



Jennifer Eismeier
Executive Director
Camp Joy
10117 Old 3-C Highway
Clarksville, Ohio 45113

Governor Mike DeWine
State of Ohio

April 15, 2020

Dear Governor DeWine:

Thank you for your aggressive and intentional response to the COVID-19 outbreak to keep Ohioans safe and healthy. Your leadership has provided great comfort to me and my colleagues and family in an unprecedented time of uncertainty. I appreciate your swift response and am confident you will continue to act strategically to minimize the impact of coronavirus on Ohioans.

Kids need camp. Human connection and belonging in an intact community have never been so important, particularly for kids whose lives have been massively disrupted by a collapse of the structure and systems that normally support them. Camp Joy has been creating those connections and building that community since 1937 – and we have no intention of stopping now.

We need your help to get back to business providing children with critically important camp experiences. **Please allow Camp Joy, and other camp organizations, to resume operations as soon as possible as necessary and early priority components of re-opening Ohio.** Young people are less impacted by COVID-19 than other age cohorts, and a return to Camp Joy sooner rather than later begins the massive healing process our kids need and provides childcare for families who desperately need it¹.

At Camp Joy, we serve the most vulnerable kids each year with camp experiences in a safe nurturing natural environment so they can reconnect to themselves and one another, be free from worry, bask in kindness, have success on their own terms, and simply have fun. And the kids we

www.camp-joy.org   

serve are those who need us most: those who, but for Camp Joy, would not be able to attend camp at all because of financial hardship or physical challenges or the upheaval of foster care.

We have necessarily shut our doors for the duration of the shelter-in-place order. But we haven't shut down. **A skeleton crew of Camp Joy staff are hard at work to ensure we can roar back to life, at your call, with the necessary safety precautions in place and gear in hand.** It will not be easy but neither are the lives of our kids.



We were delighted to welcome First Lady DeWine to Camp Joy in the summer of 2018 for a visit. It's always a treat to share the joy and hope of our campers with visitors. We look forward to hosting her again (and you!) and sharing the nurturing and healing of Camp Joy.

Help us return to Joy. We all need it now more than ever.

Thank you and stay well. We all need you too.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Eismeier". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jennifer Eismeier
Executive Director

1. The New York Times Magazine, "Restarting America Means People Will Die. So When Do We Do It?", The New York Times Magazine, April 10, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/10/magazine/coronavirus-economy-debate.html?referringSource=articleShare>
Lena H. Sun, Josh Dawsey and William Wan, "CDC, FEMA have created a plan to reopen America. Here's what it says.", The Washington Post, April 14, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2020/04/14/cdc-fema-have-created-plan-reopen-america-heres-what-it-says>

