



CAMP DREAMCATCHER NEWS

Winter 2024

YEAR-ROUND PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN WHOSE LIVES HAVE BEEN TOUCHED BY HIV/AIDS

Dear Friends:

It's never been more important to support our FREE therapeutic and educational programs. HIV/AIDS impacted, low-income, BIPOC youth face barriers to obtaining equitable physical and mental healthcare, educational, and career support. Camp Dreamcatcher strives to reduce barriers to physical and mental health equity by providing free therapeutic and educational programs throughout the year. We accomplish these goals with the help of the long list of volunteers, sponsors, and donors listed in this newsletter.

What started as a one-week camp session in 1996 for children, ages 5-17, coping with HIV/AIDS has expanded to year-round programming. An example of this is our new Mentoring Program for 15-17-year-olds, which was launched this past April at the Teen Retreat. The key focus areas of the program include Mental and Physical Health, Education/Training, Career Development, and Financial Literacy. Each mentee is paired with one, or more, mentors to work toward SMART GOALS that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound.

Mentoring Program Update:

The Mentoring Program participants meet monthly on a virtual platform and met during the week of camp on a daily basis to attend career and college/tech school readiness programs. The mentees reported leaving camp with a higher perceived self-esteem. The mentorship program participants left camp with an updated resume, which included the leadership building experiences they participated in during the camp week. We will meet again in person with the group at the Mentoring Retreat on April 26-27, 2025. Assessments conducted with the teens in this program indicate they are facing challenges beyond the issue of HIV/AIDS. These include food/housing/clothing insecurity, legal barriers, educational challenges, transportation barriers, and limited access to physical and mental health support services.

The data also indicated the following:

- 100% have experienced trauma.
- 70% are experiencing mental health challenges.
- 63% are experiencing mild-moderate depression.
- 50% are impacted by substance use disorder.
- 43% have attempted suicide.

- 70% are interested in ongoing mental health support.
- 97% are interested in pursuing higher education.

In 1996, during our very first week of camp, a young boy told me that Camp was a life preserver for him. The unconditional love and support he received from his counselors held him up as he processed his feelings related to HIV/AIDS. A week before camp this year, a man called our office and said "Is this Miss Patty?" and when I said yes, he said "Now, I'm going to cry." He didn't think I would remember him, and I did. When he told me his name, we both cried. I hadn't spoken to him for over 15 years. He said he was thinking about me and wanted to let me know what a huge impact his time at camp made on his life. That life preserver held him up for 15 years at camp, and enabled him to become a loving father. He made a promise to me to become involved as a counselor during the camp session so that he could "pay it forward" and make a positive difference in the lives of children like him.

Camp Dreamcatcher's Circle of Love provides a safe haven where children can feel protected and loved unconditionally in what many call their second home. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for supporting our programs.

Happy Holidays,
Patty Hillkirk



CAMP DREAMCATCHER NEWS 2024



“You can talk about anything, there is so much love, and you are always accepted.” - Camper

2024 THERAPEUTIC & EDUCATIONAL CAMP SESSION REPORT

The Therapeutic and Educational Camp Session was held August 18th - 24th, 2024. The Program served 110 HIV/AIDS impacted youth between the ages of 5-17 and 24 campers moved into the role of counselors this year. 85% of the campers were from Philadelphia and the surrounding region. 200 counselors, medical personnel, professionals, and community members volunteered during the camp week.

CAMP WEEK GOALS ACHIEVED:

Goal 1: To improve the physical and emotional health of the children. We provided **145 therapeutic programs** (psychotherapy, mindfulness, wilderness-based therapy, yoga, massage and sessions with therapeutic dogs) during the camp session.

Goal 2: To offer educational sessions that explore issues, problems and concerns common amongst HIV/AIDS infected and/or affected youth. We provided **65 educational programs** and these included sessions on substance use, puberty education, karate, woodworking, robotics, dance, drumming, team building & leadership programming. The 15-17-year-olds participated in Career & College Readiness Programs facilitated by PayPal. Barbara “Bluejay” Michalski, Chief and Keeper of Culture and Storytelling of the Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania, facilitated educational sessions with campers throughout the week.

Goal 3: To give the campers the chance to feel free from the secret of HIV/AIDS and have fun - just like any other kids! We provided **150 recreational programs**. These include arts/crafts, laser tag, go-kart racing, soccer, volleyball, lawn games, nature hikes, story-time, fishing, pickleball, canoeing, GAGA tournaments, a Camp Carnival, archery, an adventure course, basketball, movie nights, and our annual dance, talent show and John Flynn concert!

Goal 4: Restorative Practice Program: Over 200 community building Cabin Circles and 200 Restorative Circles were held during the camp session. These practices were used to promote connectedness in the cabin, address conflicts, repair harm, and restore justice within the community.

“As a camper to counselor (CTC) camp provided me a safe haven in life to freely express my health, both mentally and physically. The stigma on HIV has decreased, however nobody understands more than people who relate and thanks to the family I’ve chosen I know there’s always a place to feel seen and heard!”

Upcoming Events:

November-December: Adopt-a-Family Program

Monthly: Mentoring Program

December 6th: John Flynn Holiday Concert

Teen Leadership Retreat: April 26-27, 2025

Therapeutic Camp Session: August 17-23, 2025

2024 CAMPER EVALUATION RESULTS:

- 92% of the campers reported that participating in a restorative circle helped them resolve conflicts.
- 95% of campers felt that they had someone to talk to at camp
- 96% of the campers felt safe or very safe at camp
- 97% of the campers made new friends at camp
- 98% of the campers felt they could ask for help at camp
- 98% of the campers felt supported by staff and volunteers at camp
- 99% of the campers felt accepted at camp
- 99% of the campers would recommend camp to a friend
- 100% of the campers feel Camp Dreamcatcher is important



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In Memory of Howard A. Harris
Sara Harris

In Memory of Edna Bennett Pierce and C. Eugene Bennett
C.E. Bennett Foundation

In Memory of Colleen Sheehan
Scott, Viktoria, & Marit Hillkirk
Patty Hillkirk

In Memory of Brian Thoreson
Jennifer Blab

In Memory of Roger Yu
Janice Taylor

In Honor of Contributions

In Honor of John Adams Birthday
John Adams
Patrick Comerford
Patty Hillkirk

In Honor of Mariana Casiano's Birthday
Mariana Casiano

In Honor of Miguel Correa's Birthday
Patty Hillkirk

In Honor of Kelly Daniels Birthday
Amy Tyler Dance
Kelly Dianne Daniels
Joe Keys
Broderick Reynolds

In Honor of Letitia Cheatham's Birthday
Renee Beaman

In Honor of L. William DeTurck's Birthday
Patty Hillkirk
Joshua Lausch

In Honor of Jessica Guy's Birthday:
Carin Bonifacino

In Honor of Patty Hillkirk's Birthday
Amy Rathburn Arnold
Mary Carol Galvin
Susan Higginbotham
Patty Hillkirk
Gail Nishimoto
Elizabeth Revell

In Honor of Travis Vick's Birthday
Travis Vick

Special Funds or Campaigns

Charlotte's Circle (Charlotte Bartlett)
Judy & Bruce Diner

Lesley Darman Equine & Small Animal Therapy Program (Lesley Darman)
Jacqueline Bradley
Nicole Clark
Jonathan Dana
Gayle Gleckler
Janice Goldstein
Peter Goldstein
Philip Manin
Andrea Zuckerman

#GIVINGTUESDAY
Raynetta Adams
Maggie Bishop
Kris Brightbill

Lysandra Cheatham
Kelly Daniels
Harrison Darman
Joseph Fournier
Marybeth Garrett
Pam Green
Susan Higginbotham
Patty Hillkirk
Davi Ryss Hollands
Kari Keaton
Mr. & Mrs. William B. Kelly
Andrea Linvill
Kathleen Mahoney
Dori Middleman
Myra Miller
Linda Mrak
Danielle Friel Otten
Tom & Frances Roosevelt
Peggy Stabert
Deborah Teasdale
Javier Villagomez
Ellen Wessel

Mariah's Mindfulness Center (Mariah Gladis)
Dori & Karl Middleman

KC Wolfe's Campaign
KC Wolfe

Counselor Challenge

API Office Solutions
Pena & Kahn, PLLC
Michelle & Steve Lozowski
Morton Povman, P.C.
Al Torres

Camp Dreamcatcher Board of Directors

Co-Presidents: Raynetta Adams & Letitia Cheatham
Treasurer: Liz Bishop
Secretary: KC Wolfe
Members:
Kelly Daniels
Mark Stewart, MSPH
Jack Welsh, RN

Youth Advisory Board Member

Quadir Bowman

Advisory Board

Susan Belfiore
Christopher Burns
Jeff Darman
Bob DeMento, Jr.
Robert Fineberg, Esq
John Flynn



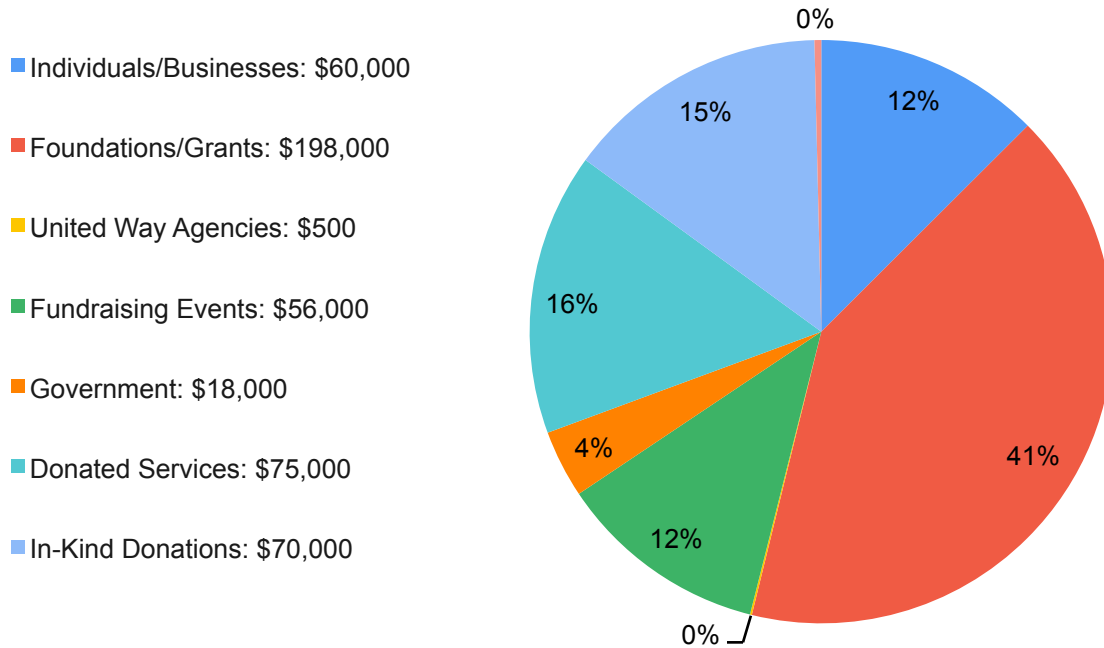
2024 Catching Dreams Over the Edge Event

The 2024 Catching Dreams Over the Edge Event took place on September 28th in the heart of Kennett Square. Over 50 Superheroes rappelled 8 stories down the tallest building in town and raised over \$75,000 to support our free therapeutic and educational programs for HIV/AIDS impacted youth. The 2025 event will be held on September 27th in Kennett Square. Thank you sponsors, rappellers and event volunteers!

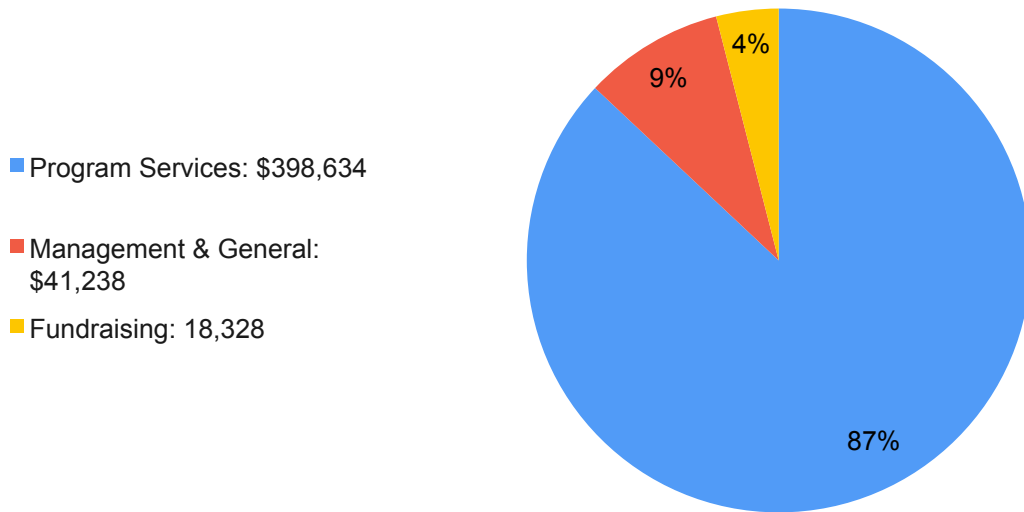


2024 Camp Finances

2024 INCOME TO DATE



2024 EXPENSES TO DATE



Income:

Individuals/Businesses:	\$60,000
Foundations/Grants:	\$198,000
United Way Agencies:	\$500
Fundraising Events:	\$56,000
Government:	\$18,000
Donated Services:	\$75,000
In-Kind Donations:	\$70,000
Restoration Prctices Training	\$1,800
TOTAL:	\$479,300

Expense:

Program Services:	\$398,634
Management & General:	\$41,238
Fundraising:	\$18,328
TOTAL:	\$458,000

2024 Camp Week Photos



Upcoming 2024 Events

- December 6: John Flynn's Holiday Concert for Camp Dreamcatcher at <https://kennettflash.org/event/john-flynn-2/kennett-flash/kennett-square-pennsylvania/>
- November - December 15: Camp Dreamcatcher's Adopt-a-Family Program <https://signup.com/go/gVWWUVz>

2025 Events

- April 26-27: Mentoring Teen Retreat at Camp NorthBay
- Spring - Summer: Volunteer Recruitment & Training
- August 16: Counselor Training
- August 17-26: Therapeutic and Educational Camp Session
- September 27: Catching Dreams Over the Edge Event



The Camp Dreamcatcher® Mission

- To provide safe, therapeutic and educational services to HIV/AIDS impacted youth and their families
- To foster an atmosphere of tolerance, compassion, respect and understanding through volunteer opportunities, services and expanded community outreach.