve it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I think the things I have done in the past will help me in the future.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Even when others want to quit, I know that I can find ways to solve the problem.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I have friends that really care about me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I feel like I'm part of a group of people that care about each other.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I like to encourage and support others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Others like me just the way I am.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Even when bad things happen to me, I still feel hopeful about the future.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. I think I will achieve my dreams.

# COUNSELOR: PRE-CAMP EVALUATION

Camper First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Camper Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS FOR THE FIRST SECTION:** Using only whole numbers (i.e. do not use 4.5), rate the camper using the following 5-point scale.



**1**  
VERY MUCH UNLIKE  
THE CAMPER

**2**  
UNLIKE  
THE CAMPER

**3**  
SOMEWHAT LIKE  
THE CAMPER

**4**  
LIKE  
THE CAMPER

**5**  
VERY MUCH LIKE  
THE CAMPER

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>_____ 1. Actively participates.</p> <p>_____ 2. Shows enthusiasm.</p> <p>_____ 3. Encourages others.</p> <p>_____ 4. Finishes whatever he/she begins.</p> <p>_____ 5. Tries very hard even after experiencing failure.</p> <p>_____ 6. Works independently with focus.</p> <p>_____ 7. Remains calm even when criticized or otherwise provoked.</p> <p>_____ 8. Allows others to speak without interruption.</p> <p>_____ 9. Is polite to adults and peers.</p> <p>_____ 10. Keeps his/her temper in check.</p> | <p>_____ 11. Gets over setbacks and frustrations quickly.</p> <p>_____ 12. Believes that effort will improve his/her future.</p> <p>_____ 13. Recognizes and shows appreciation for others.</p> <p>_____ 14. Recognizes and shows appreciation for his/her opportunities.</p> <p>_____ 15. Is able to find solutions during conflicts with others.</p> <p>_____ 16. Demonstrates respect for feelings of others.</p> <p>_____ 17. Knows when and how to include others.</p> <p>_____ 18. Is eager to explore new things.</p> <p>_____ 19. Asks and answers questions to deeper understanding.</p> <p>_____ 20. Actively listens to others.</p> |
|--|--|

**DIRECTIONS FOR THE LAST SECTION:** Please rate the camper based upon your observations using the 6-point scale below.



**1**  
NONE  
OF THE TIME

**2**  
A LITTLE  
OF THE TIME

**3**  
SOME  
OF THE TIME

**4**  
A LOT  
OF THE TIME

**5**  
MOST  
OF THE TIME

**6**  
ALL  
OF THE TIME

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>_____ 1. The camper is doing pretty well.</p> <p>_____ 2. The camper can find many ways to get the things important to him/her.</p> <p>_____ 3. The camper seems to be doing just as well as the other kids.</p> | <p>_____ 4. When the camper faces a problem, he/she can find lots of ways to solve it.</p> <p>_____ 5. The past seems to have helped the camper pursue their goals.</p> <p>_____ 6. Even when others want to quit, the camper seems confident in solving the problem.</p> |
|---|---|

# COUNSELOR: POST-CAMP EVALUATION

Camper First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Camper Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTIONS FOR THE FIRST SECTION:** Using only whole numbers (i.e. do not use 4.5), rate the camper using the following 5-point scale.



**1**  
VERY MUCH UNLIKE  
THE CAMPER

**2**  
UNLIKE  
THE CAMPER

**3**  
SOMEWHAT LIKE  
THE CAMPER

**4**  
LIKE  
THE CAMPER

**5**  
VERY MUCH LIKE  
THE CAMPER

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>_____ 1. Actively participates.</p> <p>_____ 2. Shows enthusiasm.</p> <p>_____ 3. Encourages others.</p> <p>_____ 4. Finishes whatever he/she begins.</p> <p>_____ 5. Tries very hard even after experiencing failure.</p> <p>_____ 6. Works independently with focus.</p> <p>_____ 7. Remains calm even when criticized or otherwise provoked.</p> <p>_____ 8. Allows others to speak without interruption.</p> <p>_____ 9. Is polite to adults and peers.</p> <p>_____ 10. Keeps his/her temper in check.</p> | <p>_____ 11. Gets over setbacks and frustrations quickly.</p> <p>_____ 12. Believes that effort will improve his/her future.</p> <p>_____ 13. Recognizes and shows appreciation for others.</p> <p>_____ 14. Recognizes and shows appreciation for his/her opportunities.</p> <p>_____ 15. Is able to find solutions during conflicts with others.</p> <p>_____ 16. Demonstrates respect for feelings of others.</p> <p>_____ 17. Knows when and how to include others.</p> <p>_____ 18. Is eager to explore new things.</p> <p>_____ 19. Asks and answers questions to deeper understanding.</p> <p>_____ 20. Actively listens to others.</p> |
|--|--|

**DIRECTIONS FOR THE LAST SECTION:** Please rate the camper based upon your observations using the 6-point scale below.



**1**  
NONE  
OF THE TIME

**2**  
A LITTLE  
OF THE TIME

**3**  
SOME  
OF THE TIME

**4**  
A LOT  
OF THE TIME

**5**  
MOST  
OF THE TIME

**6**  
ALL  
OF THE TIME

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>_____ 1. The camper is doing pretty well.</p> <p>_____ 2. The camper can find many ways to get the things important to him/her.</p> <p>_____ 3. The camper seems to be doing just as well as the other kids.</p> | <p>_____ 4. When the camper faces a problem, he/she can find lots of ways to solve it.</p> <p>_____ 5. The past seems to have helped the camper pursue their goals.</p> <p>_____ 6. Even when others want to quit, the camper seems confident in solving the problem.</p> |
|---|---|

# CAMPER: ACE QUESTIONNAIRE

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

While you were growing up, during your first 18 years of life:

**1. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often... swear at you, insult you, put you down or humiliate you?**

**or**

Act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?

(Circle one) YES or NO

**2. Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often...push, grab, slap, or throw something at you?**

**or**

Ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?

(Circle one) YES or NO

**3. Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever...touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way?**

**or**

Attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you?

(Circle one) YES or NO

**4. Did you often or very often feel that... no one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special?**

**or**

Your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?

(Circle one) YES or NO

**5. Did you often or very often feel that...**

you didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you?

**or**

Your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?

(Circle one) YES or NO

**6. Were your parents ever separated or divorced?**

(Circle one) YES or NO

**7. Was your mother or stepmother...often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped or had something thrown at her?**

**or**

Sometimes, often or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard?

**or**

Ever repeatedly hit at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?

(Circle one) YES or NO

**8. Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic or who used street drugs?**

(Circle one) YES or NO

**9. Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide?**

(Circle one) YES or NO

**10. Did a household member go to prison?**

(Circle one) YES or NO

## APPENDIX C: **KIPP CHARACTER REPORT CARD** SUBSCALE ITEMS MEASURING EACH CHARACTER STRENGTH

### **ZEST: 3 ITEMS**

1. Actively participates
2. Shows enthusiasm
3. Encourages others (Note: On the original scale, the wording is: "Invigorates others," but the term "Encourages others" is used for the Camp HOPE America assessment)

### **GRIT: 3 ITEMS**

4. Finishes whatever he or she begins
5. Tries very hard even after experiencing failure
6. Works independently with focus

### **OPTIMISM: 2 ITEMS**

7. Gets over frustrations and setbacks quickly
8. Believes that effort will improve his or her future

### **SELF-CONTROL: 4 ITEMS**

(NOTE: THESE ARE THE SELF-CONTROL - INTERPERSONAL ITEMS FROM THE KIPP: CHARACTER ASSESSMENT; THE SCHOOL-FOCUSED ITEMS ARE NOT INCLUDED ON THE CAMP ASSESSMENTS)

9. Remains calm even when criticized or otherwise provoked
10. Allows others to speak without interruption
11. Is polite to adults and peers
12. Keeps his/her temper in check

### **GRATITUDE: 2 ITEMS**

13. Recognizes and shows appreciation for others
14. Recognizes and shows appreciation for his/her opportunities

### **CURIOSITY: 3 ITEMS**

15. Is eager to explore new things
16. Asks and answers questions to deepen understanding
17. Actively listens to others

### **SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE: 3 ITEMS**

18. Is able to find solutions during conflicts with others
19. Demonstrates respect for feelings of others
20. Knows when and how to include others

## APPENDIX D: BIOS FOR DR. CHRISTINE E. MURRAY AND DR. RICK BUNCH

Camp HOPE America engaged Drs. Christine E. Murray and Rick Bunch as independent consultants to prepare this 2023 impact evaluation report. Brief bios for each consultant are provided below.

**Christine E. Murray, Ph.D.**, is the Founder of Start Here Counseling & Consulting, PLLC. Christine has over two decades of experience working in the mental health field. Based in Greensboro, North Carolina, Christine is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) and Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor (LCMHC) in North Carolina, as well as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) and Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in her home state of Pennsylvania.

Christine is also Professor Emerita at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG). She retired from UNCG in 2024 after 19 years of service as a faculty member in the Department of Counseling and Educational Development. From 2019 to 2023, she also served as the Director of the UNCG Center for Youth, Family, and Community Partnerships.

**Dr. Rick Bunch** is a professor in the department of Geography, Environment & Sustainability at UNC Greensboro. Dr. Bunch has over 20 years of experience in research involving Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and the conceptualization, modeling and analysis of geographically referenced data. He has been the project leader on over 50 projects over the past several decades, and has published a number of academic articles, reports, and manuals.