



KEEP THE CAMPFIRES BURNING

"THERE IS A PLACE WHERE A FLAME BURNS FOR EVERY CHILD NO MATTER HOW WEAK OR SICK
THEY MAY BE. IT GIVES THEM A CHANCE TO BELIEVE THAT THERE IS ALWAYS HOPE."

—PAUL NEWMAN



Investing in our kids

Since lighting our first campfire in 2016, North Star Reach has provided over 8,000 life-changing camp experiences for more than 3,000 children with serious health challenges and their families, free of charge. As one of only 30 SeriousFun Children's Network of camps worldwide, North Star Reach is part of a trusted global community serving children with major illnesses.

HOW THE FUN BEGAN



More than 30 years ago, Paul Newman started a free camp where kids could escape the fear and isolation of their medical conditions and, in his words, "raise a little hell." This remarkable concept sparked a quiet movement, and that one camp launched a global network. Today, there are 30 camps and programs serving the needs of children and families around the world.



Today, there are more than 1,500,000 children in Michigan and the surrounding Great Lake states who are unable to attend camp due to a serious medical condition. These children live with chronic and/or life-threatening illnesses, including heart disease, organ transplants, sickle cell and other blood disorders, major burns, cancer and epilepsy, among others, that cause them to miss out on formative childhood experiences, extracurricular activities and even meaningful family time. Much of their young lives is spent in hospitals, doctors' offices and, sadly, solitude. They also may face the stigma often associated with their illness, which can make socializing with peers difficult. As a result, they often feel left out and may develop low self-esteem and/or a diminished sense of possibility for their lives.

North Star Reach offers children with serious health challenges a piece of childhood that they might not otherwise experience — campfires and s'mores with new friends, paddling a canoe across the lake, catching fireflies at dusk or shooting a bow and arrow for the first time — the stuff of childhood. With your help, we can continue to make this transformative life experience a reality for the most vulnerable among us.

“Our camp is adaptive for everyone.
That’s why we built a tree house
that you reach by going up a long,
low ramp instead of climbing up.”

A SAFE, SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

The children who come to NSR find a medically safe, supportive environment that fosters independence, personal growth and resilience. Here, children explore intentionally designed, adaptive activities that meet their specific needs. Our programs also give campers the skills to be confident and knowledgeable advocates for their own care, which result in more positive personal and medical outcomes.

And because a child's illness affects the whole family, we also invite siblings and other family members to attend camp on spring and fall weekends. This special time bonding over fun shared activities creates cherished memories that last a lifetime.

OUR MEDICAL PROGRAM AND PARTNERS

We partner with 12 leading pediatric hospitals and medical centers across the Great Lakes region, which includes Michigan, northwestern Ohio, northern Indiana, metropolitan Chicago and Milwaukee and parts of southern Ontario. Our partners connect us to children who can benefit from our therapeutic camp programs.

Our kid-friendly onsite health center is staffed by a physician medical director and a nurse, plus volunteer doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals from our affiliate hospitals, ensuring campers receive the expert care they need. All volunteers receive special training before camp to support our campers while they spend what for most is their first time away from home alone.

Additionally, our status as a SeriousFun Children's Network camp ensures safeguards are in place to protect the well-being of all participants. These standards identify critical policies, procedures and practices related to medical and physical safety that support camps and their partners in building and maintaining a strong foundation for camp programs.

OUR SOCIAL COMMITMENT

Diversity and inclusion are an intentional part of our programming as we seek to reduce the social isolation and ostracism children with severe medical needs often encounter.



For much of our campers' young lives, their identity has been wrapped up in their medical condition. North Star Reach offers them a chance to find out who they are beyond their illness. And while they explore, discover and appreciate what makes them special, we encourage them to extend that acceptance to others as they make new friends. This sense of camaraderie and belonging is the "camp magic" that comes from being a part of something bigger than oneself. Camp also provides a place to practice useful life skills, including how to support and encourage one another, how to make decisions as a group and how to be a good friend — the same social skills children everywhere learn at camp.



A PROUD MEMBER OF THE SERIOUSFUN CHILDREN'S NETWORK

When North Star Reach became the ninth U.S. residential camp in the SeriousFun Children's Network in 2016, it joined a global network of the world's best camps for treating children with major medical issues. To date, SeriousFun has provided more than 1.7 million camp experiences to children and their families throughout the world.

In 1988, actor and philanthropist Paul Newman founded the SeriousFun Children's Network with the goal of creating camp experiences without barriers — physical, medical, social, emotional or financial. Member camps agree to a strict review process that examines all aspects of operations, including program, medical, facility, governance, finance and fundraising to ensure the highest quality experiences for campers. In this way, SeriousFun provides a central hub for sharing best practices to support all aspects of a camp's organizational development. SeriousFun also provides annual operating support to member camps, which allows more donor dollars to directly support campers and their families.

OUR LONG-TERM RELEVANCY

The rapid advancements in medical treatment over the last few decades have enabled more children to survive their illness, which necessitates their managing its long-term physical and psychological effects.



In 2021, SeriousFun Network asked 2,200 camp alumni about the importance of camp on their lives. The Lasting Impacts of Camp study revealed that:

90%

Wanted to try new things.

88%

Appreciated diversity more.

86%

Were more compassionate.

85%

Felt more confident.

84%

Were better able to persevere.

82%

Had gained friendship skills.

73%

Felt more responsible.

71%

Were better medical self-advocates.

70%

Were better at medical self-care.

69%

Regulated emotions better.

66%

Were more medically independent.

KEEP THE CAMPFIRE BURNING

We invite you to join us in making a meaningful impact on the lives of seriously ill children by supporting North Star Reach. As a not-for-profit organization, we depend on private funds to serve our young campers, all of whom attend camp entirely free of charge. Because 100 percent of all donations directly benefit our camp and its programs, a gift to North Star Reach helps ensure this world-class resource is available to seriously ill children for years to come.



North Star Reach
a seriousfun camp

CONTACT US

For more information about how you can have an impact on a child in need, please contact us. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

North Star Reach

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seriousfun
children's network
founded by paul newman

