

Evaluation Report to Parents



From the Camps of The Aloha Foundation

At the conclusion of every camp season we ask parents and campers to evaluate their camp experience. Summer after summer, we receive hundreds of reviews that strongly affirm the quality of the Aloha Camps. On average, over 95% of our survey respondents say camp was “good” or “excellent”! We also receive helpful feedback regarding opportunities for improvement.

General Comments

Each summer at the Aloha Camps we create a safe, stimulating environment for children to grow in maturity, confidence and independence. From Reveille in the morning to Taps at bedtime, the days are filled with laughter, singing, friendship, learning and an appreciation of oneness with the natural world. Here are a few of the reasons parents and campers surveyed greatly appreciate their summer experiences:

Aloha

“Our daughter had another fantastic year – once again it was so hard for her to leave!”

“I have never seen her happier than at camp.”

“She looks forward to being a Clubber, then a Midi, and finally a counselor at Aloha or Hive!”

“She had a fantastic summer. She was apprehensive about moving from Hive to Aloha, but Aloha was just what she needed this summer; a little more freedom, a little more adventure, but with all the same caring support and guidance from counselors.”

“She had a wonderful time. Aloha is one big happy family!”

“She loved it and we love what Aloha gives her – confidence!”

Hive

“She had an incredible experience at Aloha Hive. From all of the contact before she went, to being welcomed as she got out of the car, to the tears at saying goodbye, it was the perfect place for her!”

“She had a great time. I think she has found a ‘home’ all her own there.”

“My daughter had a sparkle about her when she came home and had matured, too. She had a wonderful summer!”

“She had a terrific time at Aloha Hive. She made good friends, enjoyed her counselors, engaged in lots of fun activities and has many fond memories.”

“She loves the whole Aloha experience and relishes the joy and freedom of being in such a special place!”

“She returned to us as happy as could be, singing and singing and singing!”

Lanakila

“He came back from camp a happy bundle of energy. He hit the school year with an incredible positive vibe; a complete turn-around from prior to camp.”

“Four summers at Lanakila have played a major role in his sense of confidence and self-esteem.”

“Barnes is wonderful with the boys. Overall I am so pleased my son has bonded so well with Lanakila. He feels very much a part of its culture.”

“Our son truly loved his time at Lanakila. It sounded like a very rich and happy experience for him. He liked and respected his counselor and seemed to make many friends.”

“The smile on my sons’ faces when we visited on Show Weekend said it all. We were pleased at how much our sons were treated as individuals.”

Counseling

Aloha counselors are talented individuals who enjoy their camp experience so much they can't wait for each summer to arrive! At the end of every season, we hear staff members discussing how they will arrange academic, professional or family schedules next year in order to spend the summer at the Aloha Camps once again. Our counselors' love of the Camps and joy in working with children ensures an atmosphere of enjoyment and excitement, patience and motivation, support and encouragement. 97% of the survey respondents felt Aloha's counseling staff provided outstanding camper care and leadership.

Aloha

"Her counselor was great! She was so outgoing and helpful. My daughter loved her."

"The kayak counselors impressed my daughter greatly; she had a fine tent counselor; the 'Woodchuck' counselors were a fun group."

"Her counselor was a fantastic role model. Her enthusiasm for the Aloha experience was contagious. The minute she greeted my daughter, we knew the summer was going to go well!"

"Her counselor seemed to be very 'in-tune' with my daughter's personality and needs. It was a perfect fit."

"Her counselor was a great fit for her – another terrific role model!"

Hive

"Her counselor was amazing and a great fit, thank you! They bonded immediately and the counselor was there whenever she was needed. Also, all of the communication from the counselor was exceptional."

"My daughter, once again, had an amazing counselor who was nurturing, caring, fun and a great role model. I am now realizing that all of your counselors are like this! Thank you for finding, training and retaining such wonderful staff."

"All the counselors were great, especially her tent counselor! The counselor consoled her when she was a little homesick, challenged her when climbing Mt. Cardigan, and was a trusted friend."

Lanakila

"My son felt the counselors were always there to help. His tent counselor was ideal because he was adventurous, played music, and was open-minded. Best of all, he was very involved in the things the kids in the tent did."

"All the counselors and staff we met were fantastic. Everyone shook hands, looked us in the eye, and had something nice and fun to say about our son. They all were open and friendly, with an easy confidence about themselves and their jobs."

"His counselor was terrific! My son had a great time with him and he communicated very well with us. I feel all the counselors do a fabulous job because they really enjoy camp themselves and have a great respect for Barnes."

Skill-Building

Over the course of the summer, campers are continually invited to try new things. Maybe this is the first summer they've ever sailed, or the first time they've slept outside. Maybe they are just learning to swim or this is the first time they have had a close encounter paddling a canoe on a windy lake. Whatever the activity or event, there are always 'firsts' at Camp. And as the summer days roll along, children are able to incorporate lessons learned, formal and informal, improve their skills, and have adventures – all of which they will use going forward in life. Looking back at the summer, 86% of parents responding said they saw increased motivation, confidence and ability in their children.

Aloha

"My daughter worked hard to achieve her admiral rank. She always felt supported in the challenge and not threatened."

"She had fun. She embarked on a canoe ranks adventure to be continued in 2008."

"She ran more than 100 miles over the summer at Aloha, and was focused on this goal from the outset."

"She became quite proficient in canoeing – she loved learning skills in the Woodchuck Hole, and absolutely loved woodworking!"

"She was very proud of herself this summer because she learned how to swim."

Hive

"She has taken her interest in sailing to the next level. She became skilled at sailing a Hobie Cat, and became proficient in sailing terminology. She also thoroughly enjoyed her first backpacking trip to Mt. Eisenhower."

"She challenged and developed her canoeing/kayaking skills working with younger campers as a teacher/role model. In addition, she improved her skills in archery, sailing and landsports."

"Gymnastics was a huge hit. And she was thrilled to pass her swim test. Having ranks gave her some sense of her own growth and accomplishment, motivated her and made her proud!"

Lanakila

"He picked up a new love of cross-country running. His 'diet' of his own doing has changed to healthy vs. junk food."

"He gained a lot of confidence in swimming and campcraft. He also came home a big fan of Frisbee and ping-pong, and other great low tech games."

"We loved how music was embraced and he was encouraged to play his sax. Being in an environment where music was "cool" made him want to participate!"

"He played a lot of tennis, woodworking (something he doesn't do at home), enjoyed singing (a first), and liked the trips and was embracing new experiences."

Group Living

Learning to live in a community is not always easy. Personal compromises are required to live cooperatively and compassionately as a tent or cabin family. Daily disciplines are necessary for a tent and cabin unit to function smoothly. These small communities within each Camp provide support, structure, encouragement, fun and a sense of connectedness for each and every camper, and they foster significant growth in social skills. 86% of our parents felt their child's experience in the group living category was "good" or "excellent."

Aloha

"We were particularly pleased that her tent mates were friends already made the previous year. That made a big difference."

"We couldn't ask for a better fit! They clearly enjoyed each other's company for the entire session."

"She really got along with her tent family."

"My daughter made an international friend – something she never would have done otherwise."

"The counselor was wonderful – my daughter really enjoyed getting to know her and the other tent mates. She was laid back but always enthusiastic and upbeat!"

Hive

"She really liked her tent counselor. The counselor spent a great deal of effort creating a community within the tent. She was willing to try activities the girls initiated. The girls learned how to communicate and solve differences."

"She bonded very quickly with her tent mates and counselor and she considered it her 'home-away-from-home'."

"The counselor created a fantastic tent family environment. Our daughter found her to be very funny and easy-going, and her letters to us were detailed and insightful."

"This year in particular, the match of girls in the tent was done perfectly. They all became fast friends."

Lanakila

"He said that his tent was a nice bunch of people who got along really well."

"I was especially pleased with his tent family experience. I feel he gained a lot from his interactions (feeling positive about himself) as well as from the guidance given to him by his counselor."

"He gets along well with new friends, but he really seemed to bond with all his cabin mates quickly. He now feels as though he has two homes, one with us here and one at Lanakila."

"His experience with his cabin mates was wonderful. They had a blast!"

"He loved his counselor. He was supportive and just plain fun."

Personal Growth

After 104 years, several hallmarks of the Aloha experience persist among the benefits parents and campers value most: the natural pleasures of tent and cabin living; participation in a caring, sharing community; immersion in the cultural and spiritual traditions of communal camp life. Away from distracting and sometimes isolating technologies, campers tap into their own creativity, explore new activities, and build life-long friendships around the physical challenges and bonding opportunities an outdoor summer presents. Parents often remark on advances in their children's maturity upon their return from an Aloha summer.

Aloha

"She came home with much more confidence in herself and her abilities. I know she is proud of what she accomplished this summer."

"I was proud of her in that she overcame her homesickness and grew personally and matured so much."

"My daughter, an only child, came back from camp a kinder girl, more aware of others."

"Her participation in Girl's Council most likely was – and will continue to be – her best experience at camp, thank you."

Hive

"The incredible sense of childhood which is still celebrated at Hive. We can't say enough about how wonderful this message is!"

"I loved the daily singing and camaraderie amongst the girls."

"I have seen greater maturity in our daughter, greater confidence and a more positive attitude, in general. Her Anti-Q year really was a year of personal growth."

"She came home more responsible in every aspect of her life – chores, hygiene, etc. She took pride in taking care of herself."

Lanakila

"I wouldn't change a thing. He had a great time and came home a nicer kid! We have already signed him up for next year."

"He loved the mentoring/coaching experience with Ameden League. Also the 5-day trek in the Adirondacks truly was life-changing (his words). We have seen huge growth in him from his experiences this summer in self-confidence, skills gained and self-reliance."

"We loved his pride in keeping his tent clean, his aptitude on the ropes course, the friends he made, his overall involvement in so many different activities, his pride in the camp and the letters home."

Suggestions for Improvement

We know we're upholding Aloha's tradition of excellence when over 95% of our survey respondents express substantial satisfaction with their summer's experience. However we also are committed to making our camps better every year, in areas such as the following:

- expanding our sailing programs;
- increasing opportunities for overnight tripping;
- focusing more strongly on skill-building in diverse teaching programs;
- helping campers to write more frequent and substantive letters home.

All in all, we're dedicated to improving the Camps of The Aloha Foundation continually, in order to inspire more comments like these....

"She always felt supported."



"He gained a lot of confidence."



"She continued to grow and mature."



"He embraced new experiences enthusiastically."



"I think camp gives him a real sense of independence."



"She came home with much more confidence in herself and her abilities."

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