



Camp Joy  
10117 Old 3-C Highway  
Clarksville, Ohio 45113

Governor Mike DeWine  
State of Ohio

December 22, 2020

Dear Governor DeWine:

Thank you for your aggressive and intentional response to the COVID-19 outbreak to keep Ohio 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 in Ohio.

At Camp Joy, we serve 10,000 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 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 need your help to get back to business providing children with critically important camp experiences. As vaccines and vaccination plans emerge, **please consider supporting the American Camp Association's call for camp employees to be classified as Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers with their eligibility for vaccinations coincident with other workers in the Education sector.** The American Camp Association has advocated this to the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and is in accord with the criteria set forth in the guidance provided by the Department of Homeland Security, Cybersecurity, and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA). The ongoing availability of healthy staff will allow for critical out-of-school programming. Camp programs allow working parents and caregivers to return to their jobs knowing

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that their children are benefitting from in-person education and quality supervision. A return to camp sooner rather than later begins the massive healing process our kids need.

Childcare staff in out-of-school educational and recreational settings such as camps are critical for continued support to serve the nation's health care, first responders, frontline and essential workers, as well as in assisting in the continued economic recovery of our country. Parents and caregivers cannot return to work without a functioning out-of-school sector. It will not be easy but neither are the lives of our kids.

Why camp? Because **human connection and belonging in a 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 and the other nine American Camp Association accredited camps in Warren County have been creating those connections and building that community for over 110 years – and we have no intention of stopping now.

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

Thank you and stay well.

Jennifer Eismeier  
Executive Director

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