

Your Impact...

stays with kids for the rest of their lives.

**Finding a Place
to Belong**

**Giving Kids
a Chance**

**You Helped
Fill the Bus!**



Your Impact... is personal

Thanks to you,

Mark has a place to
belong, to play,
to laugh and
learn.



For the first time in his life, my son experienced the joy of summer camp

Mark's first summer at a special needs camp was a horrifying experience. He had been neglected, ignored and put in danger. My heart ached for what my son had been through.

As a mom, all I really wanted for him is to belong, to play, to laugh and learn – just like any other kid at summer camp.

After that summer I was reluctant to ever send Mark to camp again, but my husband suggested we try YMCA summer camp where specially trained counsellors work one-on-one with kids with special needs to fully integrate and welcome them into the regular camp program.

YMCA camp seemed to meet our needs perfectly, but could we afford it? There are a lot of additional expenses when you have a disabled child and sometimes it's really hard to make ends meet. We looked at our budget, and that's when we realized that the financial assistance we were already receiving for a YMCA membership made the option of a YMCA summer camp work. Without the support of donors to the YMCA Strong Kids campaign, it would not have been possible.

So we set aside our feelings about Mark's first camp experience and took a leap of faith.

YMCA camp turned out to be more than we could have ever hoped for. The counsellors were compassionate, attentive and supportive. They included Mark in every camp experience so he could learn and have fun. For the first time in his life, my son experienced the joy of summer camp – just like any other kid.

Mark also got the chance to make new friends, and the other kids got to know Mark too.

During that first summer at Y camp, when it was his birthday, the camp counsellors and all the kids covered a soccer ball with birthday messages for him. It was one of the best things that ever happened to him. Mark proudly displays that soccer ball in his room. And whenever he looks at it, or talks about it, it makes him so happy.

To Mark, YMCA camp is the best place to be in the summer and he can't wait to go back. When he's at Y camp, Mark has the chance to do so many things that he forgets he's different in any way. And for a kid that is physically disabled to feel just like any other kid, it means the world.

- Oxana

Your Impact... is powerful



An experience of a lifetime

Camp remains one of the few places where kids can just be kids. Where they can have fun, explore the natural world, learn valuable life and leadership skills that strengthen their confidence and build character. These are the things they will carry with them the rest of their lives.




Partners in impact

We know that not every child and family in need walks through our doors to ask for help so we partner with other community organizations (like the Lighthouse Program for Grieving Children) to help give deserving children the chance to go to summer camp.



The power of your gifts

Because of your thoughtful generosity, kids in need are finding the courage to believe in themselves – to reach for their dreams, to form new friendships and gain the confidence they need to change their lives.



Thanks to you,
hundreds of kids in
need had the summer
of their lives.

Growing up today is hard enough

Families who are struggling can't afford to give their kids the things that others have... things that can have a lifetime of impact – like the chance to go to summer camp.

2013 by the numbers



\$200

average cost to send a kid to camp for a week



224

kids in need you sent to camp



271

thoughtful donors



\$72,416

funds raised to send kids to camp



0

kids in need who didn't get a chance



17

camp programs that you helped kids attend



Your Impact... is unforgettable



1 night	3 musicians	17 sponsors
160 guests	? s'mores	\$54,000+ raised

= **MORE lives changed**

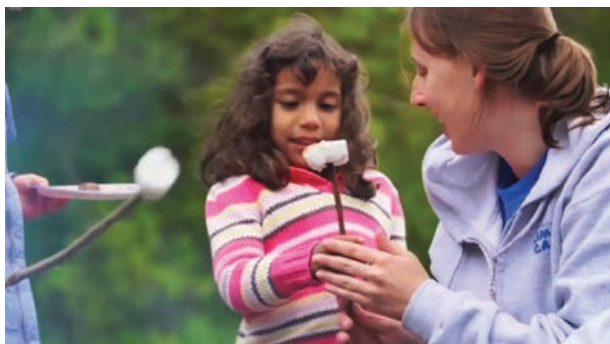
You helped us Fill the Bus

For the second year our most passionate supporters embraced their "inner kid" to recall just how truly special a summer camp experience can be.

They gave generously to help us Fill the Bus and give kids in need an experience they'll never forget!



Thanks to you,
we raised more funds
and changed more lives
than ever before.



Capturing the Spirit of Camp

We are so grateful for the in-kind contribution made by Buck Productions to our Fill the Bus campaign. The Buck team created an incredible video which captures the essence and spirit of a camp experience.



Community Support

Campers, parents and members of our community generously supported fundraising events (BBQs and car washes) hosted by our Camp and Community Initiatives team.



Ride for YMCA Strong Kids

The Ride for YMCA Strong Kids is perhaps the summer's most exciting event. Our camp staff, senior team, board and friends at the United Way Oakville showed their team spirit and made this our most successful Ride ever.



Your Impact...

can help everyone reach their full potential

Last year, donors to our YMCA Strong Kids campaign provided 2,114 children and families who are struggling with financial assistance.

Your support means the world to them.

Make your gift to the 2014 YMCA Strong Kids campaign today and help ensure that everyone has the chance to reach their full potential.

See more examples of the impact that your donation makes at ymcafoakville.org.



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