

Camp Hobé Strategic Plan

Mission

Camp Hobé offers special psychosocial support programs for kids being treated for cancer and similarly-treated disorders, as well as their families, through summer camps, virtual camps, and family outings. Our goal is to create an atmosphere that enhances self-esteem, fosters independence and friendships, and creates a feeling of belonging.

Program Goals and Objectives

Summer Camps, In-Person

1. Provide kids with cancer (and similarly-treated disorders) and their siblings a place to “just be kids.”

Objectives: Kids with cancer (or similarly-treated disorders) and their siblings have the opportunity to participate in camp activities just like kids whose families are not affected by these illnesses. The camp program provides a high level of medical and psychosocial supervision to keep these kids safe both mentally and physically during their experience.

2. Provide an opportunity for these kids to develop support systems with other kids dealing with life-threatening illness.

Objectives: Using recreation and leisure skills, staff provide a camping experience for patients and their siblings who would otherwise not have this group experience.

Both patients and siblings find support in knowing that others deal with the same issues that they do. During the calendar year, Primary Children’s Hospital, Huntsman Cancer Hospital, and other organizations provide opportunities for the patients and their siblings to learn and talk about their disease. Camp Hobé provides a break from surgery, chemotherapy, radiation, hospitals, and illness. Campers are not expected to talk about their disease experience while at camp, although we provide a supportive environment should children wish to do so. Discussions on these topics are facilitated when patients and siblings initiate the conversations. Hobé Forever is an optional “guided” activity offered during the camp session where campers have time to remember friends who are not present that year. This activity allows campers the opportunity to express feelings of grief and loss if they desire. Camp staff members respect any requests for further counseling or discussion.

3. Encourage each camper to learn new skills and leisure activities by participating in small-group and large-group activities daily.

Objectives: Campers rotate through activities such as arts and crafts, drama, archery, yoga, science, swimming, and nature. They may also take part in out-of-camp activities, carnivals, or outdoor concerts.

4. Offer opportunities for campers to learn about nature, ecology, and their part in preserving the environment during recreation and outdoor living.

Objectives: Specific topics about nature will be offered during the camp sessions. Each cabin group will be assigned chores, including cleaning the dining hall, shower/restrooms, grounds, and cabins. In addition, camp administration and kitchen staff may discuss reducing food wastage and the proper disposal of food. In the local community, all trash collected from the campsite is sorted for recycling prior to disposal at the landfill. The campsite offers both trash cans and recycling bins in the main lodge, and has both trash and recycling dumpsters for waste disposal. This ensures that campers have the opportunity to participate in this recycling program by sorting trash from recycling at meal times and at the dumpsters. Camp administration and volunteers discuss the recycling options with the campers at mealtimes and during chores.

5. Help each camper develop socialization skills and new interests.

Objectives: In addition to other program activities, each camper will be able to work with their cabin group to create and perform a skit and a cheer. They will sit together for meals and will use the “buddy system” during activities and when moving between locations. Campers are encouraged to try activities that involve controlled risk, such as the ropes course, and to participate in other activities that may be new to them.

6. Facilitate opportunities to develop leadership skills.

Objectives: Some activities give campers the chance to volunteer to be the “first” one to try it. Campers can also be leaders by following camp rules and contributing to and participating in all activities. After campers reach the age of 16, they are eligible to apply to be volunteer Counselors-in-Training and help staff with program activities or assist an adult counselor with a group of kids.

Virtual Camps

1. Provide kids with cancer (and similarly-treated disorders) and their siblings a place to “just be kids.”

Objectives: Kids with cancer (or similarly-treated disorders) and their siblings have the opportunity to participate in virtual camp activities just like kids whose families are not affected by these illnesses.

2. Provide an opportunity for these kids to develop support systems with other kids dealing with life-threatening illness.

Objectives: Using recreation and leisure skills, staff provide interactive games and activities for patients and their siblings who are unable to attend in-person summer camps for whatever reason (eg, hospitalized, infection risk, bleeding risk, live too far away).

Both patients and siblings find support in knowing that others deal with the same issues that they do, and from being able to connect with others even when in-person participation is not an option. Virtual Camp Hobé provides a break from surgery, chemotherapy, radiation, hospitals, and illness. Similar to in-person summer camp, the virtual camp offers Hobé Forever, an optional “guided” activity virtual camp where campers have time to remember friends who are not present in their lives. This activity allows campers to express feelings of grief and loss if they desire.

3. Encourage each camper to learn new skills and leisure activities by participating in small-group and large-group activities daily.

Objectives: Campers rotate through virtual activities such as arts and crafts, drama, yoga, science, virtual dance parties, and nature.

4. Offer opportunities for campers to learn about nature, ecology, and their part in preserving the environment during recreation.

Objectives: Specific topics and activities related to nature and ecology will be offered during the virtual camp sessions.

5. Help each camper develop socialization skills and new interests.

Objectives: In addition to other program activities, each camper will be able to work with their virtual cabin group during virtual activities. Campers are encouraged to participate in activities that may be new to them, such as yoga or birdwatching.

Family Outings

1. Provide families of kids with cancer (and similarly-treated disorders) with a place to “just be kids” at any age.

Objectives: Families of these patients have the opportunity to participate in social events (eg, hockey matches, movie premieres, carnivals) just like families who are not affected by these illnesses.

2. Provide an opportunity to develop support systems with other families dealing with life-threatening illness.

Objectives: We provide social events and leisure activities where these families can “hang out” with others who are facing similar challenges.

The whole family finds support in knowing that others deal with the same issues that they do. During the calendar year, Primary Children’s Hospital, and other organizations provide opportunities for family members to learn and talk about their disease. Camp Hobé provides a break from surgery, chemotherapy, radiation, hospitals, and illness. Family events offer the whole family a chance to go out and have a fun evening where they do **not** have to think or talk about their illness. In addition, family outings are provided free of charge, so that families may participate regardless of their financial situation.

Programs and Services

Who does the program serve?

Camp Hobé serves primarily children from the Intermountain area (UT, ID, WY, NV) or those being treated at Primary Children's Hospital for cancer, or similarly-treated disorders. More than 90% of those served by Camp Hobé live in Utah, and more than 80% reside along the Wasatch Front. Children who have been diagnosed with cancer (or similarly-treated disorders) and their family members may participate in Camp Hobé programs while the patient is being treated with immunosuppressive therapy (chemotherapy, radiation therapy, or immunosuppressants) and for three (3) camp seasons after their final immunosuppressive treatment.

What activities are currently offered?

Camp Hobé currently offers three in-person summer camp programs each June, including a five-day Kids Week overnight session for 7 to 11 year-olds, a five-day Teen Week overnight session for 12 to 19 year-olds, and a two-day session for 4 to 6+ year-olds. Six year-olds may choose to attend their session as day campers or may stay overnight as Hobé Juniors, based on their maturity and developmental level at the discretion of their parents and the camp staff members. All camp sessions run separately at the same campsite, during different time periods.

In 2020, we pivoted all summer camp programs to virtual programs. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we provided virtual summer camp programs to the same age groups, running a 10-day virtual Kids Week 7 to 11 year-olds, a 10-day virtual Teen Week for 12 to 19 year-olds, and a 4-day virtual program for ages 4-6 years. We will continue to offer virtual programs throughout the pandemic, because our campers are considered high-risk for COVID-19 complications. While we intend to return to in-person summer camps as soon as safely possible, we also plan to continue the virtual sessions as an outreach program for those who are unable to attend in-person programs.

During the in-person and virtual summer camp sessions, campers may participate in a variety of activities, both with their cabin groups, as individuals, and with the entire camp population. Activities offered at in-person camps include crafts, competitive and noncompetitive field games, initiative games, hikes, nature awareness, theater games, archery, and swimming. Additional activities may be offered depending on availability, such as a climbing wall, creative dance, yoga, or soccer clinics. Program activities are structured to meet the developmental needs of the specific age group attending the session.

In addition to summer camps, we offer two to four family outings during the fall and winter, including a hockey night each winter and a carnival event in September. Scheduling for additional family outings varies based on program availability.

How are the programs structured?

Summer Camps, In-Person: Campers are assigned to specific cabin groups based on their age. They live with this group during their stay at camp, eating meals, sleeping, and participating in activities together. To promote group unity, each cabin group works together to come up with a cabin name and a cabin cheer. The cabin groups rotate through activities during the day, with two to four groups at each activity area at a given time. The entire camp comes together at mealtimes, morning flagpole ceremony, evening campfire, and for other special activities. A VIP Night is offered on one evening of Kids Week, where donors, Board members, Committee members, and other special friends can visit the camp for dinner, campfire, and other structured activities.

Virtual Camp: Campers are assigned to specific breakout groups with their siblings. They interact with this group during virtual camp, participating in activities together. The breakout groups rotate through activities during the daily sessions. The entire virtual camp comes together for group activities at the beginning, and again at the end, of each daily session. During the Virtual Camp season, campfire performances are offered each evening via Facebook Live, so that the whole family can watch.

Family Outings: Family outings are free form events, where the families can just show up. These outings may be spectator events (movies, sporting events) or may involve an interactive component (group barbecue night, carnival event). Typically, we offer at least one spectator event and one interactive event each year.

How are the activities being received?

The Camp Hobé Planning Committee asks participants, parents, staff members, and volunteers to evaluate the summer camps, virtual camps, and family outings after the end of each activity. We also receive unsolicited emails from parents, campers, and volunteers throughout the year. In response, changes may be made in the program structure or activities offered. Based on evaluations turned in after each session and the unsolicited emails, our programs are very well-received.

What will the program consist of and how will it be structured in the future?

The basic summer camp program will likely remain very similar to the program now offered. However, possible changes or additions to the program structure are being considered, as outlined below.

For Kid and Teen Campers

- Additional summer camp activities: add more summer sessions; add informal group activities during the spring, winter, or fall; or add an annual camp reunion picnic.
- Continue virtual camp activities: continue to offer virtual camp programs for campers who are unable to attend in-person summer camps for whatever reason (eg, hospitalized, infection risk, bleeding risk, live too far away).
- Longer camp sessions: extend the five-day sessions by an additional one to two days, or extend the Day Camp / Hobé Junior session to several consecutive days.
- Expand eligibility: allow kids to attend for a longer period of time after treatment ends; or expand sessions to include a bereavement-specific camp.

For Young Adult Patients and Survivors (18 to 39 years)

- Expand the VIP Night program to provide an activity for this age group: invite them to an evening during Teen Camp for dinner, campfire, and other structured activities.
- Expand the summer camp program to include this age group, perhaps as a weekend camp.
- Provide two to four social outings throughout the year.
- Partner with the Huntsman Cancer Hospital / Intermountain HAIYA program to reach out to young adult patients and survivors in our community.

For Families

- Expand the summer camp program to include a family camp component.
- Expand our family outing program to host activities every one to two months year-round.

For Other Organizations

- Encourage the Utah Elks organization to expand the campsite and allow future program growth by building additional cabins on the site.
- Continue to coordinate with other cancer-related nonprofits, especially the American Cancer Society, Camp Kesem, and Huntsman Cancer Hospital; attend fundraising events for these organizations to build relationships; and avoid scheduling conflicts with their events.

Market and Clientele

Who are the clientele or personnel utilizing the program?

Our clientele includes kids with cancer (or similarly-treated disorders) who are currently being treated or who have been treated within the last three years, as well as their immediate family members. We reach our clientele through direct mailing of registration forms to parents, health professionals, and support-group providers (Primary Children's Hospital, American Cancer Society, Huntsman Cancer Institute, and local school districts) throughout the state of Utah. Campers typically are referred through Primary Children's Hospital; parents may also self-refer by contacting our office directly or requesting registration materials through our website. Staff members and volunteers are recruited from hospitals, universities, high schools, and the community through newsletters, newspapers, email, direct mail, flyers, social media, volunteer websites, and word-of-mouth.

Who are the potential clientele and what is the plan to reach them?

In order to make sure that families from all over the state are able to participate in our programs, we are working to better promote our programs to families in more rural areas. We will reach out to health care providers and social workers at hospitals in rural areas of the state to request that they promote Camp Hobé programs to these patients within their regions.

We continue to make efforts to bolster the public's awareness of Camp Hobé and develop an organized media outreach plan. In early 2017, we launched a newly designed and improved public website (camphobekids.org). We are committed to revising our organizational brochure and video every two to three years, with updates to both planned over the next calendar year. Camp Hobé uses an online Email Service Provider to reach an even wider audience. In addition, we have Facebook ([Facebook.com/camphobe](https://www.facebook.com/camphobe)) and Instagram accounts ([Instagram.com/camphobe](https://www.instagram.com/camphobe)) for the organization, as well as several promotional videos posted on [youtube.com/CampHobeVideos](https://www.youtube.com/CampHobeVideos). We also have a Guidestar profile and are registered with greatnonprofits.org so that our organization may be vetted and reviewed by donors. These inexpensive and efficient means to reach current and potential clientele can extend even to the most remote and rural areas.