



# Supporting children after a disaster: An evaluation of the Camp Noah program

*Overview of camp implementation and impact*

**S E P T E M B E R 2 0 1 7**

Prepared by:

Amanda Hane, Cheryl Holm-Hansen, Sophak Mom, and Thao Vang

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# Introduction

## Impact of disasters on children

Following a natural disaster, children and youth may face an array of stressful experiences, such as loss of homes or community resources or injury or death of loved ones. Research suggests that after a disaster, children are especially vulnerable to physical and psychological issues such as anxiety, depression, and behavioral challenges.<sup>1-7</sup>

Immediately after a disaster, children benefit from many services and supports, such as assistance meeting basic needs (food, shelter, and clothing) and crisis counseling. The need for services is longer lasting, however, and many individuals and communities continue to need support after the immediate crisis response phase.<sup>8-9</sup> It may be especially important for interventions to promote a psychological sense of safety, calming, a sense of efficacy, connectedness, and hope.<sup>10</sup> Other research has pointed to the importance of coping skills, self-regulation, and positive interactions with peers.<sup>11-15</sup>

A variety of programs exist to help children develop these protective factors following a disaster. However, most are school-based and limited to children experiencing specific responses, such as post-traumatic stress disorder.<sup>16</sup> Other types of interventions, offered more widely to children in disaster-impacted communities, would help to promote broader well-being and reduce distress following disasters.<sup>17-18</sup>

## Potential role of camps in post-disaster recovery

Since the 1970s, a variety of therapeutic camps for children have been developed. Many of these camps target children with chronic illnesses or medical conditions.<sup>19-20</sup> These camps provide normalizing experiences for children and offer opportunities for support and skill building.<sup>21-22</sup> In recent years, camps have also been established to help children dealing with other stressful events, such as parent death or military deployment.<sup>23-24</sup> camps can create a supportive environment that allow children to develop coping skills and recover from stressful events, especially when they are attending with other children facing similar experiences.<sup>25</sup>

Camp Noah, a program offered by Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota (LSSMN), complements other disaster recovery efforts by providing a therapeutic camp experience in communities impacted by disasters. LSSMN has hosted Camp Noah in disaster-impacted communities across the country with the mission to bring hope and healing to these communities. Camp Noah provides a structured and safe environment in which elementary-age children are encouraged to face their fears, grieve their losses, identify and share their unique gifts and talents, and plan for their future.

## Overview of Camp Noah

Camp Noah can be offered in a variety of formats (such as after school or on weekends), but is most often done as a weeklong summer camp. The camp follows an established curriculum designed to help children process their disaster and/or trauma experience through creative activities and play. Camp Noah is a 30-hour program that includes a variety of activities, including small groups, large group time (including music, skits, and puppet shows), crafts, and recreation. Meals and snacks are provided. In addition, all campers receive a paintable ark, a Camp Noah t-shirt, a fully equipped Camp Noah Preparedness Backpack, a handmade fleece blanket, multiple craft items, and all the supplies necessary to complete the creative activities during camp.

Camp Noah is implemented through the active participation of volunteers and communities. Each camp has a local Site Coordinator, who arranges local logistics such as finding a facility, arranging for food, and recruiting local volunteers. This team of local volunteers serves meals and snacks, provides transportation, and supports the camp in a variety of ways. A team of Certified Camp Staff leads the camp curriculum activities. Headed by a Team Leader, each member of this team participates in training to administer the camp activities. The team of Certified Camp Staff could be from the local community where camp is being held, but most often come from other locations across the country. Many teams support camps across multiple years. In addition, a Mental Health Professional supports each camp, providing additional social-emotional support for campers and linkages for ongoing support when needed.

## Evaluation overview

In 2014, LSSMN contracted with Wilder Research to provide evaluation consultation and support. In this role, Wilder Research is working with LSSMN staff to collect information to help understand the full impact of camp on campers, families, staff and volunteers, and local communities. The evaluation is also exploring the way camp is implemented, and considering opportunities to strengthen the camp curriculum or approach. The evaluation took place over a three-year period.

This report summarizes the evaluation of 24 camps conducted in 2016. Most were held in the summer of 2016, though one camp took place in March during the spring break. These camps were held in a variety of locations, including:

- Bastrop, TX
- Brooklyn Center, MN
- Chicago, IL
- Columbia, SC
- Delmont, SD
- DeWitt, NE
- Flatgap, KY
- Flint, MI
- Garland, TX
- Lower Brule, SD
- Middletown, CA
- Oglala, SD
- Oklahoma City, OK
- Orangeburg, SC
- Pacific, MO
- San Marcos, TX
- St. Charles, MO
- St. Paul, MN
- Staples, TX
- Tulsa, OK
- Wimberley, TX

The evaluation draws information from a number of different sources. Demographic and background data (household income, race and ethnicity, household size, experience with disasters) was gathered through registration materials, which are primarily completed online. Completing demographic items was voluntary. Campers and parents also provided information about their experience with camp, and their perceptions of the camp's impact through three data collection activities:

- **Camper survey (N=754)** – campers completed brief paper and pencil surveys at the conclusion of camp. These surveys asked campers to rate a variety of program activities and potential impacts.
- **Parent survey (N=166)** – After children completed camp, parents were asked to complete a brief survey. The survey included questions about the impact of camp on campers and their satisfaction with camp activities. An online survey was used to administer the survey for most of the camps, but a paper version of the survey was used at the camps held in Saint Paul, Minnesota and at Our Lady of the Sioux Catholic Church, Oglala, South Dakota. Parents of children from 20 of the 24 camps completed surveys. Camp Noah did not have any email addresses for parents of the camp held at Salem Lutheran Church in Flint, Michigan, and parents from three other camps did not complete the survey, although they did receive email invitations and reminders.

- **Follow-up parent survey (N= 50)** – Three months after camp, parents were asked to complete another brief online survey designed to explore the longer-term impact of camp on campers. Sixteen of the 24 camps were represented in this survey. Parents from the camps held in Saint Paul, MN, Salem Lutheran Church in Flint, MI, and Our Lady of the Sioux Catholic Church, Oglala, SD were not invited by email to complete a follow-up online survey because parent email addresses were not available. Additionally, parents from five camps did not respond to the follow-up survey invitation.

Second, staff and volunteers were asked to complete online surveys shortly following camp. Wilder Research and LSSMN staff collaboratively designed and administered all surveys. The surveys provided staff and volunteers with an opportunity to rate and describe their experience with Camp Noah and to provide recommendations for future camps. In the previous two evaluation years, a single survey was administered to three different roles including Team Leaders, Team Members and Mental Health Professionals. For the current evaluation, different online surveys were administered separately to each role. Five different surveys were used:

- **Site Coordinator survey (N=21)** – Site Coordinators from 20 camps completed surveys at the conclusion of camp. Site Coordinators are responsible for arranging local logistics such as finding a facility, arranging for food, and recruiting local volunteers.
- **Local volunteer survey (N=45)** – Site Coordinators sent a survey web link to their local volunteers, who most often provided support with tasks such as food service, registration, or transportation.
- **Team Leader survey (N=11)** – Team Leaders head the teams of Certified Camp Staff. Team Leaders from eleven camps responded to this survey.
- **Team Member survey (N=87)** – Team Members include small group leaders and staff who lead or support recreation and art activities. Team Members representing 20 camps completed a survey.
- **Mental Health Professionals survey (N=17)** – Mental Health Professionals from 15 camps completed online surveys at the conclusion of camp.

Additional details on survey data are included in the Appendix.

## Overview of report

This report is broadly divided into three sections.

- **Camper and family experience** – While some of the information in this section comes from other perspectives (i.e., staff and volunteers), the first section of the report focuses on the experience of campers and their families. This section describes the background of the families that participated, the reasons why parents decided to send their children to Camp Noah, and the strategies that were used to recruit campers. This section also describes the immediate and longer-term benefits of Camp Noah for campers and parents' satisfaction with their children's camp experiences.
- **Staff and volunteer experience** – The second section of this report focuses on the staff and volunteers who help to arrange and implement Camp Noah. This section covers a wide array of topics, such as effective strategies for recruiting volunteers, the reasons why people choose to volunteer, the training and preparation staff and volunteers received before camp, and strategies used to coordinate the camp logistics. Staff and volunteer experiences implementing camp are also included here, including feedback related to the camp curriculum and the ways in which the team roles and relationships were managed. The benefits of camp for staff and volunteers, and their overall satisfaction with their experience, are also included in this section.
- **Community experience** – The third section presents the community perspective regarding Camp Noah. This section is relatively brief, highlighting some feedback regarding the benefits of camp for the broader community.

The report concludes with some overall recommendations for Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota staff to further refine and enhance the Camp Noah approach.



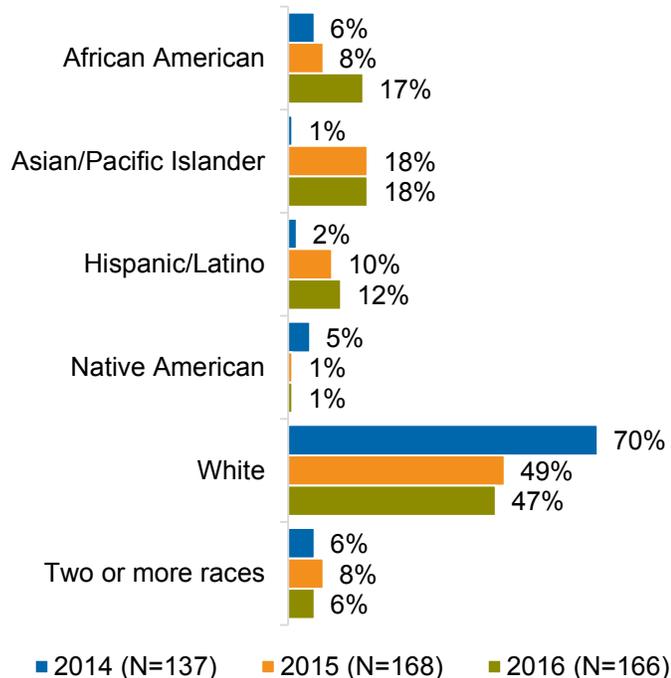
# Section 1: Camper and Family Experience

## Family background

*What were the demographics of families who sent their children to Camp Noah?*

**Camp Noah is serving increasingly diverse families.** Camp Noah has seen an increase in families identifying as Asian/Pacific Islander, as well as in African American and Hispanic/Latino families. In 2016, 47 percent of the families Camp Noah served identified as white, down from 49 percent in 2015 and 70 percent in 2014. In 2016, 6 percent of families identified as two or more races, and another 1 percent were Native American (Figure 1).

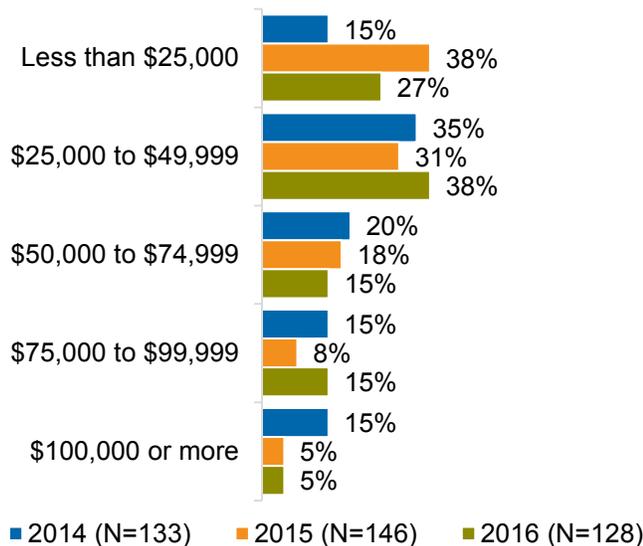
### 1. Household race/ethnicity (2014-2016)



Note. Data was collected through the parent survey in 2014 and through camp registration materials in 2015 and 2016.

**In 2016, about two thirds of families (65%) reported a total household income of less than \$50,000 annually.** Thirty percent of families said their income was between \$50,000 and \$99,999 (15% each). Five percent had a total household income of \$100,000 or more (Figure 2).

## 2. Total household income (2014-2016)



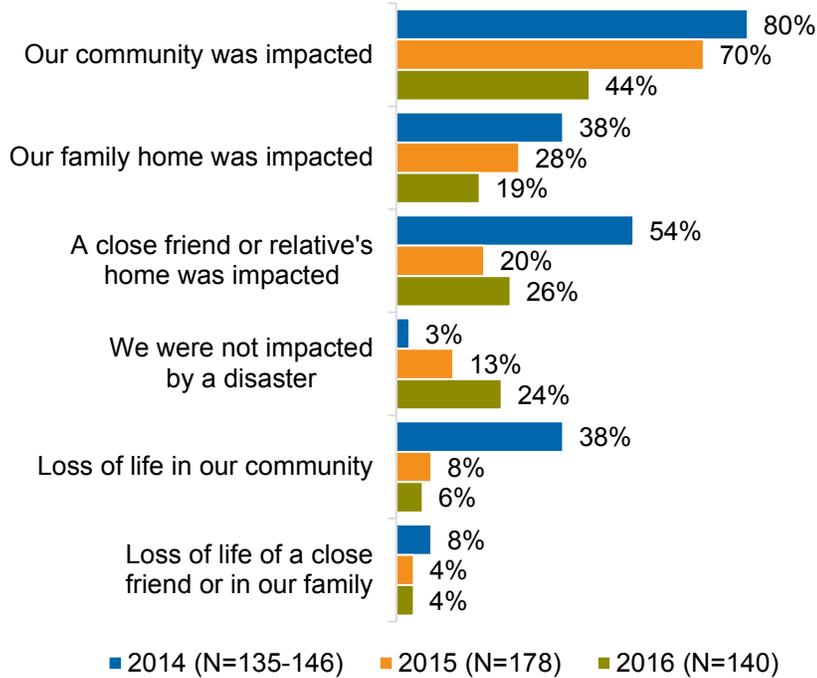
Note. Data was collected through the parent survey in 2014 and through camp registration materials in 2015 and 2016.

### *How were families of the children attending camp impacted by disasters?*

**Disasters impacted families in a variety of ways.** Camp Noah is typically offered in communities that have experienced a disaster, but not every camper may have been personally impacted. In 2016, 44 percent of the parents who completed the survey said their community was impacted by a disaster, compared to 80 percent in 2014 and 70 percent in 2015. Twenty-six percent of families indicated a close friend or relative’s home was impacted, and 19 percent reported their own family home was impacted. Fewer parents reported loss of life in their community compared to previous years.

One-quarter of the parents reported they were not impacted by a disaster, an increase from previous years (3% in 2014 and 13% in 2015) (Figure 3). Reasons for lower rates of parents reporting that they were impacted by a disaster could be explained by parents’ definitions for “disasters.” Camp Noah has been increasingly focusing more efforts on providing camp to communities that are affected by historical trauma such as Indian reservations and new refugee communities or communities who experienced water crises and other challenges that are not natural disasters (such as tornadoes, flooding, and fires).

### 3. How families were impacted by the disaster (2014-2016)



Note. Data was collected through the parent survey in 2014 and through camp registration materials in 2015 and 2016. Data exceeds 100% because respondents may select more than one response option.

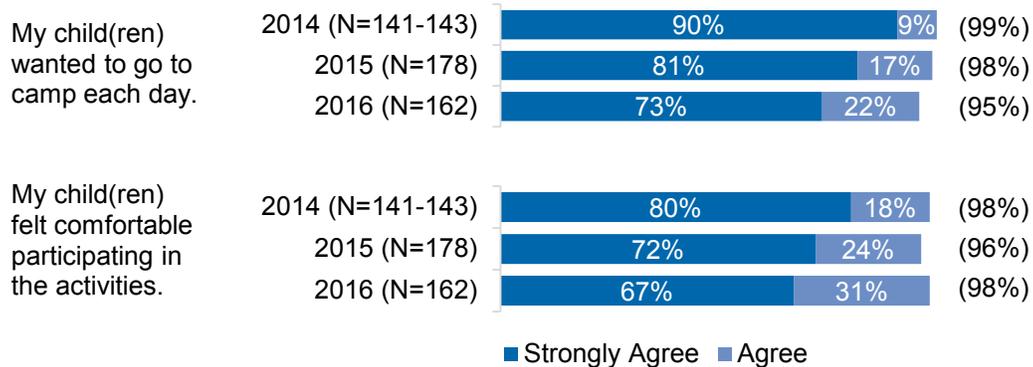


### Camp attendance

*Did children attend the camp all or most of the days it was offered?*

**Almost all campers attended camp each day and were comfortable participating in the activities.** When asked about their children’s attendance at camp, 95 percent of parents reported that their children wanted to go to camp each day. Almost all parents agreed that their children felt comfortable participating in the activities (98%; Figure 4).

#### 4. Parent survey (2014-2016): My child wanted to go to camp each day and felt comfortable participating in the activities



### Camper recruitment

#### *How did families hear about Camp Noah?*

Parents heard about Camp Noah through different outreach methods, but most reported hearing about it through school or from friends and family members. Thirty percent heard about camp through a flier or postcard from school or from a friend or family member. Fewer found out about Camp Noah through Facebook (18%) or from a Site Coordinator who contacted them (16%). Another 10 percent said they heard about camp in other ways.

Compared to 2014 and 2015, the number of parents who heard about camp from a flier or postcard from school decreased from 61 percent in 2014 to 38 percent in 2015 and to 30 percent in 2016. However, over the course of these three years, there were increases in the number of parents who heard about camp from the Site Coordinator (from 4% in 2014 to 16% in 2016) or through Facebook (from 7% to 18%; Figure 5).

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## 5. Parent survey (2014-2016): How parents heard about Camp Noah

How parents heard about Camp Noah (2014, 2015 and 2016)	2014 (N=146)	2015 (N=180)	2016 (N=162)
Flier/postcard from school	61%	38%	32%
Friend/family member	27%	19%	31%
Facebook	7%	11%	18%
Site Coordinator contacted me	4%	20%	16%
Other	5%	24%	8%
My disaster case manager	1%	6%	2%
Camp Noah website	4%	2%	2%
Media: newspaper, radio, TV	2%	2%	N/A

Data exceeds 100% because respondents may select more than one response option.

2017: Other responses included church (N=11), "I was co-coordinator" (N=1), flyer at food pantry (N=1), Sharing Life (N=1)

## Reasons parents had their children attend camp

### *Why did parents choose to have their children attend Camp Noah?*

**Many families shared that they wanted to send their children to camp because they thought it would be a good experience and learning opportunity.** When parents were asked why they chose to have their children attend Camp Noah, the most frequently mentioned comment was that they thought it would be a positive experience with an opportunity to learn.

*I thought it would be helpful to my child, teach her new things in a great environment.*

*I wanted my child to have a positive experience with other children of her age in the community.*

**Parents also hoped the camp might help their children develop resiliency or coping skills.** Parents explained that they thought attending Camp Noah would be helpful for their children in learning to cope with recently difficult or chaotic events in their lives.

*[Camp Noah] sounded like just what my daughter needed to build up her confidence after going through the tornado and its aftermath.*

*With recent changes in our community, I felt it was important for our children to be allowed the opportunity to explore the impact it made to them. It was with hope that they could empathize with other campers and learn from experiences.*

*To help [my daughter] heal from her experience during the valley fire and to give her a memorable positive experience.*

*Camp Noah was recommended by a friend who is a therapist because my child has experienced family trauma within the past year and it would help with coping skills.*

Others wanted the opportunity for their children to attend Camp Noah because they felt that it aligned with their religious beliefs. The Camp Noah curriculum is secular, however a faith-based version is available.

*I chose Camp Noah because it is a Christian retreat, a place where I believed they could learn good things about the Bible, which will bring an impact to their lives.*

*I chose to send my children to Camp Noah because the more they hear about Christ, the more they will have love for him and the people around them and also do his will and be respectful children.*

*It is a Christian-based camp and I knew that my child was going to learn a lot of things while enjoying the experience and making new friends.*

Parents also chose to send their children to Camp Noah because it was free, a new experience for their child or an opportunity to meet other children and make friends.

**Benefit to campers**

*How did campers benefit from Camp Noah?*

**Almost all campers said they learned that they are somebody special and that they have gifts and talents.** Similar to previous years, almost all campers reported that they learned they are somebody special (96%). Likewise, 93 percent of campers learned what their gifts and talents are (Figure 6). In the survey’s open-ended questions, campers also stated that they learned they are special.

*I learned that I am special and to always look forward to a better day.*

*I learned that I am special and that there is no one like me.*

*I learned that you can be what you want to be.*

**6. Camper survey (2014-2016): Percentage of campers who responded “Yes” to program impact related to self-confidence**

	2014 (N=852-857)	2015 (N=661-669)	2016 (N=732-735)
Camper survey: Ratings of program impact			
I learned that I am somebody special.	97%	97%	96%
I learned what my gifts and talents are.	94%	92%	93%

**Many parents also observed that their children had a stronger sense of self and more self-confidence after participating in Camp Noah.** Almost all parents felt that Camp Noah helped their children feel good about themselves (96%) and understand or know something that makes them unique (93%; Figure 7). In the survey open-ends, some parents shared that their children’s confidence has increased.

*His confidence level also appears to have grown back up to pre-flood days.*

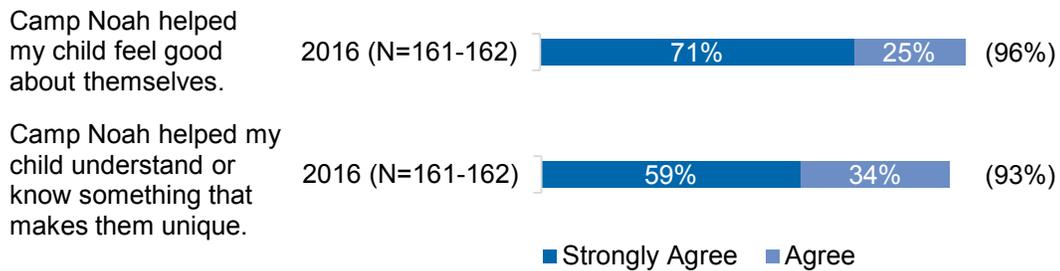
*My children are more confident and are able to handle life situations better.*

*Her confidence level is way higher than before cause she knows no two people are the same and that she's a unique child. That people must accept her for who she is.*

*My children came home after the week-long program feeling a lot better about themselves and also in other situations in our life.*

*They have more confidence in their selves when it comes to trying new things.*

**7. Parent survey (2016): Ratings of Camp Noah's impact on child's self-confidence**



Campers were asked what they learned at camp. **Many campers said that they learned coping skills and how to stay safe during stormy weather.** Campers reported that they learned ways to relax (93%), about having a safe place and going there when they feel worried or afraid (92%), and about how to stay safe during stormy weather. (92%; Figure 8).

*I learned how to relax in a bad situation.*

*[I learned] how to handle worries.*

*I learned that you don't have to be afraid.*

*[I learned] how to go to my safe place.*

*If I'm scared I can go to my safe place.*

In the survey open-ends, some parents also shared that their children have a greater sense of safety.

*He has a bit more understanding about storms and have a safe place in mind.*

*My child has a stronger sense of safety. She also learned she's not alone.*

*It made [my son] think a lot about safe places and preparations for natural disasters.*

*It helps my child relax and feel safe during the storm.*

*My youngest son [is] more relaxed and described his safe place. He has referred to this as we continue to deal with health issues.*

*My children were apprehensive to attend a camp they were unfamiliar with. Especially after so much turmoil recently happened around us. The nature of the camp helped them to feel secure and the constant busyness of activities kept their minds occupied and at ease.*

**8. Camper survey (2014-2016): Percentage of campers who responded “Yes” to program impact related to coping skills**

camper Survey: Ratings of program impact	2014 (N=853-855)	2015 (N=661-664)	2016 (N=724-735)
I learned ways to relax.	94%	93%	93%
I know my safe place, and I can go there when I feel worried or afraid.	95%	93%	92%
I learned how to stay safe during stormy weather.	95%	90%	92%
I feel more prepared for stormy weather.	93%	90%	89%

**Many parents also observed that their child learned to handle stressful situations.**

Ninety-three percent of parents reported that their child feels more prepared to handle challenges in life (Figure 9). Parents also shared that their children learned how to better cope with challenges.

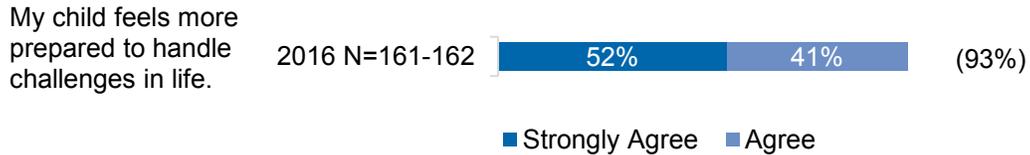
*It gave them a better outlook on how to deal with stressful situations and communicate better when they are upset.*

*I think he had a better understanding of past event and how to deal with it.*

*[Camp Noah] helps him understand how to handle things that life throws at you.*

*It gave her an opportunity to understand how others go through life situations and still be okay.*

## 9. Parent survey (2016): My child feels more prepared to handle challenges in life



Note. In 2016, some survey items were modified and can no longer be compared to previous years.

### Parents also reported that their children learned how to relax and are less anxious.

In 2016, nine in ten parents agreed that their children learned ways to relax, a slight increase from 2015 (85%, Figure 10). Parents described how their children learned to stay calm and feel less worried.

*Each day he learned something new and was very interested and excited about sharing his day, he is now not afraid when a storm comes. He shares with me how to stay calm.*

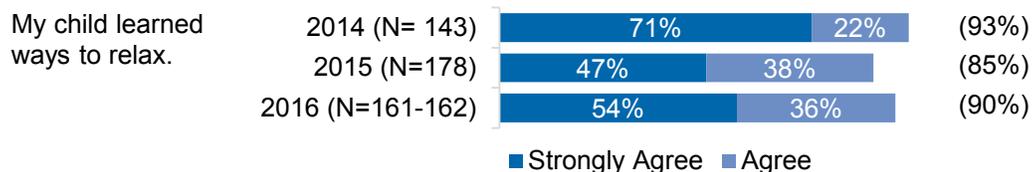
*She is much more confident. She does not have as much anxiety about weather.*

*My child liked the relaxation techniques taught. We focus on prayer, at home, as a way to relax, but the breathing exercises are a good skill to learn too. Thank you for those skills. Just asked my kid directly about Camp Noah.*

One Site Coordinator also shared their observations of the impact of the camp on children.

*The camp was very engaging and interactive. The children's overall experience was excellent. We had a family that lost their home and everything else. The children had been quiet and didn't express themselves until this camp. They have become more relaxed and not as scared.*

## 10. Parent survey (2016): My child learned ways to relax



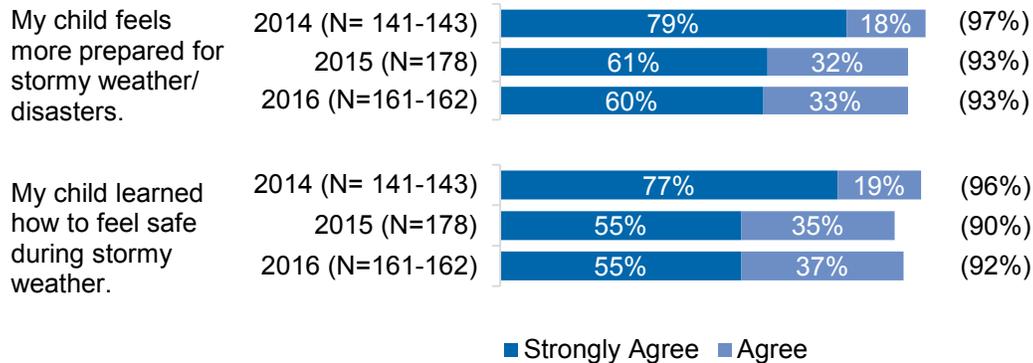
**Parents felt that their children learned how to be prepared and to stay safe during stormy weather.** Eighty-nine percent of campers reported that they feel more prepared for stormy weather (Figure 11). Ninety-three percent of parents reported that their children feel more prepared for stormy weather or disasters and 92 percent indicated that their children learned how to feel safe during stormy weather (Figure 11). Some parents also described their children being more prepared for disasters in the survey open-ends.

*They feel more confident about handling themselves during a natural disaster.*

*My child really enjoyed Camp Noah, she now knows how to better prepare for disaster.*

*[Camp Noah] showed them what to do in the time of a disaster and how to react when it occurs.*

### 11. Parent survey (2014-2016): Ratings of Camp Noah's impact on child's storm preparedness



**Campers built relationships with the adults and other children at camp.** Almost all campers indicated that they liked their teachers (96%) and friends (95%). Though there was a slight decrease in this measure from previous years, overall, it is still positive. Some campers also expressed positive thoughts about friends and teachers in the survey open-ends.

*Camp Noah is a fun place to be and there are many people to become friends.*

*All teachers are kind and I love them.*

*I will miss friends & teachers.*

*The fun part of Camp Noah is making new friends.*

*[The most fun part of Camp Noah is] when me and my friends played all together.*

### 12. Camper survey (2014-2016): Percentage of campers who “liked” teachers and friends at Camp Noah

What did you like about Camp Noah?	2014 (N=922-926)	2015 (N=667-669)	2016 (N=736-737)
Teachers	98%	97%	96%
Friends	97%	97%	95%

Similarly, almost all parents (95%) reported that their children made friends at Camp Noah (Figure 13). In the survey open ends, some parents also mentioned their children’s friendships and the changes in their children’s social skills.

*[My child is] more confident and has more friends. [My child] grew [as an] individual and [has] become a better person in term of life skills.*

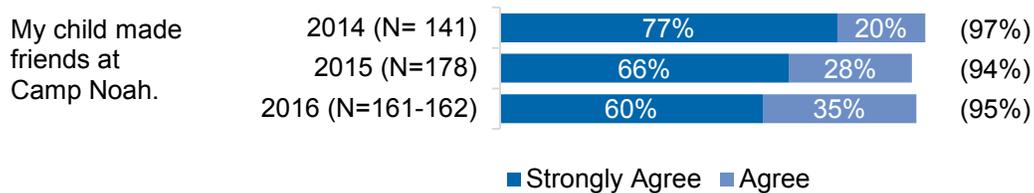
*She was sad when it ended. She met some great Christian people and made some new friends.*

*My daughter made some really great friends that have been dealing with similar loss.*

*They felt more comfortable around other students they didn’t know beforehand.*

*They are more outgoing and talk more.*

### 13. Parent survey (2014-2016): My child made friends at Camp Noah

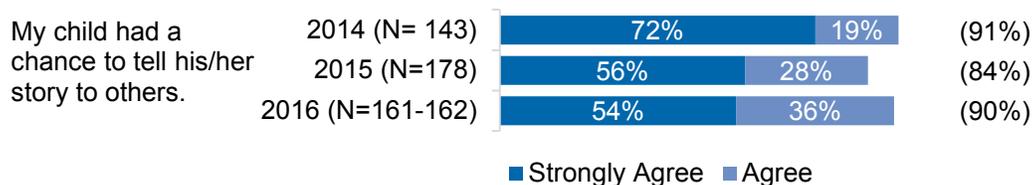


**Most campers said that they had a chance to tell their story to others.** Although 78% of campers felt they were able to tell their story to others (Figure 14), this item did receive somewhat lower ratings than other items campers were asked to rate, as was also the case in previous years. Nine in ten parents also agreed that their children were able to tell their stories to others (Figure 14).

### 14. Camper survey (2014-2016): I had a chance to tell my story to others

Camper Survey: Ratings of program impact	2014 (N=856)	2015 (N=662)	2016 (N=754)
I had a chance to tell my story to others.	85%	78%	78%

### 15. Parent survey (2014-2016): My child had a chance to tell his/her story to others

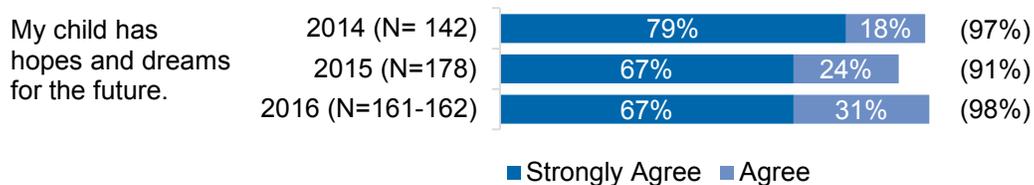


**Almost all campers reported having hopes and dreams for the future.** Ninety-five percent of campers reported that they have hopes and dreams for the future (Figure 16). Almost all parents (98%) also agreed that their children have hopes and dreams for the future (Figure 17), a slight increase from 2015.

### 16. Camper survey (2014-2016): I have hopes and dreams for the future

Camper Survey: Ratings of program impact	2014 (N=849)	2015 (N=666)	2016 (N=733)
I have hopes and dreams for the future.	96%	96%	95%

### 17. Parent survey (2014-2016): My child has hopes and dreams for the future



## Camper experience

### *Did campers have a positive experience at Camp Noah? If so, what parts of camp did campers like the best?*

**Campers had fun at Camp Noah.** Almost all campers (97%) said that they had fun overall. At least 79 percent of the campers rated each specific camp component as “fun.” When asked in an open-ended item to describe the most fun part of camp, the most frequent response was simply that “everything” was fun.

*It was so fun. I loved the songs. I loved the socks.*

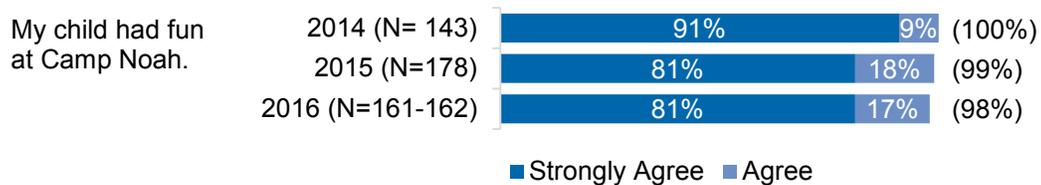
*That the first rule is fun and I love it.*

*It is really fun and I wish it can keep going.*

*It was the awesomest camp ever.*

Parents were also asked about their children’s experience at camp. Ninety-eight percent of parents felt that their children had fun at Camp Noah (Figure 18).

### 18. Parent survey (2014-2016): My child had fun at Camp Noah



In the survey open-ends, many parents also expressed that their children had a positive experience at camp or were excited to go to camp.

*Every day she would come home anxious to tell me everything she learned and show me things she did. I looked forward to hearing about her daily adventures. She had an absolute blast!*

*They had a blast! They came home telling me about their day, and they had to be stopped or they would've talked over each other! They were so excited to ride on the limos and the shuttle buses provided. They said it made them feel important. They already had a lot of knowledge about disaster prepping, but doing this with their classmates was a treat for them.*

*He loved going every day and felt special receiving the gifts and attention. The backpack made him feel safe in case of a storm!*

*They were very excited to get up each morning and go to camp. They were able to tell me Noah's wise words each and every night and even now to this day they still say them.*

### Campers liked a variety of camp components, with blankets and backpacks at the top of the list.

Campers were asked whether or not they liked the various camp components. Campers were most likely to report that they liked the blankets (98%). campers also indicated that they liked the backpacks (96%), recreation (95%), crafts (94%), and food (92%). Ninety percent of campers indicated that they liked Noah (the camp is loosely based on the biblical story of Noah, who is also one of the characters portrayed in skits performed for the campers). Some campers said they liked the stories (83%) and songs (79%) (Figure 19).

### 19. Camper survey (2014-2016): Percentage of campers that responded that they “liked” each camp component

What did you like about Camp Noah?	2014 (N=882-925)	2015 (N=654-671)	2016 (N=731-741)
Blankets	99%	99%	98%
Backpacks	98%	97%	96%

**19. Camper survey (2014-2016): Percentage of campers that responded that they “liked” each camp component (continued)**

What did you like about Camp Noah?	2014 (N=882-925)	2015 (N=654-671)	2016 (N=731-741)
Recreation	95%	94%	95%
Crafts	97%	95%	94%
Food	95%	95%	92%
Noah	94%	93%	90%
Stories	87%	86%	83%
Songs	87%	87%	79%

**Parent satisfaction**

*Were parents satisfied with their children’s experience at Camp Noah?*

**Nearly all parents felt comfortable sending their children to camp.** Although the percentage of parents who agreed that they felt safe sending their child to camp is comparable to previous years (98%), the rate of parents who “strongly agreed” has decreased. In 2014, 92 percent of parents strongly agreed they felt comfortable sending their children to camp, compared to 81 percent in 2015 and 78 percent in 2016 (Figure 20).

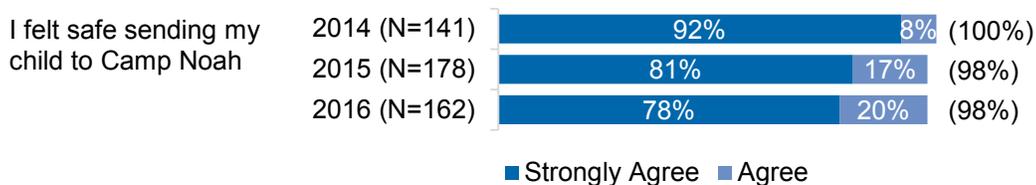
In the survey open-ends, some parents also described that they felt Camp Noah was a safe place for their children.

*Because it was free and in a safe environment. The staff also made me feel comfortable and my girls loved it. They also learned valuable techniques that they use daily.*

*It appeared to be an opportunity for the children of our affected community to come together in a safe place and learn coping skills. (And to my delight, it turned out to be the case!)*

*With everything that has happened to our family this past year, I thought it would be good for them to have some place safe to go to and learn about resiliency. My girls had a good time.*

**20. Parent survey (2014-2016): I felt safe sending my child to Camp Noah**



## Lasting benefits to campers

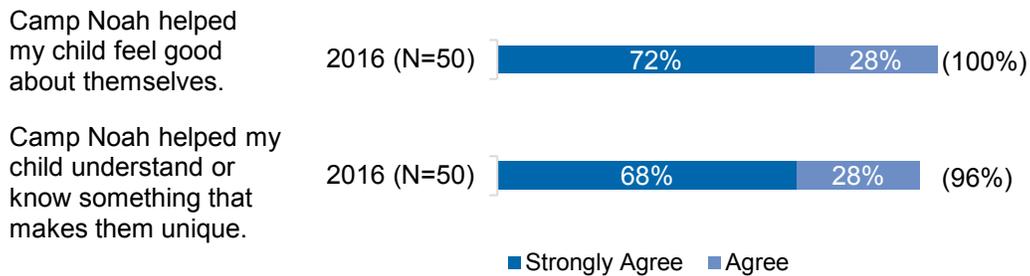
### *Did Camp Noah have lasting impacts on campers after camp was over?*

In the follow-up survey, parents were asked again about the impact of Camp Noah on their child. Overall, longer-term impacts reported by parents in 2016 were more positive than in 2015, with most ratings at the highest across the three years of evaluation. Additionally, the rate of parents “strongly agreeing” is also greatest in 2016 in almost all measures.

**Three months after their children participated in Camp Noah, parents were asked whether the camp had a positive impact on their children’s self-confidence.** All parents agreed that Camp Noah helped their children feel good about themselves and 96 percent of parents felt that Camp Noah helped their children understand or know something that makes them unique (Figure 21). In open-end responses, some parents also reported improvement in their children’s self-esteem.

*I really appreciate how Camp Noah helped my daughter understand that she's unique. She learned that it's important to love yourself. She also isn't so scared anymore on stormy nights.*

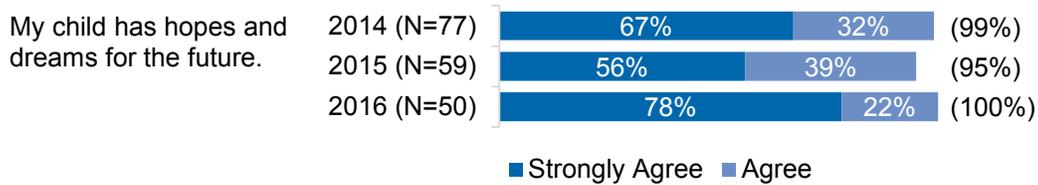
#### 21. Parent three-month follow-up survey (2016): Ratings of Camp Noah’s impact on child’s self-confidence



Note. In 2016, some survey items were modified and can no longer be compared to previous years.

**Children have hopes and dreams for the future.** Three months after participating in Camp Noah, all parents reported that their children have hopes and dreams for the future (78% strongly agreed and 22% agreed; Figure 22).

#### 22. Parent three-month follow-up survey: My child has hopes and dreams for the future (2014-2016)

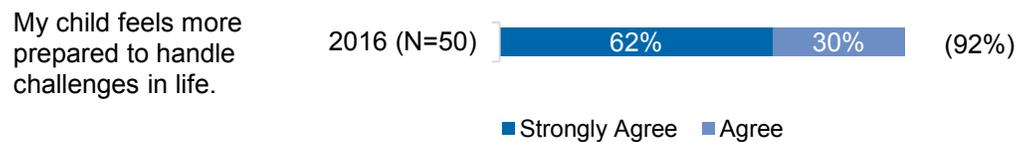


**Parents observed improvement in their children’s ability to handle challenges.** A total of 92 percent of parents reported that their children feels more prepared to handle challenges in life (Figure 23). Some parents also reported improvement in their children’s ability to handle challenges in the survey open-ends.

*He is confident in the midst of fears. He knows what to expect and what to do to remain as safe as possible.*

*He is more positive and doesn't let the small things stress him out.*

**23. Parent three-month follow-up survey (2016): My child feels more prepared to handle challenges in life**



Note. In 2016, some survey items were modified and can no longer be compared to previous years.

**Children continued to make use of their safe places after Camp Noah and other strategies that they learned to relax.** Three months after Camp Noah, 90% of parents reported that their children continued to use their safe places. Most parents also felt that their children used the strategies that they learned at Camp Noah to relax (84%). This rating increased from 72 percent in 2015 (Figure 24). Parents shared the following observations:

*He uses calm-down techniques like breathing and talks to his friends about how great they are.*

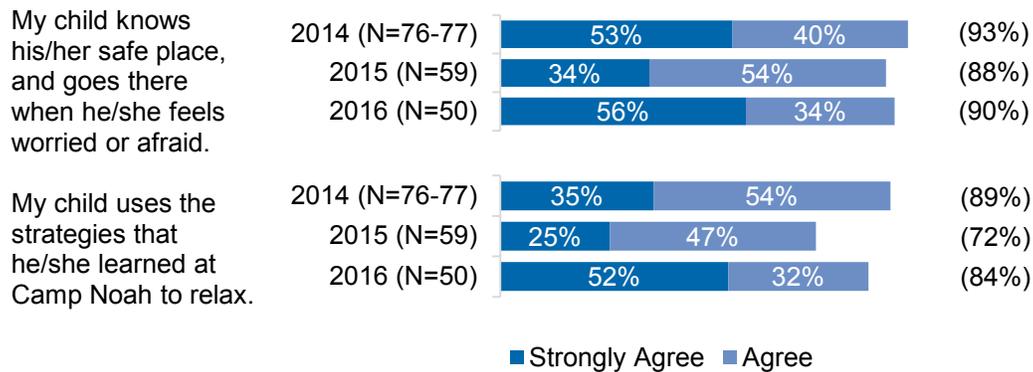
*She will breathe instead of getting worked up.*

*[Strategies my child continued to use includes]: 1. Knowing when she needs some space and to allow herself to cry. 2. Using the notion of an invisible string that connects them to loved ones for comfort.*

*They have learned how to share their feelings when they are scared or afraid.*

*My son and daughter have learned how to talk about their feelings, think positive and they have learned how to relax.*

**24. Parent three-month follow-up survey (2014-2016): Ratings of Camp Noah's impact on child's coping skills**



**Parents also indicated that their children are better able to manage and express their fears in stormy weather three months after Camp Noah.** Almost all parents reported that their children feels more prepared (98%) and safer (96%) during stormy weather after participating in Camp Noah (Figure 25). Parents shared observations of their children during stormy weather and making preparations to be safe.

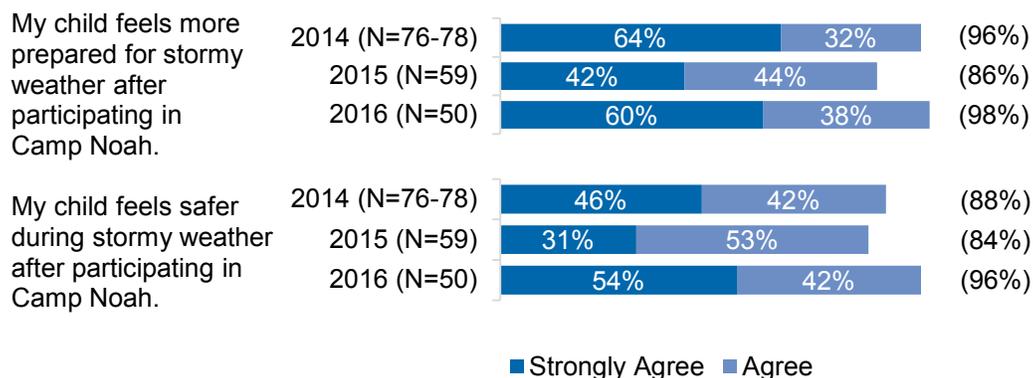
*They are prepared more if a disaster happens and are able to appreciate the things that happen before during and after a disaster*

*Anytime there is a bad storm, he grabs his kit and heads downstairs to wait it out. He feels much more comfortable knowing he's prepared.*

*If there is a rainstorm or storm coming. They will say get the flashlights and batteries and let's be quiet.*

*My son has so much insight on how to be safe. He helps us check the fire alarms monthly. He keeps his preparedness items at the ready. He takes on the responsibility of keeping us safe to heart and we appreciate him for being so brave as well as Camp Noah for teaching him these values.*

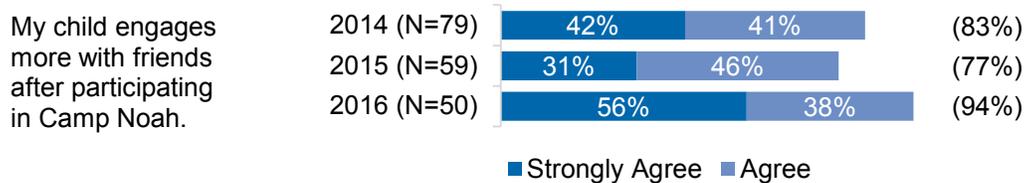
**25. Parent three-month follow-up survey (2014-2016): Ratings of Camp Noah's impact on child's storm preparedness**



**Many parents also observed improvements in their children’s social skills three months after Camp Noah.** The rate of parents reporting that their children engage more with friends after participating in Camp Noah greatly increased to 94 percent in 2016 from 77 percent in 2015 (Figure 26). Parents shared observations of their children’s being social.

*It seems like they make friends everywhere now.*  
*[My child is] more social.*  
*They feel more comfortable communicating more with others.*  
*She is more comfortable in a group setting.*

**26. Parent three-month follow-up survey (2014-2016): My child engages more with friends after participating in Camp Noah**



***Did Camp Noah have an impact on signs of stress and trauma in campers?***

Children often communicate signs of stress and trauma through behaviors such as clinginess or whining, feeling fearful or anxious, somatic concerns such as complaining of aches and pains, sleep or toileting problems, or behavior problems. Parents were asked in an open-ended question if they had observed any changes in their children related to these behaviors in the months after Camp Noah.

**Social interaction.** Parents most frequently felt that their child was more comfortable and open in social settings as a result of participating in camp.

*She gets along better with others.*  
*Both my son and daughter are doing really good in school and their more social when it comes to talking to people. They're not as shy anymore.*  
*He really talks to us more. If he has a question he feels comfortable in asking.*  
*My daughter is a happier kid for sure. She associates a lot better with people and kids.*

**Fear or anxiety.** Three parents reported that their children were easier to calm or showed less worry after Camp Noah.

*Yes, my girls didn't panic during the hurricane and power outage.  
[My child is] not so stressed.  
They have been more at ease.*

**Clinginess.** Two parents reported that their child seemed more independent.

*She is still clingy, but a little less clingy and has recently taken a brave step on her own to sign up to sing a solo in a Sing for Scholarship event. (She is one of just a few in her 2nd grade class to sign up.) She also had her first basketball practice, and she got out there without hesitation and went for it!  
She sleeps in her own room. Before Camp Noah, she would not.*

**Aches and pain.** Two parents reported that their children had fewer physical complaints.

*She has not complained of stomachaches in months, which she used to do daily.*

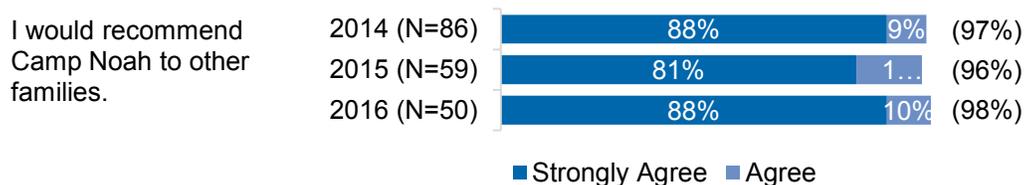
A few parents shared that there were no change or that their children did not have signs of stress or trauma to begin with.

*We haven't really seen any changes in their behavior, they have always been pretty well behaved.*

**Three months after participating in Camp Noah, almost all parents would recommend Camp Noah to other families.**

A total of 98 percent of parents would recommend Camp Noah to other families (Figure 27).

**27. Parent three-month follow-up survey: I would recommend Camp Noah to other families (2014-2016)**



Parents shared positive thoughts about recommending the camp to others.

*I want to thank everyone who was involved in making it possible for my daughter to be a part of such great program! Kudos to all of the great volunteers they did an awesome job. I strongly recommend Camp Noah to anyone that has children that have suffered great loss because of natural disasters.*

*I have recommended this camp to others. I think you do a wonderful mission through this camp. While our household was not directly affected by the flood, many of my son's classmates were. I hope you continue to serve!!!*

Parents also praised the staff and program and were very appreciative of the camp. Some also wished the program could be longer.

*I want to thank all the staff at Camp Noah for the love they show my children and for making them to feel at home.*

*I believe Camp Noah was a great place. My child came home with lots of good stuff and stories. It makes him happy to be in the camp and wish it could have lasted longer.*

*I loved all of the materials that were presented and the people that ran Camp Noah were exceptional!*

*Very knowledgeable staff, show great team work and genuine interest in the children, and the interactions with the children were great. Would love to see Camp Noah come every year. Great job and hats off to a wonderful staff!*

*I wish they would have it every day during summer months when they are not in school.*



## Section 2: Staff and volunteer experience

This section of the report focuses on the staff and volunteers who help to arrange and implement Camp Noah. Camp Noah requires the active participation of volunteers and staff, including Site Coordinators, local volunteers, Mental Health Professionals, and Certified Camp Staff. For the purposes of this report, Certified Camp Staff is defined as both Team Leaders and Team Members. In 2016, some survey items were slightly modified and can no longer be compared to previous years. Additionally, some survey items are specific to only Team Leaders or Team Members rather than Certified Camp Staff as a whole.

### Training and preparation

#### *How prepared did Team Leaders and Site Coordinators feel before beginning their work at camp?*

**Team Leaders and Site Coordinators felt they had enough time to prepare for their role before camp started.** Ninety percent of Team Leaders and 95 percent of Site Coordinators felt that they had enough time to prepare for their role before camp started (Figure 28).

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#### **28. 2016 Site Coordinators, and Team Leader surveys: Before camp started, I had enough time to prepare for my role**

	Team Leader (N=10)	Site Coordinator (N=21)
Strongly agree	80%	62%
Agree	10%	33%
Disagree	10%	0%
Strongly disagree	0%	5%

**Local volunteers and Site Coordinators invested a reasonable amount of time in their camp role.** Almost all local volunteers (98%) felt that they invested a reasonable amount of time in their camp role (69% strongly agreed and 29% agreed). Similarly, 95 percent of Site Coordinators reported they invested a reasonable amount of time in their role (76% strongly agreed and 19% agreed; Figure 29).

**29. Local volunteer and Site Coordinator surveys (2015, 2016): I invested a reasonable amount of time in my camp role**

	Local volunteers		Site Coordinator	
	2015 (N=34)	2016 (N=45)	2015 (N=12)	2016 (N=21)
Strongly agree	62%	69%	67%	76%
Agree	35%	29%	33%	19%
Disagree	3%	0%	0%	5%
Strongly disagree	0%	2%	0%	0%

**Most staff and volunteers felt prepared to fulfill their role at camp.**

In the surveys completed at the end of camp, all 34 local volunteers reported that they felt properly prepared to fulfill their role. Almost all Site Coordinators also said that they felt prepared to fulfill their role (95%; Figure 30).

**Certified Camp Staff were more likely to report that they felt prepared in 2016 than they did in 2015.**

Ninety-six percent of Certified Camp Staff felt that they felt properly prepared to fulfill their role at camp, compared to 80 percent in 2015.

The overall positive rating for Site Coordinators increased in 2016 (a total of 95% agreed in 2016 compared to 83% in 2015). However, the most positive rating decreased from 75 percent who strongly agreed to 57 percent in 2016 (Figure 30).

**30. Local volunteer, Certified Camp Staff and Site Coordinators surveys (2015, 2016): I felt properly prepared to fulfill my role at camp**

	Local volunteers		Certified Camp Staff*		Site Coordinator	
	2015 (N=34)	2016 (N=34)	2015 (N=90)	2016 (N=92)	2015 (N=12)	2016 (N=21)
Strongly agree	71%	60%	34%	47%	75%	57%
Agree	29%	36%	46%	47%	8%	38%
Disagree	0%	4%	19%	4%	17%	0%
Strongly disagree	0%	0%	1%	2%	0%	5%

\* Team Members received a slightly different question asking about the training videos. Team Leaders were asked to rate 'I received the right AMOUNT of training and support from Camp Noah before serving as a Team Leader.'

***What feedback did Certified Camp Staff and Site Coordinators have about the online training?***

**In 2016 there was an increase of Certified Camp Staff and Site Coordinators indicating that they received the right amount and the right kind of training.**

About nine in ten Certified Camp Staff (92%) reported that they received the right amount of training from Camp Noah. This is a slight increase from 2015, where 85 percent felt that they had the right amount of training (Figure 31).

Similarly, there was also an increase in 2016 of Certified Camp Staff who felt that they received the right kind of training from Camp Noah. Ninety-two percent felt that they had the right kind of training compared to 85 percent in 2015.

All Site Coordinators strongly agreed or agreed they received the right amount of training and the right kind of training in both 2015 and 2016.

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**31. Certified Camp Staff and Site Coordinators surveys (2015, 2016): I received the right amount and type of training from Camp Noah**

	Certified Camp Staff*		Site Coordinator	
	2015 (N=90)	2016 (N=92)	2015 (N=12)	2016 (N=21)
<b>I received the right AMOUNT of training from Camp Noah</b>				
Strongly agree	38%	37%	67%	76%
Agree	47%	55%	33%	24%
Disagree	14%	4%	0%	0%
Strongly disagree	1%	3%	0%	0%
<b>I received the right KIND of training from Camp Noah (2016)</b>	<b>2015 (N=90)</b>	<b>2016 (N=92)</b>	<b>2015 (N=12)</b>	<b>2016 (N=21)</b>
Strongly agree	38%	35%	67%	71%
Agree	47%	57%	33%	29%
Disagree	14%	5%	0%	0%
Strongly disagree	1%	3%	0%	0%

\* Team Members received a slightly different question asking about the training videos. Team Leaders were asked to rate 'I received the right AMOUNT of training and support from Camp Noah before serving as a Team Leader.'

Team Members were asked if they received their curriculum before they left for camp. Seventy-eight percent indicated they received the curriculum before camp (Figure 32).

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**32. 2016 Team Member survey: I received my curriculum before I left for camp**

	(N=82)
Strongly agree	50%
Agree	28%
Disagree	12%
Strongly disagree	10%

**Team Leaders said they had enough time to communicate with the Site Coordinator before camp.**

Almost three-quarters of Team Leaders (72%) felt they had enough time to communicate with the Site Coordinator before camp (Figure 33).

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**33. 2016 Team Leaders survey: I had enough time to communicate with the Site Coordinator before camp**

	(N=11)
Strongly agree	27%
Agree	45%
Disagree	27%
Strongly disagree	0%

Note. In 2016, some survey items were modified and can no longer be compared to previous years.

**Most staff felt prepared to manage campers' emotional or behavioral issues and sought support from the Mental Health Professional when needed.**

In the surveys completed after camp, 94 percent of Certified Camp Staff said that they felt prepared to manage campers' emotional or behavioral issues. This is an increase from the 88 percent who felt prepared in 2015 (Figure 34).

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**34. Certified Camp Staff survey (2015-2016): I felt prepared to manage campers' emotional or behavioral issues**

	2015 (N=90)	2016 (N=91)
Strongly agree	39%	51%
Agree	49%	43%
Disagree	9%	5%
Strongly disagree	3%	1%

Note. In 2016, some survey items were modified and can no longer be compared to previous years.

Team Leaders were asked if the team sought support from the Mental Health Professional to address campers' emotional or behavioral issues when needed. In 2016, 82 percent of Team Leaders reported that the team sought support from the Mental Health Professional to address campers' emotional or behavioral issues (Figure 35).

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**35. 2016 Team Leader survey: The team sought support from the Mental Health Professional to address campers' emotional or behavioral issues when needed**

	(N=11)
Strongly agree	64%
Agree	18%
Disagree	18%
Strongly disagree	0%

Note. In 2016, some survey items were modified and can no longer be compared to previous years.

**Some staff felt that there were not enough Mental Health Professionals available.**

They reported that they did not receive the mental health support they needed. One staff had to seek support from an outside source because the Mental Health Professional was absent when a child really needed the service. Another staff needed support to address campers' behaviors. One local volunteer thought it would be helpful to have a Mental Health Professional in each classroom.

*The Mental Health Professional was absent for half of Thursday and Friday. There was a child that severely needed the Mental Health Professional on Friday. I ended up speaking with my husband about my experience with the child (without names and details) and he gave me insight. The child was hard to deal with and acting out on the first day and the last day. My husband said the first day the child was testing limits and the last day he was acting out because we were leaving. I felt like I cheated the children by not having a Mental Health Professional for the ENTIRE camp. – Site Coordinator*

*I have not worked with children in many years. I felt as if all I could do is try to provide "crowd control" as several of the children were "runners," and did not listen to authority. We really needed that Mental Health Professional. [A Camp Noah staff member] had too many other responsibilities to be available all the time. The Pastor was supposed to assist, but was not very supportive. – Team Member*

*That you would allow for time out when needed for discipline issues for campers fighting. Also, it may be beneficial to have a healthcare professional in each classroom. The health professional in the classroom could help and observe the campers in the classroom setting. This will allow the health professionals to be more familiar with the child and their particular issues and not after the problem arises in the later part of the week. – Local volunteer*

One Team Leader highlighted that the Mental Health Professional was popular amongst the campers.

*...This made for lots of long walks during small group time to/from bathrooms or the healing room (and we had a lot of kids who asked to visit the Mental Health Professionals, usually legitimately, but probably because the Mental Health Professional was well-known to them and had lots of cool stuff in the healing room.) ... To address the unusually heavy traffic in the healing room, after the first two days we developed a triage system for visits, which successfully reduced the number of "boredom" visits. We also established limits to how many campers could be in the Healing Room at one time to ensure that the Mental Health Professional could actually address issues, rather than "babysit."*

**Team Leaders were also asked to indicate if the team sought support from the Mental Health Professional to address *their own* emotional reactions to campers' stories or situations.** Nearly three quarters of Team Leaders (72%) reported that the team sought support from the Mental Health Professional to address their own emotional reactions to campers' stories or situations (Figure 36). In the survey open-ends, Team Members commented that they appreciated the Mental Health Professionals and the debriefing time.

*To not totally break down emotionally in front of the children/campers. The Mental Health Professionals were an awesome resource as well as the debriefing meetings after each day.*

*To not take on the emotions of the campers too much. To not cry in front of the campers. Dealt with it by letting it out during the debriefing meetings.*

*Mental health counselor was wonderful!*

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**36. 2016 Team Leader survey: The team sought support from the Mental Health Professional to address their own emotional reactions to campers' stories or situations**

	(N=11)
Strongly agree	36%
Agree	36%
Disagree	27%
Strongly disagree	0%

Note. In 2016, some survey items were modified and can no longer be compared to previous years.

***What should be done to better prepare future staff and volunteers?***

When asked what they know now that they wished they had known at the beginning of camp with regard to training and preparation, some commented that they would have liked to receive trainings and materials earlier.

*I would have asked for the Site Coordinator box to be mailed to me directly as setting up for Day 1 became very time-consuming the Sunday before camp started. I met with and helped the Camp Noah Team set up for about 3 hours and then continued to work at home for about 3 hours with re-forming groups, writing and making name-tags, editing sign-in sheets, etc. It would be helpful to have this box a few days prior to camp starting.*

– Site Coordinator

*I think knowing what all of the things in the boxes were for beforehand might have helped. I didn't know what the curriculum was so I didn't know what everything was for. I still don't know what those little white cups were for.*

– Site Coordinator

*This was my first time, so it would have been ideal if I could have had a copy of all the posters and other activities before I went.*

– Team Member

Others would have liked the opportunity to know the community they were serving better.

*I wish I would have studied the area a little more to give myself context for when I was talking to 4th graders. According to them, it floods a lot so they were used to it... I think a reporter's opinion would have given me more understanding of what had happened and how this was different. Also a virtual tour of the area that was hit would be helpful. I am a visual learner. I could have done this myself, but I didn't realize it would be hard for me to imagine what happened in the flood hearing from a 4th grade perspective.*

– Team Member

*Cultural miscommunication—how kids play. This was super important and only came out at the end of the week. Maybe having a conversation between [Team Leader] and [Site Coordinator] to determine what REC activities would be most appropriate/work well. [Site Coordinators] tend to have more cultural knowledge of the community than the outside team. Also incorporating volunteers from the same culture worked, if there was a way to have more of a mix of staff diversity that would be helpful too. One day...*

– Team Member

*I felt prepared going into this camp. However, I have experience with the community and trauma specifically. I feel knowing the community and culture are important for any Mental Health Professional working with the camp. – Mental Health Professional*

Furthermore, Certified Camp Staff provided suggestions on how to improve the registration form. They would like campers to be screened for education level and suggested simplifying the online registration process.

*I wish I had known that the children were not screened before registration. The local coordinator registered children who were really too young for the curriculum. I was to be the small group leader for kindergarten and first grade. Instead, I found out on the first day that we had children who had not been to kindergarten or even to pre-K. I had 4 year-olds who have different abilities and attention spans. We adapted quickly but it ended up not being productive for the goals of Camp Noah. I do believe we were able to cover some of the basic concepts but these children could not even draw their stories. I question the registration process and if we weren't used for day care. For future Team Members, information on children's ages and abilities would be helpful. – Team Member*

*When putting in the information on each camper, make sure the information is correct before entering. Making sure the application is complete. Try to get with the parents/guardians on their medical issues. We were able to have one of our members that was an RN to help with the issues and inform parents of things that they may not have been aware of. – Site Coordinator*

*I do think the online registration is a little confusing for most people. There are times when it is unclear if you are to enter the campers' info or the parents. It took me a couple tries to really be comfortable that I was filling everything out correctly. Also, some of the roster options didn't seem very user/printer friendly. I never did find a way to print out registration forms that didn't require 3 pages/camper. I think the layout could be improved - although maybe Camp Noah has little control over this. Also, maybe this is available, but it would be nice if there were some fillable forms for Site Coordinator - menu, volunteer hours, etc., or even a place you could download some blank ones. I don't write very neatly and ended up making some of my own spreadsheets instead of using provided ones. – Site Coordinator*

*Yes, the active camps reports file was a tad confusing. Also I wasn't able to run a report for whether or not photos could be used. There needed to be a place to add an address for transportation pick-up and drop off also. Active should have kicked back the people trying to register their kiddos who hadn't finished kindergarten yet. – Site Coordinator*

Some Team Members were concerned about not having enough food to provide to the campers and wished they had known about this ahead of time. Site Coordinators identified a need for better coordination and communication on meal preparation expectations.

*I wish we had known about the food situation prior to the first day of camp so that we could have brought food. I think this would have taken some stress off of our Site Coordinator. Having volunteers in the kitchen would be helpful. – Team Member*

*At our camp the Site Coordinator did not fix enough food for lunch for the campers. They were still hungry. We took over the snacks so we knew the campers were getting healthy snacks instead of a handful of chips. This really bothered and sadden me. – Team Member*

*The food for the children was not adequate. They ran out of food on many days. The lunch was meager and these children were very hungry. Our team went out and bought more food from our own money with no expectation of reimbursement. We supplied some healthier snacks than what the local coordinator had on hand. – Team Member*

*It would be nice to add in the mock daily food menu. That it's the Site Coordinator's expectation to provide M&M's or Skittles for the birthday party, bingo, and also whole apples for the Day 1 demonstration. In the menu it lists "apple slices." – Site Coordinator*

Team Leaders were asked about lessons learned related to recruiting staff. They recommended starting early, recruiting one-on-one, and trying to recruit groups.

*My experience is that recruiting can best be done one-to-one. Sometimes a mass appeal will spark some interest, but people like to be specifically asked. For us, we have a couple of sources for funding mission trips so that's not a big issue. Travel can be a challenge if there's any distance to go.*

*People are busy in the summer. They spend time with families and friends and volunteering is not in their mind. Finding volunteers that are willing to spend a week serving is hard because of time commitment. Fundraising was hard because some of the volunteers were jobless and they aren't able to help or contribute so this make them turn away from volunteering. This summer was great. Everything went smoothly and I was able to get enough volunteers.*

*Try to recruit groups, not individuals. I had such a hard time recruiting, and even if I would have gotten just a group of 4 people from an organization to commit, it would have relieved a lot of my stress.*

*Start early and continue to talk up camp during the recruiting process. It is definitely the biggest challenge! I have never had this experience before, recruiting for a camp, so it is something that I will work on throughout the beginning stages through to the days leading up to camp in the future!*

When asked how Camp Noah could improve, local volunteers said they would like better communication with other camp staff. They also had some financial concerns.

*Better communication with volunteers. One Site Coordinator who made herself only available one week before the camp started was very difficult. Explaining fully what the funds were being used for. Your explanation of backpacks, supplies and travel was bogus. The camp was for 50 kids, we should have been able to use a wait list. There should have been financial reimbursement for supplies not used by the 14 kids who did not attend!*

*My concern was communication with the Site Coordinator, Team Leader and local volunteers. Communication was lacking with our Site Coordinator. I also was disappointed that our church paid for 50 campers, but only 35 were able to attend when the week arrived. When our church asked for the backpacks for these kids we were told we could not have them that they would be sent back to the main office and used for another camp. I do not think this is right. I also think the cost of the camp was extremely high for what our campers got out of it.*

*Communication and preparation is key. Also a large group leader that can hype the children up is also vitally important.*

*My suggestion would be, if possible, for each Camp Noah Staff Team to convey to the on-Site Coordinator their expectations with regards to meals (family style; buffet style; etc.) snacks and where and how they prefer to set-up their indoor activities so that the volunteers can better prepare for them. All considered, I think Camp Noah was a great success.*

## Logistics

### *What challenges did Site Coordinators face in arranging for camp logistics?*

**Site Coordinators identified a number of challenges related to camp logistics.** In addition to recruiting local volunteers, Site Coordinators are responsible for arranging a number of logistics for Camp Noah, including planning for camper transportation, finding a facility, and arranging for food. During the surveys completed at the end of camp, Site Coordinators were asked to identify their greatest challenge as a Site Coordinator. Challenges that they identified related to logistics included fundraising and managing the budget, arranging and coordinating transportation, and not having enough volunteers.

Among the nineteen comments, two Site Coordinators mentioned fundraising and budgetary issues. One also described how this was related to managing the campers' meals.

*Did not have enough budget to get snacks for the youth but we gave the chef that help us for it.*

*I forgot to budget for gas as well, so that was an unexpected challenge as well.*

Site Coordinators also dealt with challenges related to transportation. One Site Coordinator described their experience.

*My biggest challenge was transportation. The original plans fell through due to miscommunication. I took it into my own hands and found an alternative. Creating a bus route and address changes was also a huge challenge.*

Team members would like to see more children who were directly impacted by natural disasters attending the camp.

*See if it is possible for the kids who were actually in the storm to attend.*

*Make sure that the majority of children attending were directly affected by the disaster, that is the reason for you sending in Camp Noah. You have a wonderful program that could greatly help them.*

*This was my 7th Camp Noah week so very little is a surprise anymore other than just the individual children, their stories and what they are dealing with in life. The most helpful information prior to when camp starts is what the child's experience was with the natural disaster. We had such an extreme of those who had direct impact from the storm to those that did not even live in an area that was impacted and barely knew anything about the storm and its destruction. That would be some key information to add to the registration form. Also, knowing exactly what grade the kids just came from in the spring would be helpful to avoid the variations in age/grade as much. It also would be helpful to not market Camp Noah as a VBS- program. I think this naming misrepresents what Camp Noah really offers and is more of a specialty service offering.*

***Was the facility (e.g., church, school, community center) appropriate for the camp activities?***

Similar to 2015, 97 percent of local volunteers felt that the facility was appropriate for the camp activities in 2016. Likewise, all Site Coordinators also felt that the facility was appropriate. Although Site Coordinators’ most positive rating decreased in 2016 compared to 2015 (92% strongly agreed in 2015 compared to 76% in 2016), the overall rating is still comparable (Figure 37).

In 2016, 77 percent of Certified Camp Staff felt that the facility (e.g., church, school, community center) was appropriate for the camp activities. This is a decrease from the 92 percent who strongly agreed (48%) or agreed (44%) in 2015 (Figure 37).

**37. Local volunteer, Certified Camp Staff, and Site Coordinator surveys (2015-2016): The facility (e.g., church, school, community center) was appropriate for the camp activities.**

	Local volunteers		Certified Camp Staff		Site Coordinator	
	2015 (N=34)	2016 (N=45)	2015 (N=90)	2016 (N=91)	2015 (N=12)	2016 (N=21)
Strongly agree	65%	73%	48%	45%	92%	76%
Agree	32%	24%	44%	32%	8%	24%
Disagree	3%	2%	4%	14%	0%	0%
Strongly disagree	0%	0%	3%	9%	0%	0%

**Logistical issues also came up occasionally from other staff and volunteers.** camp staff commented that the lack of space or the small space available created some challenges. One challenge was the restricted time use of the facility, which limited the time available to set up and clean up.

*The facility and lack of space was a major hurdle. If the camp had the amount of campers that it was supposed to have we would not have been able to pull it off. God took care of this. Having to tear down one side of facility each evening to accommodate other groups using the building. Our restricted time use of facility. Only allowed to be in facility from 8am-4pm. In that time we had to set up and tear down as well as debrief each day. – Team Leader*

*The facility was too small and there was no room inside for rec time when it was too hot or if it rained. We did not have an adequate amount of time to set up. We were not allowed in the facility when we were supposed to be and we had to be out before we were completely set up. Then we had to tear down our large group area several nights because other groups were using the facility. This resulted in a lot of extra work for us. And we had to be out of the facility by 4:00 and the kids didn't leave until 3:00. It didn't give us much time for our debriefing or enough time to set up for the next day. We all worked together as a team and made things work. But it was very stressful. Plus we stayed at a church that was 50 miles away from the camp so we had almost an hour's drive every morning and evening back and forth to camp. Without the experience of our team and the camaraderie that we have had doing previous camps it would not have been a good experience. But we depended on each other and made do and things worked out. – Team Member*

Another challenge that Team Members highlighted was the lack of private classrooms, which resulted in a loud and distracting camp environment.

*Our setting was too small and LOUD due to all groups being held in the same church basement. They did the best that they could to provide for us, but it was really hard to hear our group or for them to hear the leader. We often had to find a quiet corner elsewhere in the very hot upstairs of the church. (It was in the 90's for three days and over 100 for two.*

*The facility did not lend itself favorably to this type of camp due to its size and design. Fortunately, our Team Leader brought eight king size sheets with her on the trip. We strung them from the ceiling creating makeshift "classrooms." It was not ideal, but it worked.*

*Our space was very limited. People had to walk through our class to get to their class and with small children, it was disturbing. We tried to do our best with what we had.*

Furthermore, an inadequate facility could pose safety concerns. A Team Leader described the challenges with splitting the camp to two separate parts of the building and the frequent presence of non-Camp Noah personnel.

*Our biggest challenge was that we had too small a team (12+myself) for a full camp in this facility. Serving as both Team Leader and craft coordinator was already a stretch, but the facility layout exacerbated the problem, because each role required me to be in a different part of the building. We dealt with this issue by using a set of walkie-talkies our team had brought along. Good thing, too, because they allowed the Site Coordinator to alert me to an impending fire drill and prepare campers and our team for the building evacuation on Tuesday morning during craft/rec time. (As craft leader, I used the fire drill as an opportunity to talk about preparedness.) The building itself presented some challenges. Because roof damage had occurred two months previously, our camp was held in two separate areas of the building, with the large group room, dining area, and the bathrooms we were allowed to use in the k-2 section, while the craft room, first aid room, and Mental Health Professionals were in the 3-6 section. A large number of non-Camp Noah personnel (construction workers, movers, janitorial staff, teachers, IT staff) were in the 3-6/healing/first aid/craft room area at all time, while the Salvation Army volunteers and limo driver hung around in the k-2 section. We dealt with the security issues by stringently ensuring that children were in the presence of certified camp staff at all times.*

A Team Member recommended that Site Coordinators should be better informed of appropriate facilities for camp.

*I think first time Site Coordinators need a bit more instruction on the kind of places that need to be booked and what they should expect because our Site Coordinator did not realize the amount of space we would need or food needed.*

**Camp schedule and activities**

**Certified Camp Staff reported that the curriculum materials were clear and easy to use and follow.** Almost all Certified Camp Staff (97%) indicated the curriculum and materials were clear and easy to use (Figure 38).

**38. Certified Camp Staff survey (2015-2016): The curriculum materials were clear and easy to use and follow**

	<b>2015 (N=90)</b>	<b>2016 (N=91)</b>
Strongly agree	42%	59%
Agree	46%	38%
Disagree	12%	2%
Strongly disagree	0%	0%

***What concerns did staff and volunteers have about the camp activities?***

Some Team Members felt they did not have enough time to cover everything and had to adjust the curriculum as needed. One Team Member highlighted her concern about the curriculum not being representative of the campers’ cultural background.

*Not having enough time to complete all of the activities. We just did what we thought the kids needed on that day and accomplished what we could.*

*There is too much to cover in the curriculum and still allow the kids to share at any length about their experiences. There wasn't enough time in the day. While most of the time I managed to cover everything, there were times when I had to decide to skip parts of the curriculum. This was my first (of 4) camps where we served in an African American community. I was extremely disappointed about two things: first, that I had not noticed how "white" the curriculum was in terms of the stories we read, but also that it is a "white" curriculum. I dealt with this challenge by skipping the story on the last day and downloading the Story of Ruby Bridges, and shared that with my class.*

*Using time allotted to achieve goals designed for the campers.*

A few Team Members also mentioned the need for adaptation of materials for different ages.

*The booklet for campers for first grade students is a challenge for them. Writing ideas for them takes too much time and is difficult for them. So we let them dictate their thoughts to us. There are too many pages for each day for them.*

*The curriculum has a lot of sitting, talking, writing, and drawing. Some of it is repetitive - same questions asked in the Camp Noah book as in discussions and for projects. (e.g. drawing or writing their stories) [My biggest challenge was] trying to adapt the curriculum for older students (grades 6-7) and younger students (kindergarteners).*

## Staff/volunteer roles and expectations

### *Did staff and volunteers feel that their roles at camp were reasonable?*

**Team Members felt their role on the team was a good fit for their interests and skills.** Nearly all Team Members (99%) indicated they strongly agreed (55%) or agreed (44%) their role on the team was a good fit for their interests and skills (Figure 39).

#### **39. Certified Camp Staff survey (2015, 2016): My role on the team was a good fit for my interests and skills**

	<b>2015 Certified Camp Staff (N=91)</b>	<b>2016 Team Member (N=82)</b>
Strongly agree	53%	55%
Agree	45%	44%
Disagree	1%	1%
Strongly disagree	1%	0%

**In 2016, local volunteers and Team Members felt the expectations and duties for their camp roles were reasonable.**

In the surveys completed after camp, staff and volunteers were asked in various ways whether their camp roles were reasonable. Nearly all Team Members said that Camp Noah had reasonable expectations for them. Ninety-three percent of local volunteers felt that the expectations and duties were reasonable for their role at camp (Figure 40).

**40. Local volunteer and Certified Camp Staff surveys (2015, 2016): The expectations and duties for my camp role were reasonable**

	Local volunteers		Team Leaders	
	2015 (N=34)	2016 (N=45)	2015 (N=N/A)	2016 (N=81)
The expectations and duties for my camp role were reasonable				
Strongly agree	71%	62%	N/A	57%
Agree	29%	31%	N/A	40%
Disagree	0%	7%	N/A	2%
Strongly disagree	0%	0%	N/A	1%

One Mental Health Professional said their role did not seem like it was used appropriately based on the needs of the campers.

*I felt like the Mental Health Professional was primarily used for behavioral issues. I didn't feel needed as a counselor because many of the kids here weren't affected by the disaster.*

**Some staff indicated that there was an inadequate number of staff and volunteers.**

Although staff invested a reasonable amount of time in their roles and felt prepared to fulfill their roles at camp, some staff commented that they had to play a number of different roles to make it work because there were not enough staff.

*Not enough staff, rolled with it. – Team Member*

*Trying to focus on and meet the kids' needs while also trying to make the camp run smoothly. I had to play so many roles, it was hard to make it about the kids. – Team Member*

*We made it work but everyone had multiple jobs. We had 6 staff from our community and 2 from the local community. – Team Member*

*Lack of local help, team picked up many extra duties. – Team Leader*

*Struggle to get enough people to help. Then two people had to back out at the last minute. – Team Member*

*Biggest challenge was not having enough staff members but I know a lot of effort goes into finding staff members so sometimes that just is how it is. I tried to keep a good attitude and did what we could with the amount of people we had. – Team Member*

*The biggest challenge came from not enough people committing to the camp until the last moment. I continued probing and gained sufficient leadership to fill the roles needed.*  
 – Team Leader

Some Site Coordinators also shared that their biggest challenge was recruiting committed volunteers.

*My experience had to do with 3 volunteers not showing up because "they decided they weren't coming." They did not communicate that prior to camp starting. I had to jump in and cook meals, with two men who were older (80's), but had good intentions. That was difficult to get them to "jump-in" and help. They needed constant direction in the work, so that added great pressure to the job.* – Site Coordinator

*I wish I would have gotten more staff than I thought I would have needed.*  
 – Site Coordinator

*My biggest challenge was getting volunteers to really commit and do as they agreed. I worked with the staff that showed up.* – Site Coordinator

One Site Coordinator shared their challenges of finding a Mental Health Professional and issues regarding a background check for a Certified Camp Staff.

*Finding a [Mental Health Professional], also figuring out how to deal with a Certified Staff Member who didn't pass background check.* – Site Coordinator

However, in the 2016 surveys, 83 percent of Certified Camp Staff reported that they had enough Team Members to meet the camp's needs. This is an increase from 71 percent who reported enough Team Members in 2015 (Figure 41).

**41. Certified Camp Staff surveys (2015): We had enough Certified Camp Staff to meet the camp's needs. Team Leader and Team Member surveys (2016): We had enough Team Members to meet the camp's needs**

	<b>2015 (N=90)</b>	<b>2016 (N=93)</b>
Strongly agree	38%	40%
Agree	33%	43%
Disagree	19%	12%
Strongly disagree	10%	5%

**There were enough local volunteers to meet the camp's needs.** In 2016, almost all local volunteers (95%) agreed that they had enough local volunteers to meet the camp's needs. This is an increase from the 82 percent who agreed in 2015.

Similarly, the percentage of Site Coordinators who strongly agreed they had enough local volunteers also increased from 2015 to 2016. In 2015, 42 percent of Site Coordinators strongly agreed, compared to 81 percent who agreed in 2016.

Most Team Leaders (81%) agreed there were enough local volunteers to meet the camp’s needs (Figure 42).

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**42. Local volunteer and Site Coordinator survey (2015, 2016): We had enough local volunteers to meet the camp’s needs**

	Local volunteers		Site Coordinators		Team Leaders
	2015 (N=34)	2016 (N=44)	2015 (N=12)	2016 (N=21)	2016 (N=11)
Strongly agree	44%	50%	42%	81%	36%
Agree	38%	45%	42%	19%	45%
Disagree	15%	5%	17%	0%	9%
Strongly disagree	3%	0%	0%	0%	9%

Almost all local volunteers and Certified Camp Staff felt that they understood their respective roles, with 59 percent of local volunteers and 55 percent of Certified Camp Staff strongly agreeing.

Site Coordinators’ most positive rating decreased in 2016 compared to 2015, although the overall rating is comparable across both years. In 2016, 71 percent of Site Coordinators strongly agreed that they understood the roles of local volunteers and Certified Camp Staff compared to 92 percent who strongly agreed in 2015 (Figure 43).

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**43. Local volunteer and Certified Camp Staff surveys (2015-2016): I understood the respective roles of the local volunteers and the Certified Camp Staff**

	Local volunteers		Certified Camp Staff*		Site Coordinators	
	2015 (N=34)	2016 (N=44)	2015 (N=91)	2016 (N=93)	2015 (N=12)	2016 (N=21)
Strongly agree	65%	59%	45%	55%	92%	71%
Agree	32%	36%	49%	39%	8%	24%
Disagree	0%	5%	5%	5%	0%	0%
Strongly disagree	3%	0%	0%	1%	0%	5%

## ***What challenges did staff and volunteers describe related to team roles and responsibilities?***

While most staff understood their respective roles at camp, some commented that leadership roles were unclear at certain points.

*It was unclear who was in charge at some points: the Team Leader, the Site Coordinator, the actual paid staff, or veteran volunteers. There was a weird dynamic between those who were being paid to work at camp, interns and volunteers... – Team Member*

*The biggest challenge for Camp Noah was communication/understanding roles with the volunteers. Given that [the church] donated \$10,000 to the camp I believe they felt they had a right to include the church's names and have a say with directives over fellow church volunteers and also what to do with leftover Camp Noah supplies. This was challenging from the beginning of my collaboration with the church members (months in advance) and also throughout camp. With the amount of role clarification [a Camp Noah staff member] provided to the Pastor or I did to the Pastor and/or church members, the message didn't seem to be noted and it was very challenging and stressful to constantly re-clarify my role or re-do a step they had already taken that didn't need to be taken. It was a balance of clarifying without damaging relationships/my need for their help for Camp Noah. – Site Coordinator*

## **Team dynamics and relationships**

### ***Team Members felt that their team worked together well.***

Almost all strongly agreed (70%) or agreed (29%) their team worked together effectively (Figure 44).

#### **44. 2016 Team Member survey: Our team worked together effectively**

	<b>N=80</b>
Strongly agree	70%
Agree	29%
Disagree	1%
Strongly disagree	0%

Note. In 2016, some survey items were modified and can no longer be compared to previous years.

Site Coordinators also reported similarly across the two years. In 2016, all Site Coordinators felt that the Certified Camp Staff worked together effectively (76% strongly agreed and 24% agreed; Figure 45).

**45. Site Coordinators survey (2015-2016): The Certified Camp Staff appeared to work together effectively**

	2015 (N=12)	2016 (N=21)
Strongly agree	75%	76%
Agree	25%	24%
Disagree	0%	0%
Strongly disagree	0%	0%

**Certified Camp Staff, local volunteers, and Site Coordinators reported everyone coordinated with each other effectively throughout camp.**

Ninety percent of Team Leaders and Site Coordinators and 87 percent of local volunteers felt that everyone coordinated with each other effectively (Figure 46).

**46. Local volunteer, Site Coordinator and Team Leader surveys (2015-2016): Everyone coordinated with each other effectively throughout camp**

	Local volunteers		Site Coordinator		Team Leader
	2015 (N=34)	2016 (N=44)	2015 (N=12)	2016 (N=21)	2016 (N=11)
Strongly agree	65%	64%	58%	76%	45%
Agree	32%	23%	42%	14%	45%
Disagree	3%	14%	0%	10%	9%
Strongly disagree	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Note. The 2015 survey question was slightly different: “2015 Local volunteer, Certified Camp Staff, and Site Coordinators surveys: The local volunteers and the Certified Camp Staff coordinated with each other effectively throughout camp.”

Although most staff and volunteers reported effective coordination, some staff encountered challenges around interpersonal relations and commented that they wished the communication was clearer.

*How difficult it is to understand how to work with the Team Leader. – Site Coordinator*  
*I needed more information on public relations. I should have set clearer boundaries with the Team Leader before she had arrived. – Site Coordinator*  
*I wish my Team Leader communicated things more clearly. – Team Member*

*That I was going to be the craft leader. It was 11:30 Sunday night when I was assigned the craft leader [position]. Since I was also the large group leader, leading crafts occurred at a different time so it worked. – Team Member*

**Team Leaders said they worked well with the Site Coordinator.**

In 2016, Team Leaders were asked if they worked well together with the Site Coordinator. Ninety percent strongly agreed (45%) or agreed (45%) they worked well with the Site Coordinator (Figure 47).

**47. 2016 Team Leader survey: The Site Coordinator and I worked well together**

	N=11
Strongly agree	45%
Agree	45%
Disagree	9%
Strongly disagree	0%

Note. In 2016, some survey items were modified and can no longer be compared to previous years.

**Team Members reported their team had strong leadership.**

Nearly all Team Members reported they strongly agreed (74%) or agreed (24%) their team had strong leadership (Figure 48). All Site Coordinators reported the team of Certified Camp Staff appeared to have strong leadership (Figure 49).

**48. 2016 Team Member survey: Our team had strong leadership**

	N=80
Strongly agree	74%
Agree	24%
Disagree	1%
Strongly disagree	1%

Note. In 2016, some survey items were modified and can no longer be compared to previous years.

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**49. Site Coordinator survey (2015-2016): The Certified Camp Staff / the team appeared to have strong leadership**

	<b>2015 (N=12)</b>	<b>2016 (N=21)</b>
Strongly agree	75%	71%
Agree	17%	29%
Disagree	8%	0%
Strongly disagree	0%	0%

**Almost all Certified Camp Staff and local volunteers felt they received enough support in 2016.**

Most local volunteers strongly agreed (73%) or agreed (18%) they received enough support from the Site Coordinator during camp. This is a slight decrease from 2015. Sixty-eight percent of Team Members strongly agreed and 28 percent agreed they received enough support from their Team Leader before and during camp.

All 21 Site Coordinators felt that they received enough support from Camp Noah staff before and during camp. Although the most positive rating decreased from 2015 to 2016 (100% strongly agreed in 2015 compared to 76% strongly agreed), the overall rating is still positive (Figure 50).

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**50. Local volunteer, Team Member and Site Coordinator surveys (2015-2016): I received enough support from...**

	Local volunteers: the Site Coordinator during camp.		Site Coordinator: Camp Noah staff before and during camp		Team Member: my Team Leader before and during camp
	2015 (N=34)	2016 (N=44)	2015 (N=12)	2016 (N=21)	2016 (N=82)
Strongly agree	82%	73%	100%	76%	68%
Agree	18%	18%	0%	24%	28%
Disagree	0%	7%	0%	0%	0%
Strongly disagree	0%	2%	0%	0%	4%

One Site Coordinator expressed gratitude for the support they received.

*I would like to take this space to thank my supervisor [at Camp Noah] for everything she did to support me in my role. She was available via phone, text, and email when needed and helped brainstorm ideas with me, intervened with community members when needed, encouraged and thanked me, and guided me as I learned how to appropriately and effectively be Site Coordinator for 3 communities. A huge thank you to her and all of her help and support. – Site Coordinator*

## Satisfaction of staff and volunteers

### *How satisfied were staff and volunteers with their camp experience?*

#### **Staff enjoyed their experience with Camp Noah.**

Thirty-eight percent of local volunteers said camp was absolutely amazing. About half (49%) said it was excellent, and 9 percent said it was good. Similarly, 34 percent of Certified Camp Staff said camp was absolutely amazing, 45 percent said it was excellent, and 16 percent said it was good (Figure 51).

Certified Camp Staff provided positive feedback about their experience. They said Camp Noah is a great program, and they enjoyed being a part of it.

*This is a wonderful program that I just wish was able to be promoted even more! It's hard to let communities that have been through disaster know how great it is until they experience it. Keep up the good work! ... – Team Member*

*I had a great time volunteering this week and it was a very fulfilling experience. A lot of the kids really opened up to me and spent time around me, even the ones who weren't in my small group. I feel like I connected with a lot of the kids as well and I think Camp Noah is doing a great thing. I don't know the backgrounds of all the kids I met but I do know that the week they were at Camp Noah was a very happy one for them filled with learning and fun to distract them from whatever they may be dealing with. – Team Member*

*I believe this is a well-run program that definitely helps children to be resilient and hopeful for what is ahead in their lives. Thank you for all you do to plan, organize, and ensure these camps continue for children and families around the country! – Team Member*

*Overall, it was a great week. I think being in a diverse community was so great for our group and provided a wonderful experience to grow. Kids LOVED the quilts and backpacks!!! They also loved the Camp Noah theme song. Relaxation time became a great time during the day to refresh. We had a pretty "hyper" group of 50 so we extended our relaxation time a bit to regroup. Our small groups were very resourceful and creative to get kids to focus. They used yoga techniques even and it really worked with some of their groups :). – Team Leader*

**51. Local volunteer and Certified Camp Staff surveys (2015, 2016): Ratings of own experience with Camp Noah**

	Local volunteers		Certified Camp Staff	
	2015 (N=32)	2016 (N=44)	2015 (N=85)	2016 (N=85)
Absolutely amazing!	44%	38%	42%	34%
Excellent	34%	49%	29%	45%
Good	19%	9%	18%	16%
Fair	3%	2%	9%	5%
Poor	0%	0%	1%	0%

**Nearly all local volunteers, Certified Camp Staff, and all Site Coordinators would recommend Camp Noah to others as a positive service experience.**

Similar to previous years, almost all Certified Camp Staff (99%) and local volunteers (98%) indicated that they would recommend Camp Noah to others as a positive service experience. All 21 Site Coordinators reported that they would recommend Camp Noah as a positive service experience (Figure 52).

**52. Local volunteer and Certified Camp Staff surveys (2015): I would recommend Camp Noah to others as a positive service experience**

	Local volunteers		Certified Camp Staff		Site Coordinators	
	2015 (N=32)	2016 (N=45)	2015 (N=85)	2016 (N=91)	2015 (N=12)	2016 (N=21)
Strongly agree	74%	76%	66%	79%	92%	86%
Agree	24%	22%	32%	20%	8%	14%
Disagree	2%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Strongly disagree	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%

**Nearly all Certified Camp Staff and local volunteers said they would serve at Camp Noah again in the future.**

Similar to 2015, 69 percent of local volunteers strongly agreed and 27 percent agreed they would serve at Camp Noah again in the future.

Certified camp staff reported similarly. Seventy-one percent strongly agreed and 24 percent agreed they would serve again. More than half of Site Coordinators (52%) strongly agreed and 43 percent agreed they would serve again (Figure 53).

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**53. Local volunteer and Certified Camp Staff surveys (2015-2016): I would serve at Camp Noah again in the future**

	Local volunteers		Certified Camp Staff		Site Coordinators	
	2015 (N=34)	2016 (N=45)	2015 (N=89)	2016 (N=91)	2015 (N=12)	2016 (N=21)
Strongly agree	68%	69%	58%	71%	75%	52%
Agree	29%	27%	34%	24%	17%	43%
Disagree	3%	2%	7%	3%	8%	0%
Strongly disagree	0%	2%	1%	1%	0%	5%



## Section 3: Community Experience

### Benefits to the community

*Does Camp Noah impact the broader community? If so, how?*

**There was general agreement that Camp Noah impacted the broader community.**

When asked how they felt Camp Noah went in the community, forty percent of Site Coordinators indicated they felt camp went absolutely amazingly in their community, half said it was excellent, and ten percent said it was good. Overall, Site Coordinators' reporting is comparable across all three years, although the most positive rating did decrease each year (Figure 54).

#### 54. Site Coordinators survey (2014-2016): On a scale from 1-5, how do you feel Camp Noah went in your community?

	2014 (N=23)	2015 (N=12)	2016 (N=20)
Absolutely amazing!	78%	58%	40%
Excellent	17%	25%	50%
Good	0%	8%	10%
Fair	4%	8%	0%
Poor	0%	0%	0%

Local volunteers reported similarly, with 38 percent saying it was absolutely amazing, 49 percent said it was excellent, and nine percent said it was good. Thirty-one percent of Certified Camp Staff said camp was absolutely amazing, 44 percent said it was excellent, and 22 percent said it was good. (Figure 55).

**55. Local volunteer and Certified Camp Staff surveys (2015-2016): On a scale from 1-5, how do you feel Camp Noah went in the community?**

	Local volunteers		Site Coordinator	
	2015 (N=34)	2016 (N=44)	2015 (N=95)	2016 (N=85)
Absolutely amazing!	36%	38%	27%	31%
Excellent	42%	49%	39%	44%
Good	21%	9%	29%	22%
Fair	0%	2%	4%	4%

**Local volunteers and Site Coordinators agreed Camp Noah had a positive impact on their community.** Fifty-five percent of local volunteers strongly agreed and 41 percent agreed that Camp Noah had a positive impact on their community. Seventy-one percent of Site Coordinators strongly agreed and 24 percent agreed that the camp had a positive impact on their community (Figure 56).

**56. Local volunteer and Site Coordinator surveys (2015-2016): Camp Noah had a positive impact on my community**

	Local volunteers		Site Coordinator	
	2015 (N=33)	2016 (N=45)	2015 (N=12)	2016 (N=20)
Strongly agree	67%	55%	75%	71%
Agree	33%	41%	25%	24%
Disagree	0%	5%	0%	0%
Strongly disagree	0%	0%	0%	0%

Staff shared their gratitude for the support from the community for Camp Noah. They were grateful for the opportunity to be able to be a part of the camp. One Site Coordinator highlighted that the parents in their community provided supper for the camp staff each evening.

*Our community was extremely thankful and honestly blown away by the kindness of the program. Our lives are forever changed and I can say honestly even a little closer and stranger. And it is with that; that I am eternally grateful. – Site Coordinator*

*I had many parents call/text me telling me how much fun their children were having all week. I was also impressed with our community because the parents provided supper for the staff members every night of the week! – Site Coordinator*

*The experience benefited the children from the community and allowed the children to have an outlet for share their personal experiences. – Mental Health Professional*

*In volunteering our service, in whatever capacity, was a blessing to the community as well as us in knowing and seeing the positive impact on the children, their parents as well as the Camp Noah staff that we had the opportunity to get to know. – Local volunteer*

***Would Site Coordinators and local volunteers recommend Camp Noah to other communities who have experienced natural disasters?***

**Almost all local volunteers, Certified Camp Staff, and Site Coordinators would recommend Camp Noah to other communities as a post-disaster resource.** Seventy-six percent of local volunteers strongly agreed and 20 percent agreed they would recommend the camp to other communities who have experienced natural disasters.

All Certified Camp Staff and Site Coordinators in 2016 agreed they would recommend Camp Noah to other communities as a post-disaster resource (Figure 57).

**57. Local volunteer, Certified Camp Staff and Site Coordinators surveys (2015 and 2016): I would recommend Camp Noah to other communities as a post-disaster resource**

	Local volunteers		Certified Camp Staff		Site Coordinator	
	2015 (N=34)	2016 (N=45)	2015 (N=90)	2016 (N=91)	2015 (N=12)	2016 (N=21)
Strongly agree	79%	76%	64%	79%	100%	90%
Agree	21%	20%	33%	21%	0%	10%
Disagree	0%	4%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Strongly disagree	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%

In addition to recommending Camp Noah to other communities as a post-disaster resource, local volunteers provided some recommendations for future volunteers, including being willing to pitch in where needed and focusing on the children.

*Just be prepared and meet the kids on their level but know they want and need a leader as well. They are very receptive to caring leaders that can engage them.  
Be flexible and help wherever needed.*

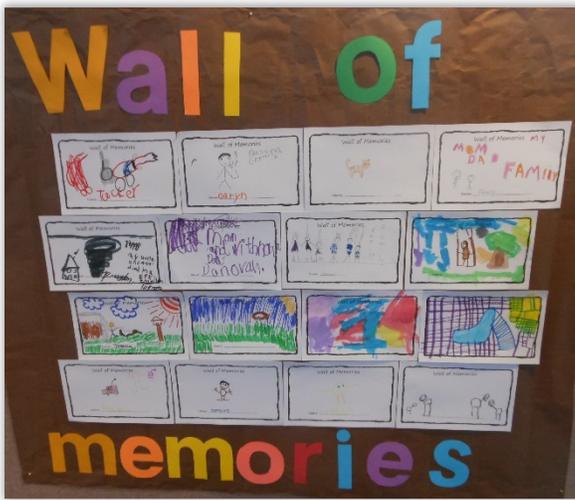
Other camp staff offered words of encouragement for future staff and volunteers, and indicated that it was a great experience overall. They also shared words of gratitude for the opportunity to be a part of Camp Noah.

*Do it! It's a great program for the kids and is well organized. – Local volunteer  
Go for it...the time is well spent and you won't regret it. – Local volunteer  
Please do...Very rewarding!!!! – Local volunteer*

*This was my first experience. I had an awesome team and support in order to allow me to do the best job possible. – Team Member*

*I was very thankful for the opportunity to serve in a community that is going through a crisis in my home state. – Team Leader*

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## 2016 Evaluation Recommendations

The results of this evaluation were very positive. Campers not only felt that camp was fun, but many also demonstrated sustained benefits of participation, such as feeling more prepared for storms. Similarly, the many staff and volunteers who supported Camp Noah during this period also described benefits they had experienced through their involvement with Camp Noah.

In general, camp went smoothly across a diverse array of communities. However, there may be opportunities for Camp Noah to further these efforts through camper recruitment, staff and volunteer recruitment, training and support, camp curriculum and activities, and lastly, staff and volunteer roles. Camp Noah values feedback on their services, and is committed to actively learning and ongoing improvement.

The following recommendations, based on the 2016 evaluations, were developed to help Camp Noah continue and further the positive impacts experienced by campers, parents, staff, volunteers and the community.

### Camper recruitment

1. Continue to reinforce the age limits for the camp to ensure that the camp is reaching children who are of the appropriate age.
2. Continue to review recruitment strategies to ensure that Camp Noah is reaching communities and families that have been most affected by disasters. Consider how “disaster” is being defined.
3. Review the online registration system, especially clarifying whether information asked for is about parents or campers. Registration portal should have the ability to reject campers who are not in the eligible age group.

## Staff and volunteer recruitment

1. Continue recruitment of Certified Camp Staff and Site Coordinators earlier so they have adequate time to prepare for camp.
2. Continue to ensure that teams have enough Certified Camp Staff to comfortably fill all roles.
3. Consider recruitment of volunteers and staff that reflect the cultural community being served, including the Mental Health Professionals. Consider recruiting teams from the local community.
4. Consider recruiting more mental health professionals for camps. Consider ways to ensure consistent attendance from Mental Health Professionals and consider placing the Mental Health Professionals in the classroom.

## Training and support

1. Consider ways to provide Certified Camp Staff with more information about the campers' background and the local community.
2. Consider providing Site Coordinators with camp materials earlier.
3. Consider providing additional support to Site Coordinators in menu planning and securing adequate food.
4. Continue to provide additional guidance to Site Coordinators about securing appropriate facilities that have individual space for small groups to meet, such as local schools, and also large group space for recreational activities.
5. Review policies on cost and payment for materials that do not get used if fewer campers show up than expected.
6. Provide more support around recruitment of teams, especially support for one-on-one recruitment and group recruitment.
7. Continue to facilitate connections between the Certified Camp Staff, Site Coordinators, and local volunteers before camp, and consider adding team-building activities to the meeting the night before camp begins. Ensure that staff have sufficient time to communicate with Site Coordinators.
8. Consider providing support and training, especially to Site Coordinators and Team Leaders on overall team communication.

9. Consider providing training or resources to prepare staff and volunteers for the end of camp.
10. Provide an opportunity for Certified Camp Staff to meet the campers ahead of time, such as with a meet-and-greet with families the day before camp begins.
11. Increase the emphasis on addressing behavioral and emotional issues in training, including working with children who have experienced multiple types of trauma.
12. Provide additional support and guidance for Certified Camp Staff to help them manage their own emotional responses to hearing the children's stories over the course of the week. Reiterate that staff and volunteers can make use of Mental Health Professionals for their own mental health.

### **Camp curriculum and activities**

1. Review the current curriculum to consider how it can better support children who have experienced other traumas beyond disasters.
2. Continue to support staff in finding ways to modify camp activities to better suit the youngest and oldest campers.
3. Continue to support staff in finding ways to modify the camp schedule or activities to avoid feeling rushed.
4. Review curriculum and provide options to ensure cultural responsiveness.

### **Staff and volunteer roles**

1. Provide additional guidance, especially to Site Coordinators and Team Leaders, about their respective roles and responsibilities. Clarify roles of Team Leaders and Site Coordinators to the local volunteers.
2. Continue to facilitate early communication between Site Coordinators and Team Leaders, and provide guidance regarding issues that they should discuss/resolve in advance of camp.
3. Consider whether the current size of the teams, especially Certified Camp Staff, is adequate for the requirements of camp.
4. Provide guidance for resolving conflicts and avenues for staff and volunteers to address concerns about camp leadership.

5. Consider ways to leverage the roles of the local volunteers to help out with activities and ensure that the local volunteers have meaningful volunteer experiences.

# Appendix

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## A1. 2016 Team Member survey: What was your role at Camp Noah?

What was your role at Camp Noah?	N=83
Small Group Leader	61%
Small Group Helper/Assistant	33%
Skit Actor	30%
Puppet Show Performer	21%
Recreation Leader	14%
Craft Leader	10%
Noah	9%
Large Group Leader	6%
Music Leader	6%
Assisted as a craft person mostly, then also was assigned a small group assistant.	1%
Camp Nurse	1%
Student	1%
Team Leader Assistant	1%

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## A2. 2016 Local volunteer survey: What was your role at Camp Noah?

What was your role at Camp Noah?	N=45
Preparing/serving meals	56%
Providing transportation	29%
Assisting with registration/check-in and dismissal	31%
Assisting with camp activities (such as crafts or recreation)	13%
Providing security	4%
Providing health care/nursing	4%

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**A3. Parent survey (2014-2016): Number of children in household attending camp**

	<b>2014 (N=146)</b>	<b>2015 (N=177)</b>	<b>2016 (N=166)</b>
1	55%	56%	55%
2	34%	34%	34%
3	7%	7%	9%
4	3%	3%	0%
5	1%	1%	0%
6 or more	0%	0%	2%

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**A4. Registration Materials (2014-2016): Number of children under 18 in the household**

	<b>2014 (N=139)</b>	<b>2015 (N=117)</b>	<b>2016 (N=133)</b>
1	15%	16%	29%
2	43%	36%	41%
3	22%	28%	18%
4	13%	14%	8%
5	4%	3%	3%
6 or more	2%	3%	1%

Note. Data from 2014 was collected through the parent survey.

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**A5. Camper survey (2014-2016): Percentage of campers saying that each camp component is "fun"**

	<b>2014 (N=882-926)</b>	<b>2015 (N=654-671)</b>	<b>2016 (N=734-741)</b>
Blankets	99%	99%	98%
Backpacks	98%	97%	96%
Teachers	98%	97%	96%
Friends	97%	97%	95%
Crafts	97%	95%	94%
Recreation	95%	94%	95%
Food	95%	95%	92%
Noah	94%	93%	90%
Songs	87%	87%	79%
Stories	87%	86%	83%

**A6. Local volunteer, Certified Camp Staff, Team Member, Team Leader and Site Coordinator surveys (2015-2016): Camp Noah had a positive impact on the campers**

	Local volunteers		Site Coordinator		Staff/ Volunteer	Certified Camp Staff
	2015 (N=33)	2016 (N=44)	2015 (N=12)	2016 (N=20)	2015 (N=94)	2016 (N=91)
Strongly Agree	70%	70%	92%	86%	61%	56%
Agree	30%	30%	8%	10%	38%	30%
Disagree	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Strongly disagree	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
I don't know	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%

**A7. Camper survey (2014-2016): Percentage of campers saying "yes" to each item**

	2014 (N=849-857)	2015 (N=661-669)	2016 (N=724-735)
I learned that I am somebody special.	97%	97%	96%
I have hopes and dreams for the future.	96%	96%	95%
I know my safe place, and I can go there when I feel worried or afraid.	95%	93%	92%
I learned ways to relax.	94%	93%	93%
I learned what my gifts and talents are.	94%	92%	93%
I learned how to stay safe during stormy weather.	95%	90%	92%
I feel more prepared for stormy weather.	93%	90%	89%
I had a chance to tell my story to others.	85%	78%	78%

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