



“Thank you so much for giving my child the summer of my actual dreams. In such an uncertain world, it’s so comforting to know that camp remains a source of joy and wonder for our littles. This is everything I wanted for him, and he loved it, and I am so thankful.”

OVERNIGHT CAMP PARENT

INTRODUCTION & KEY FINDINGS

Jewish camp has maintained the gains of last summer and the field has settled into a new normal within our post-pandemic world. In summer 2023, the field served +3% (6,000) more campers and counselors than in summer 2022. Part of this new reality includes hiring more staff, since fewer are working the full summer. Camps are having to raise more money to keep up with rising costs and the increased demand for camper financial aid.

While we hope this report aids camps in planning ahead for summer 2024, we acknowledge that this data was collected before the events in Israel on October 7th. Since the initial Camp Census data was reported, FJC has reassessed the needs of Jewish camps in the shadow of this war. We have identified several areas of impact and created initiatives to support the field in addressing new challenges in the areas of wellness, security, staffing, and Israel education. You can see a snapshot of our research on camps' needs related to Israel [here](#).

Let us celebrate the resiliency and innovation of the field of Jewish camp as they continue to sustain and nurture multi-generational, joyful Jewish communities.

A FEW KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THIS YEAR'S REPORT:

- **Camp enrollment continues to grow, with the largest gains coming from day camps.** Day camps have reached pre-pandemic enrollment levels in summer 2023. Overnight camps enrollment now remains at 96% of 2019 (pre-pandemic) levels. 80% of overnight camps plan to increase their camper enrollment for summer 2024.
- **Many staff are no longer working full summers; this is creating an increased need for seasonal staff positions.** The total number of staff in summer 2023 is higher than in 2019 (pre-pandemic) and given many staff are not working a full summer, especially within overnight camps, there is a need for camps to hire more staff to fill in gaps.
- **Increased turnover of Jewish camp professionals.** 66% of reporting overnight camps and 58% of reporting day camps had professional staff leave their positions between fall 2022 and fall 2023.
- **Families are requesting more financial aid from overnight camps than ever before.** Overnight camps saw about a 30% increase in the amount of financial aid that families requested from their camps.
- **MESSH (mental, emotional, social, and spiritual) resources were ranked highest in terms of the resources camps need.** Camps also indicated a need for resources on character development and resilience building; parent communication and engagement; antisemitism and bridging differences; and diversity, equity and inclusion.
- **Capital needs are a big priority for camps across the field** as camps prioritize growing camper enrollment and making camp more accessible, all while upkeeping older buildings and facilities. Staff housing is a key need as camps are unable to grow enrollment without it.

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Camper
Enrollment
and Capacity



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Professional
and Seasonal
Staff



23

Operations,
Finance & Needs
of the Field

SUMMER 2023

nearly

181,000

campers, teens,
and college-aged
staff participated in
Jewish camp across:



166 ☀️

day camps and

158 🌙

overnight camps

Participation in Jewish **overnight and day camp** grew **3% from 2022 to 2023** and now stands 99% of 2019's pre-pandemic record participation.

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS SERVED (CAMPERs AND COUNSELORS, DAY AND OVERNIGHT)



Total
Participants

% Change
Year over Year

	Total Participants	% Change Year over Year
2023*	180,700	+3%
2022	174,700	+13%
2021	155,000	-15%
2019	182,400	+1%

**The 2023 numbers are made up of 148,100 campers and 32,600 high school and college aged staff members*

All data for this report was collected between Aug 23-Nov 1st, 2023 from 135 overnight and 113 day camps. Numeric data included in this report uses projections to represent the full field of 158 overnight and 166 day camps.

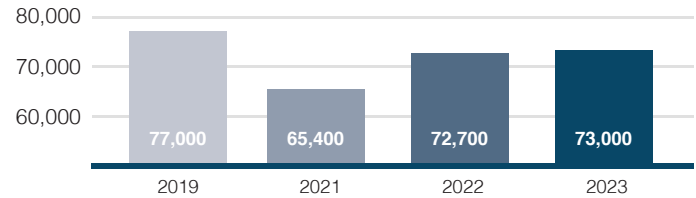
CAMPERS

OVERNIGHT CAMP ENROLLMENT

Overnight camp enrollment is holding steady and over half of overnight camps reached their enrollment goal for 2023. Overnight camps have set a goal for themselves to increase enrollment by 5% for summer 2024. If they are able to achieve this, 2024 enrollment will be back to pre-pandemic levels.



TOTAL UNIQUE CAMPERS

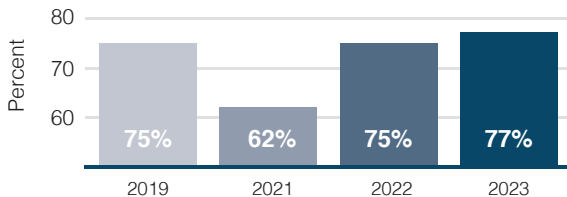


37% of overnight camps increased their enrollment and 35% of camps decreased their enrollment between 2022 and 2023. 53% of overnight camps are operating at or above their pre pandemic enrollment levels and as a field, overnight camp's total enrollment is now at 95% of 2019 numbers.

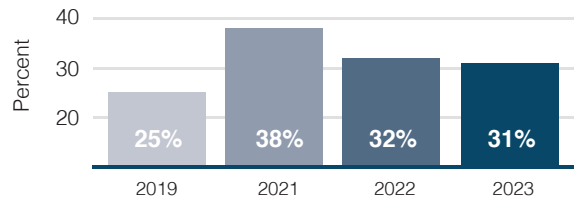
Overnight camp retained 77% of their campers from 2022 to 2023, exceeding pre-pandemic retention rates.

New campers made up 31% of the overnight camper population in 2023.

CAMPER RETENTION RATE*

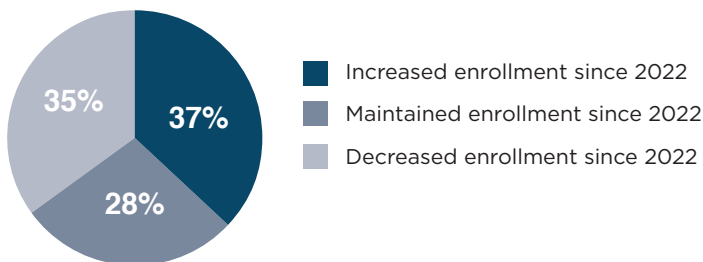


NEW CAMPERS



*The retention rate is calculated by removing the 10% of campers who are not eligible to return to camp (given they've aged out) from the denominator.

OVERNIGHT CAMP ENROLLMENT



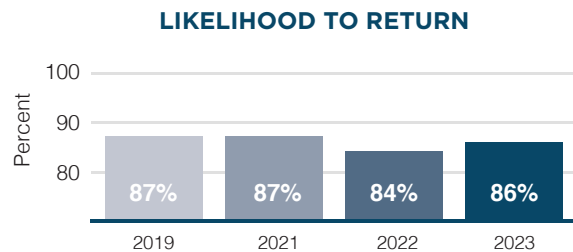
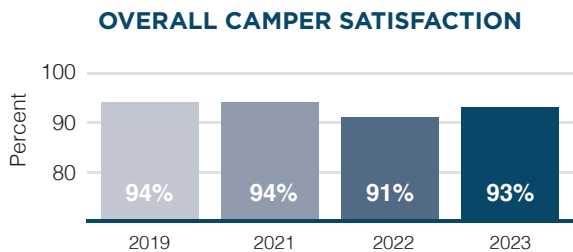
We have been amazed at the programming, organization and care for the children at camp. We could not have asked for a better experience for both our first-time campers this year! Thank you!!!

– Overnight Camp Parent

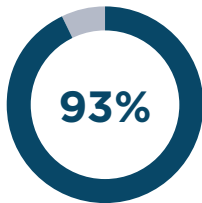
OVERNIGHT CAMPER SATISFACTION

*according to data collected from over 9,000 camper families in response to FJC's annual Camper Satisfaction Insights survey

Overnight camp overall satisfaction and likelihood to return both increased by 2%, with levels remaining relatively consistent since 2019.

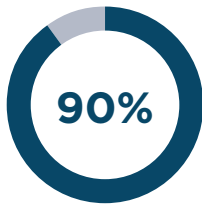


Alongside these trends, positive impacts for Jewish camp remained high.



of families report that overnight camp made their child feel part of the larger Jewish community and peoplehood.

Jewish camp's ability to strengthen the Jewish identities of campers is strong.



of families reported that camp has built important Jewish friendships for their child.

In addition, more than half of families reported that their child's camp experience has motivated their child to participate in other Jewish programming throughout the year.



“

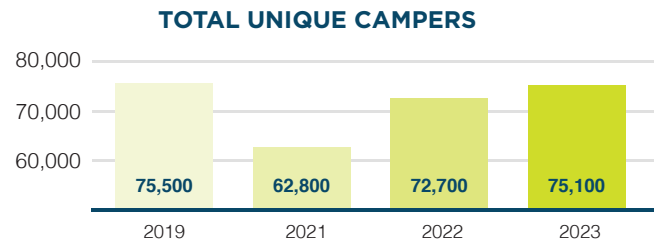
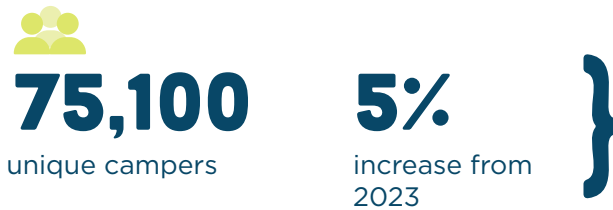
My child loved camp! She loved her counselors and all of the adventure. I think most of all she loved being around other Jewish children and celebrating being Jewish.

– Overnight Camp Parent

”

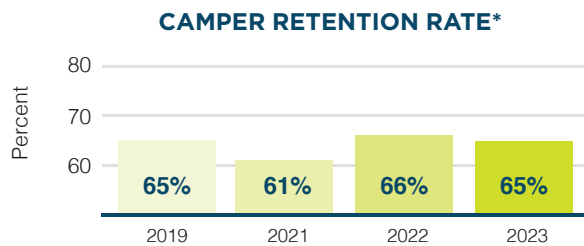
DAY CAMP ENROLLMENT

Enrollment for day camp continues to rise and is just about back to pre-pandemic levels. Over half of day camps reached their enrollment goal for 2023. Day camps have set a goal for themselves to increase enrollment by 1% for summer 2024.



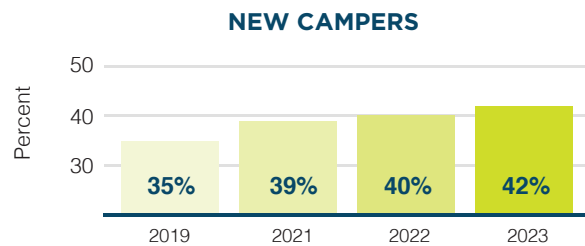
From 2022 to 2023, **60% of day camps increased their enrollment**. The day camp field has reached its pre-pandemic enrollment levels with 60% of camps operating above their pre-pandemic enrollment numbers.

Day camp retained 65% of their campers from 2022 to 2023.

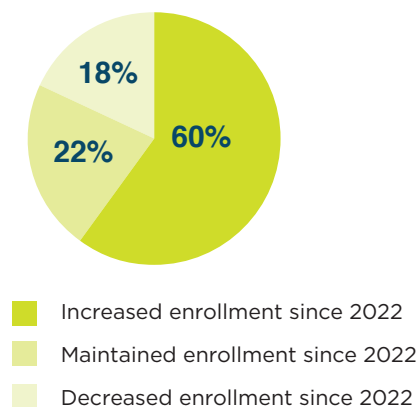


**The retention rate is calculated by removing the 10% of campers who are not eligible to return to camp (given they've aged out) from the denominator.*

New campers made up 42% of the day camper population in 2023.



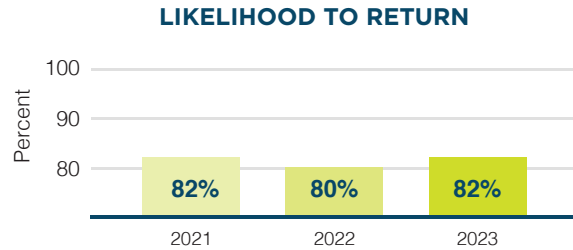
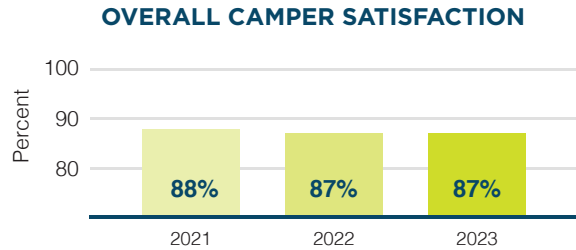
DAY CAMP ENROLLMENT



DAY CAMPER SATISFACTION

*Data collected from FJC's Day Camper Satisfaction Insights Surveys 2023

Day camps are maintaining high levels of satisfaction, with levels remaining relatively consistent since 2021.



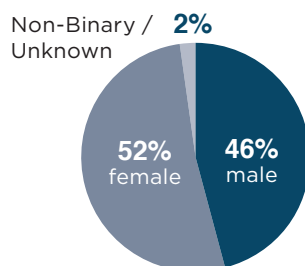
Day camp provides an environment where children feel like they belong.



CAMPER DEMOGRAPHICS

These demographics were measured through the Camper Satisfaction Insights surveys that are administered to families after their campers come home each summer. The results were collected from over 9,000 families at 81 different camps. Understanding who is a part of our camp community will help us to better serve and support these campers and their families.

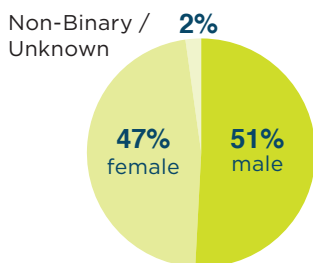
GENDER OF OVERNIGHT CAMPERS



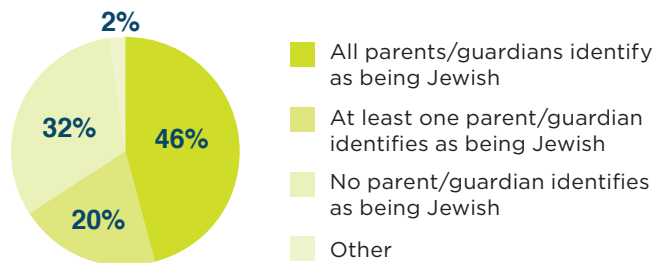
OVERNIGHT CAMP FAMILIES RELIGIOUS IDENTITY



GENDER OF DAY CAMPERS



DAY CAMP FAMILIES RELIGIOUS IDENTITY



OVERNIGHT CAMPER LENGTH OF STAY

Overnight camps were open for an average of 7 weeks this summer, except for those in the Western U.S. where camps were open for 6 weeks on average. This is mainly due to a few specialty camps in the West that were open for four weeks or less. In contrast, camps in the Midwest were on average open for longer, with more than two-thirds of camps in the Midwest open for eight or more weeks.

OVERNIGHT CAMP NUMBER OF WEEKS OPEN BY REGION 2023

Region	1-4 weeks	5-7 weeks	8+ weeks
Canada	5%	81%	14%
Midwest	14%	19%	67%
Northeast	9%	65%	26%
South	0%	70%	30%
West	26%	35%	39%
All overnight camps	11%	56%	33%

Most overnight campers attended overnight camp for 4 weeks in 2023 and this has been consistent since 2019, though there are some regional differences. Shorter stays are most popular in Southern and Western camps where 5% or less of the camper population stays for more than 4 weeks. Meanwhile, 31% of campers in the Northeast and 30% of campers in Canada attended camp for a full summer of six weeks or more.

OVERNIGHT CAMPER LENGTHS OF STAY OVERALL & BY REGION 2023

Region	1 week	2 weeks	3 weeks	4 weeks	5 weeks	6 weeks	7 weeks	8+ weeks
Canada	7%	13%	12%	36%	2%	17%	13%	0%
Midwest	7%	14%	9%	58%	3%	2%	1%	4%
Northeast	4%	12%	19%	33%	2%	2%	20%	9%
South	4%	22%	0%	70%	0%	1%	0%	2%
West	12%	37%	28%	19%	2%	1%	0%	2%
All overnight camps 2023	6%	18%	16%	41%	2%	3%	9%	5%
All overnight camps 2019	6%	18%	14%	43%	2%	3%	8%	6%

DAY CAMPER LENGTH OF STAY

Day camps opened for 8 weeks on average and almost half of all day camps in the West were open for the longest duration of 10-11 weeks over the summer. No day camps in the FJC network were open for less than 4 weeks.

DAY CAMP NUMBER OF WEEKS OPEN BY REGION 2023

Region	4-7weeks	8-9 weeks	10-11 weeks
Canada	60%	40%	0%
Midwest	32%	47%	21%
Northeast	42%	48%	10%
South	10%	57%	33%
West	30%	25%	45%
All overnight camps	33%	45%	22%

In comparison to 2019, there have been dramatic increases in the number of campers attending Jewish day camp for eight weeks or more, with the percentage of campers almost doubling overall. In addition to this trend, shorter durations are becoming more common in Canada and the western and southern United States. However, most day campers attend camp for either four or eight weeks which is similar to camper weeks in 2022.

DAY CAMPER LENGTH OF STAY OVERALL & BY REGION 2023

Region	1 week	2 weeks	3 weeks	4 weeks	5 weeks	6 weeks	7 weeks	8+ weeks
Canada	8%	24%	6%	23%	4%	9%	11%	15%
Midwest	8%	9%	11%	19%	5%	8%	15%	26%
Northeast	3%	11%	7%	16%	8%	10%	15%	28%
South	15%	15%	17%	13%	10%	11%	8%	12%
West	21%	22%	10%	20%	4%	6%	4%	13%
All day camps 2023	9%	13%	10%	17%	7%	10%	12%	22%
All day camps 2019	11%	12%	13%	13%	13%	13%	12%	12%



My child loves camp. He is just so happy when he comes home every day, and he can't wait to go in the morning. I definitely see more independence in my child and love the friendships he is building with his peers. – Day Camp Parent



CAPACITY & OCCUPANCY

This was the first year since Covid that camps were able to open all their beds, previously they had kept some empty in case they needed to quarantine camp community members. If every camp was open on the same day during the summer, the maximum capacity would be 54,000 campers at overnight camp.

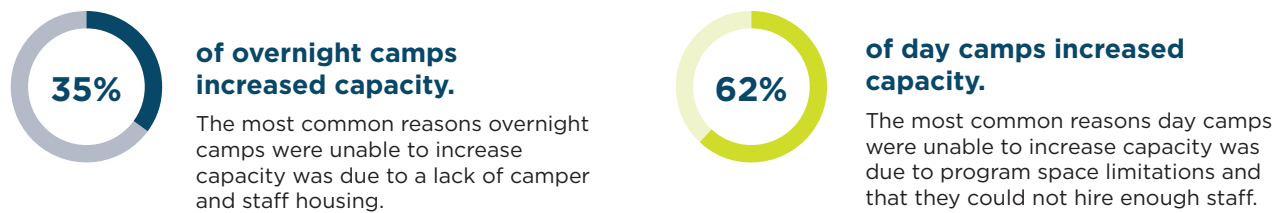
TOTAL DAILY ESTIMATED CAMPER CAPACITY AVAILABLE AT JEWISH CAMPS IN 2023



TOTAL DAILY ESTIMATED CAMPER CAPACITY AVAILABLE AT JEWISH CAMPS IN 2022



Capacity increased by 10% across all overnight and day camps from 2022 to 2023.

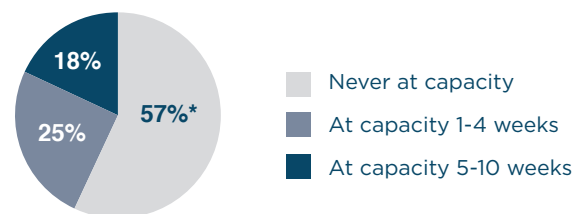


The full capacity of spaces available or beds for campers is estimated to be 113,000 per day. Average daily camper capacity at overnight camps was 334 and the average daily camper capacity at day camps was 358. About half of the overnight camps in the United States never reached full capacity this summer.

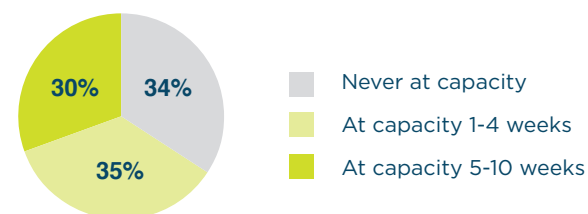
While overnight camps increased their capacity this summer, adding about 5,000 beds, they have not yet filled all of them. This bodes well for future enrollment, as filling the new spots will take time. Camps are already working on recruiting new campers - **80% of overnight camps plan to increase their enrollment for summer 2024.**

More camps operated below capacity this summer as a result of the increased bed count.

OVERNIGHT CAMP OCCUPANCY



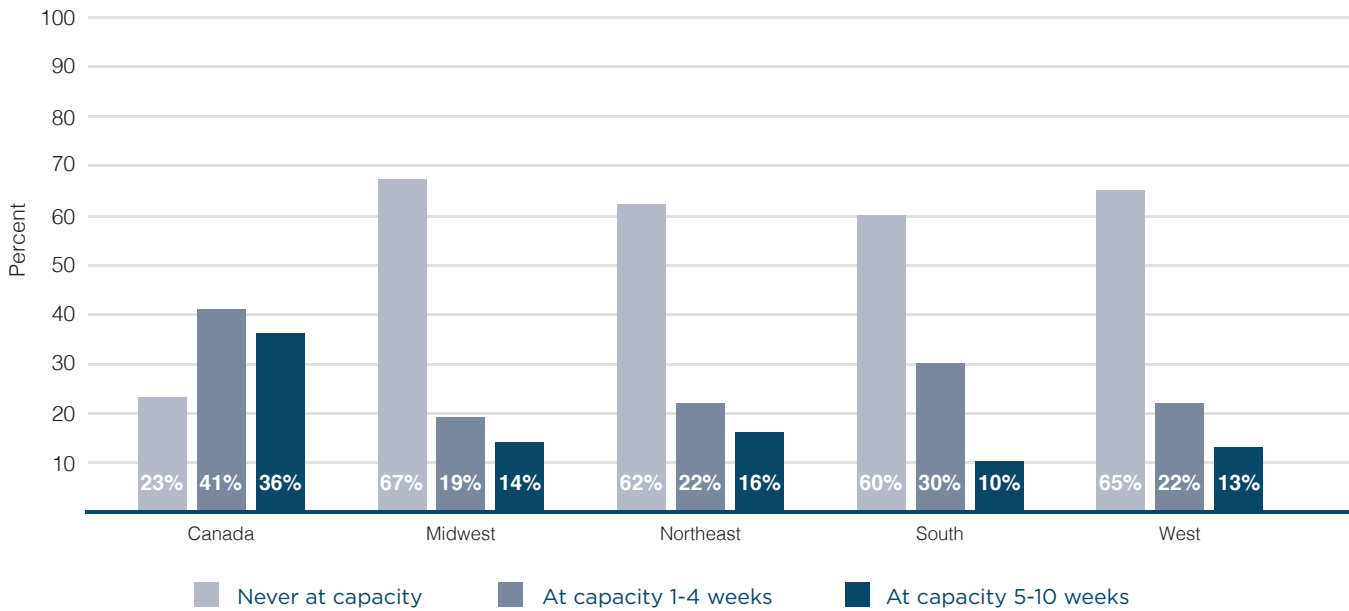
DAY CAMP OCCUPANCY



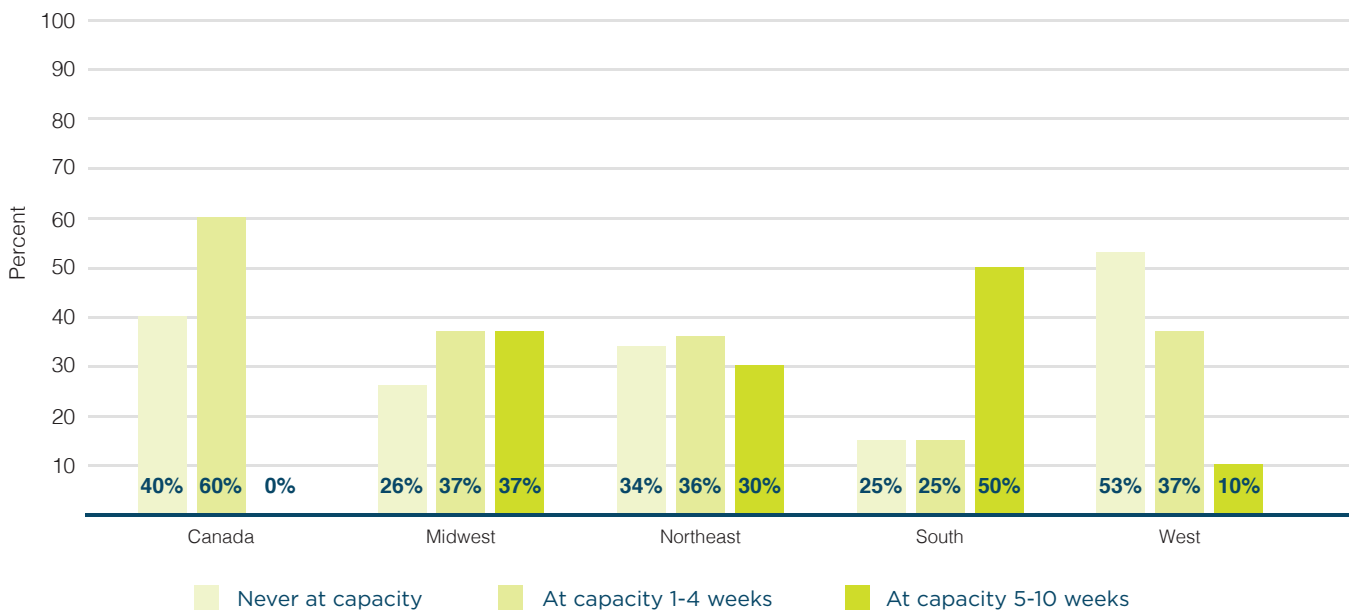
*18 overnight camps that were at capacity in 2022 for just one week dropped to never being at capacity in 2023

Given there are more camps in any other region, almost half of the field's capacity (day and overnight) lies in the Northeast. Canadian overnights camps were more likely to be operating at capacity during the summer than U.S. camps. In comparison, day camps in the West and Canada were more likely to operate below capacity than camps in the Midwest, Northeast and South.

OVERNIGHT CAMP OCCUPANCY BY REGION



DAY CAMP OCCUPANCY BY REGION



Despite the increased capacity availability at some camps, other camps could not meet camper demand. However, the number of campers on waitlists decreased by about 15% from 2022 to 2023.

 **3,100+**

Overnight campers were turned away in summer 2023

 **3,700+**

Day campers were turned away in summer 2023

 **5,800+**

Campers remained on waitlists for summer 2023

CAMPERS WITH DISABILITIES

The number of campers with disabilities has remained stable over the past 3 years.

Overall, camps report that approximately 6% of day and overnight campers identify as having a disability. Overnight camps have served about 3,000 campers with disabilities and day camps have served about 3,000 to 4,000 campers with disabilities every summer since 2021.

GENDER AT CAMP

Many day and overnight camps have been working on creating a more inclusive environment for campers of all genders. 45% of day camps and 41% of overnight camps reported altering bathrooms at camp to make them safer and more affirming for trans and nonbinary campers. They did this by adding private changing areas in bathrooms and doors that lock to shower stalls. Many camps re-labeled single occupancy bathrooms as gender neutral. Some camps worked with campers and families to figure out which gender-based bunks or groups would be best for nonbinary and trans campers on an individual basis. Many overnight camps have renamed their bunks from “girls/boys’ cabin 5” to neutral names like “Lakeside 5”.

STAFF

Staffing numbers exceed pre-pandemic totals. Camps are hiring more staff members, as fewer of them commit to working the full summer. Overnight camps reported that they are still understaffed because they now require more unique staff members than in previous summers to cover the full summer. Day camp staff are also not working for full summers; this coupled with an increase in day campers has caused a 14% increase in day camp staff members.

OVERALL CAMP STAFFING 2019 - 2023

Overnight Camps



Day Camps



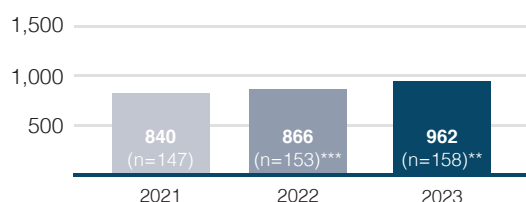
*these numbers include all staff that worked at camp in 2023

YEAR-ROUND PROFESSIONALS

The field is experiencing a high turnover of camp professionals. The field of Jewish camping experienced a huge loss of full-time year-round professionals during the pandemic. Camps began closing that gap in 2022 and have continued to hire more year-round professionals in 2023. However, **66% of reporting overnight camps and 58% of reporting day camps had professional staff leave their positions between fall 2022 and fall 2023.**

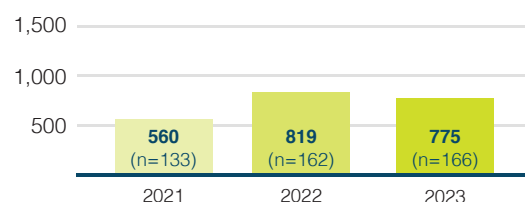
In 2023, overnight camps reported a range of 1-32 staff on their year-round team, averaging six year-round professionals per camp. Day camps reported a range of 1-10 year-round professionals, averaging five year-round professionals per camp (two more than last year's average).

YEAR-ROUND OVERNIGHT CAMP PROFESSIONALS*



*Full time professionals **436 additional part time
***448 additional part time

YEAR-ROUND DAY CAMP PROFESSIONALS*



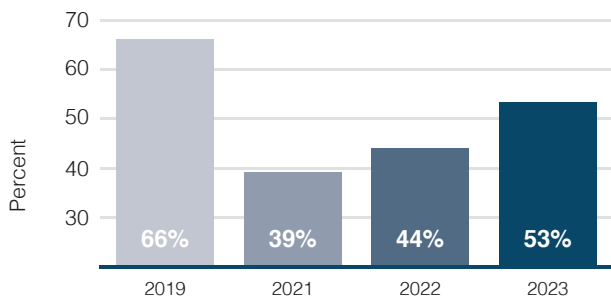
*Full and part time professionals

SEASONAL STAFF RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

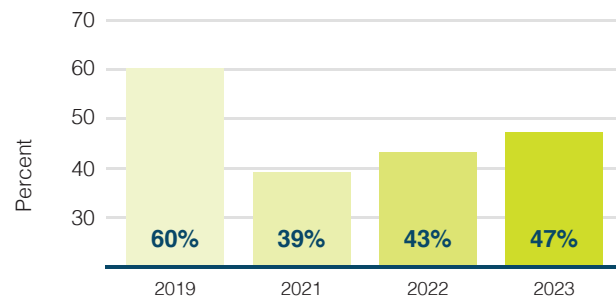
Seasonal staff retention rates across the field of both day and overnight camps reached 53% this summer, the highest it has been since the pandemic. While camps are still not back to their pre-pandemic staff retention rates, they are continuing to focus on improving staff retention and we can see the results of their efforts as staff retention trends continue to climb.

Camps reported that hiring and maintaining enough staff throughout the summer remains one of their biggest challenges.

OVERNIGHT CAMP STAFF RETENTION RATE



DAY CAMP STAFF RETENTION RATE



This past year, FJC worked with many camps to expand their staff recruitment and retention efforts. Several camps focused on improving the staff experience by increasing the number of leadership positions available, providing more programming for staff throughout the summer, and investing in supervisor/supervisee relationships. Both day and overnight camps found staff recruitment success through referrals, where staff who recruited their friends to work at camp received a bonus.

Contract flexibility impacted staff recruitment as well. In summer 2023, two thirds of day camps and almost all overnight camps had to hire North American staff who did not work a full summer. Across the field, only 75% of North American young adult (ages 18-24) staff worked for the full summer.

More and more overnight camps are hiring staff whose role is to focus on the summer experience for staff members in an effort to boost recruitment and retention. FJC recommends this strategy as the best way improve camper recruitment and retention. Referral bonuses and recruiting staff from high schools and colleges were the most common recruitment tools used by day camps. Increased salaries and word of mouth are also utilized by both day and overnight camps to recruit and retain staff.



This place is very special to me, as I grew up here as a camper. Being an adult now, with more freedom than as a camper, I have the opportunity to explore and experience camp like never before. – Overnight Camp Staff Member





*I loved being able to help campers participate who were having trouble.
Teaching them new skills and watching them be brave and try was awesome.*
– Day Camp Staff Member



MOST POPULAR STAFF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION METHODS

Overnight Camp	Rank	Day Camp
Focus on creating an excellent summer experience for staff members	1	Increase salaries / Provide bonuses
Increase salaries / Provide bonuses	2	Recruit staff from local high schools and colleges
Personal outreach by camp leadership	3	Focus on creating an excellent summer experience for staff members

20,650 North American teens & young adults worked at Jewish camps in 2023. About 50% of all overnight staff are teens and young adults, while 70% of day camp staff are teens and young adults, which is about the same as in years past. 91% of all North American, young adult staff members across the field work directly with campers.

YOUNG ADULT CAMP STAFF*

	Overnight 2023	Day 2023
# of high school-aged staff (ages 13-17 & paid)	2,050 (9%**)	4,000 (30%**)
# of North American Young Adult Staff (ages 18-24)	9,100 (38%**)	5,500 (41%**)
# Returning	5,900 (65%***)	3,400 (62%***)
# hired to work the full summer	6,100 (67%***)	4,600 (84%***)
# working directly with campers	8,200 (90%***)	5,100 (93%***)

**This chart includes data that was not collected in prior years as we are now tracking North American retention trends and staff working partial summers.*

***% is of total staff*

****% is of all North American Staff*

INTERNATIONAL STAFF

The number of Israeli and other international staff remains consistent with 2022 and is back up to pre-pandemic levels. FJC is currently conducting research and working with camps to understand and address the effect that the conflict in Israel will have on bringing Israeli staff members to camps this summer.

	Overnight Staff 2023	Overnight Staff 2022	Day Staff 2023	Day Staff 2022
Israeli Staff (% is of total staff)	2,400 (10%)	2,300 (10%)	400 (3%)	400 (3%)
Other International Staff (% is of total staff)	3,500 (15%)	3,400 (15%)	139 (1%)	Not collected

“

The camp and people are so friendly and welcoming; it really feels like a second family & home.

– Overnight Camp Staff Member

”

“

Every day at flagpole the Israeli emissaries would do a dance to an Israeli song, and it really brought everyone together.

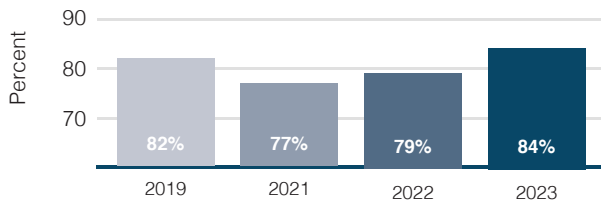
– Day Camp Staff Member

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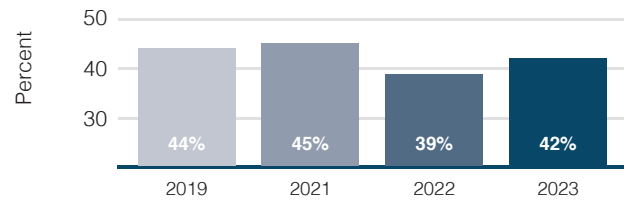
OVERNIGHT CAMP STAFF SATISFACTION

Seasonal staff overall satisfaction is up 5% and is the highest it's been since 2019. Staff likelihood to return rate increased 3% as well. Camps are focused on seasonal staff satisfaction as a key factor for a successful summer.

OVERALL STAFF SATISFACTION



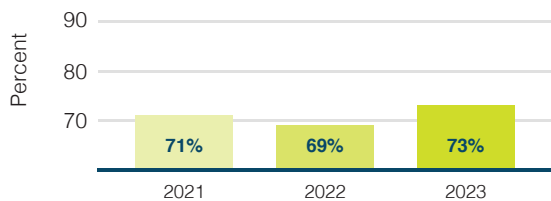
LIKELIHOOD TO RETURN (YES, DEFINITELY)



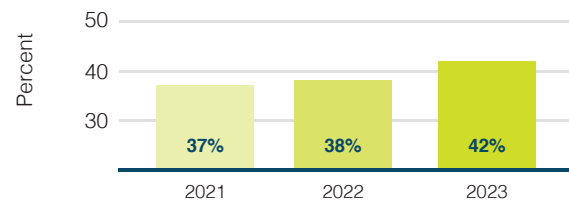
DAY CAMP STAFF SATISFACTION

Seasonal staff overall satisfaction and likelihood to return continues to rise.

OVERALL STAFF SATISFACTION

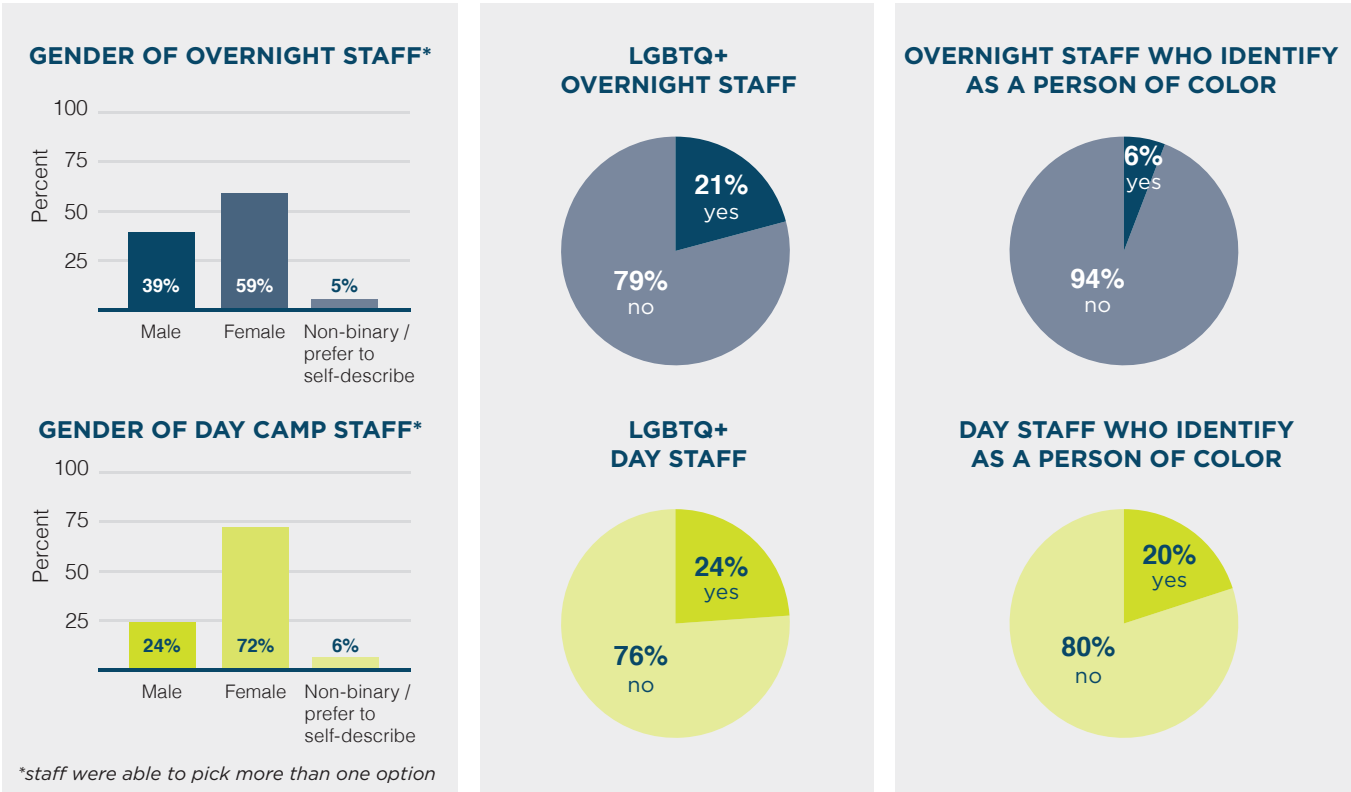


LIKELIHOOD TO RETURN (YES, DEFINITELY)



STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS

These demographics were measured through the Staff Satisfaction Insights surveys that are administered to seasonal staff after their experience each summer. The results were collected from over 6,000 staff members at 119 different camps. Understanding who is a part of our camp community will help us to better serve and support these staff members.



I am not Jewish but I got to experience a lot of Jewish traditions including Shabbat which I've never heard of before coming to this camp, and it made camp feel like we're all a big family.

– Day Camp Staff Member



STAFF WITH DISABILITIES & VOCATIONAL ED PROGRAMS

Approximately half of day and overnight camps (48%) have staff who identify as having a disability and 19% of day and overnight camps offer vocational summer training programs. There has been a slight increase in the number of camps offering vocational education programs.

	Overnight 2023	Overnight 2022	Day 2023	Day 2022
# of camps with vocational training programs	27 (20%)	21 (15%)	20 (18%)	17 (15%)
# of vocational training participants	327 (1%)	230	140 (2%)	130
# of camps reporting staff with known disabilities	55 (41%)	60 (44%)	65 (58%)	64 (58%)
# of staff with disabilities	234 (1%)	230 (1%)	296 (2%)	210 (1%)

COMMUNITY CARE STAFF

Medical and community care teams at camp consist of nurses, doctors, social workers, disabilities inclusion specialists, and one-on-one aides. They are increasingly critical and complex for camps to staff. Many of these staff do not work for the entire summer. At any given time, overnight camps had an average of seven people and day camps had an average of four people working as a part of their community care teams.

INCLUSION STAFF

Overnight camps had less certified or licensed disability/inclusion professionals and one-on-one aides on staff this year than in 2022. Day camps had about the same number of these kinds of staff.

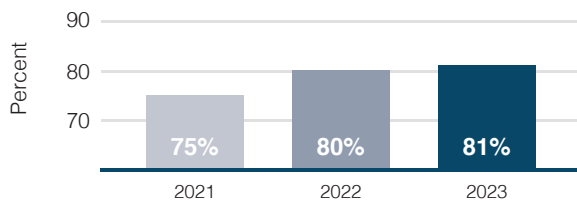
	Overnight 2023	Overnight 2022	Day 2023	Day 2022
Certified or licensed disability/inclusion professionals				
Average # per camp	1*	2	2	2*
Range	1-6*	1-10*	1-10	1-7*
Unlicensed support counselors or one-on-one aides				
Average # per camp	3*	5*	10*	9*
Range	1-46*	1-35*	1-48*	1-35*

*Outliers removed

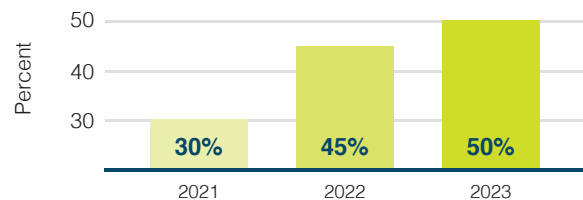
MESSH (MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, SOCIAL, & SPIRITUAL HEALTH) STAFF

It is becoming commonplace for camps to hire multiple psychologists, social workers, or certified mental health professionals to create a team of MESSH professionals. Funding made available through FJC's Yedid Nefesh program has provided monetary support and staff training to over 100 day and overnight camps. More camps would like to hire MESSH professionals but are unable to due to a mental health service provider shortage across North America.

OVERNIGHT CAMPS WITH AT LEAST ONE MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL*



DAY CAMPS WITH AT LEAST ONE MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL*

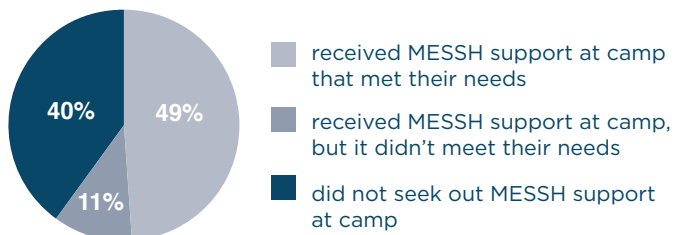


The head nurse and mental health staff contacted us before camp to discuss (twice) our child's personality, difficulties, strengths, and support needs in general and specific circumstances. When an interpersonal incident arose, mental health staff responded calmly and supportively, not punitively, and contacted us from a collaborative perspective to brainstorm additional support steps.

– Overnight Camp Parent

Overnight camp staff are also seeking mental, emotional, social and spiritual health support during camp. Some are using time-off to call therapists off site while other camps are able to provide staff with on-site professional MESSH support for staff.

OVERNIGHT STAFF RECEIVING MESSH SUPPORT AT CAMP



The directors were amazing with listening to concerns or questions I had. I also loved how there was a staff member there solely for staff mental health.

– Overnight Camp Staff

MESSH STAFF*

	Overnight 2023	Overnight 2022	Day 2023	Day 2022
Average # per camp	3	3	2	2
Range	1-15	1-19	1-8	1-10**
Average # of people on community care team at any given time	8	Not collected	5	Not collected

*FJC defines a MESSH professional as a psychologist, social worker, and certified licensed mental health professional.

**Excludes outliers as a few camps are specialty camps for campers with special needs whose whole staff are focused on medical and camper care.

MEDICAL STAFF

The number of doctors and nurses working at overnight and day camp has stayed about the same since 2019. However, the average number of nurses and doctors per overnight camp has gone up by 2 from 2022 to 2023.

CAMP MEDICAL STAFF*

	Overnight 2023	Overnight 2022	Day 2023	Day 2022
Average # per camp	11	9	2	2
Range	1-32	1-34	1-8	1-6
% of total staff	5%	5%	1%	1%

*This data represents the average number of total medical staff that served over the course of the summer per camp.

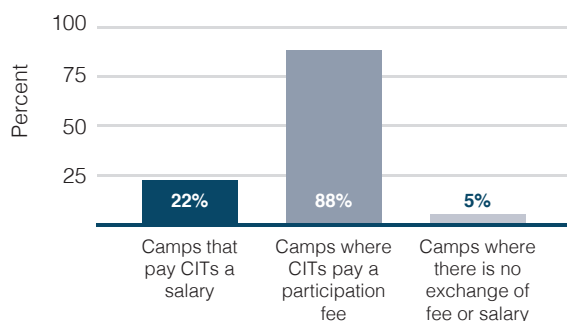
COUNSELORS IN TRAINING (CITS)

A Counselor-in-Training program is a critical aspect of many camps' leadership ladders and overall staff pipelines. It also provides campers with a safe space to explore and build their leadership skills through intentional training and developmental exercises.

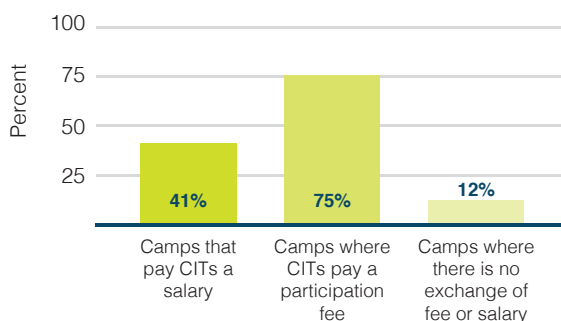
	Overnight 2023	Overnight 2022	Day 2023	Day 2022
# of CITs per camp (range)	3-87	4-87	2-68	1-63

88% of overnight camp CITs and 75% of day camp CITs pay a fee to participate in the counselor in training programs that camps provide.

CIT FEES & PAYMENT AT OVERNIGHT CAMP



CIT FEES & PAYMENT AT DAY CAMP



SALARIES OF SEASONAL CAMP STAFF

Average weekly salaries of seasonal roles vary greatly and have not risen by much since 2022. On average, overnight camps pay their camper-facing staff less than day camps per week. However, weekly average salaries below do not factor in additional financial incentives, bonuses, or tips, nor do they reflect the room and board provided to overnight camp staff. Overnight camps find it more challenging to compete with other summer jobs due to salary differences. Both day and overnight camp staff saw only marginal increases in their average weekly salaries from 2022 across all staff functions.

SEASONAL STAFF AVERAGE WEEKLY SALARIES IN 2023

STAFF	Overnight 2023	Day 2023
First-Year Counselors	\$230	\$400
Returning Counselors	\$290	\$450
First Year Specialists	\$280	\$530
Returning/Experienced Specialists	\$360	\$600
Unit Head, Age Group, or Program Area Supervisors	\$510	\$670
Camp Nurse	\$1,250	\$1,120
Licensed or Certified Mental Health Professional	\$1,020	\$960
Camp Head Chef	\$1,600	\$970

The highest paid overnight camp staff members work at camps in the Western U.S.

OVERNIGHT CAMP AVERAGE WEEKLY STAFF SALARIES BY REGION

Region	First-Year Counselors	Returning Counselors	First Year Specialists	Returning/Experienced Specialists	Unit Head, Age Group, or Program Area Supervisors	Camp Nurses	Mental Health Professionals	Camp Head Chef
Canada*	\$180	\$240	\$210	\$300	\$440	\$830	\$880	\$1,420
Midwest	\$190	\$250	\$190	\$260	\$430	\$1,180	\$900	\$1,080
Northeast	\$190	\$260	\$270	\$310	\$500	\$1,250	\$950	\$1,680
South	\$230	\$310	\$280	\$460	\$520	\$1,290	\$940	\$1,070
West	\$320	\$360	\$360	\$500	\$540	\$1,370	\$1,190	\$1,230

*Canadian dollars have been converted to U.S. Dollars

Day Camps in the Western U.S. pay their camper-facing staff the most on average, though Southern camps are paying their returning specialists and staff supervisors slightly more.

DAY CAMP AVERAGE WEEKLY STAFF SALARIES BY REGION

Region	First-Year Counselors	Returning Counselors	First Year Specialists	Returning/ Experienced Specialists	Unit Head, Age Group, or Program Area Supervisors	Camp Nurses	Mental Health Professionals	Camp Head Chef
Canada*	\$270	\$350	\$390	\$430	\$430	\$1,100	Not Collected	Not Collected
Midwest	\$400	\$450	\$520	\$590	\$650	\$1,090	\$960	Not Collected
Northeast	\$320	\$380	\$490	\$580	\$660	\$1,170	\$940	\$760
South	\$440	\$510	\$590	\$660	\$750	Not Collected	\$1,060	Not Collected
West	\$600	\$620	\$630	\$650	\$720	\$970	\$980	\$1,270

*Canadian dollars have been converted to U.S. Dollars



OPERATIONS, FINANCE AND NEEDS OF THE FIELD

TUITION

Camp tuition at both day and overnight camps continues to climb, and a 5%-6% tuition increase is expected for summer 2024. Average weekly tuition increased by 5% at day camp and by 3% at overnight camp. Overnight camps, on average, estimated that their tuition prices will increase by another 5% for summer 2024. Day camps predicted that their tuition will rise by about 6% for summer 2024.

WEEKLY TUITION: OVERNIGHT AND DAY

	Overnight Camp Average Weekly Tuition	Overnight Camp Range of Average Weekly Tuition	Day Camp Average Weekly Tuition	Day Camp Range of Average Weekly Tuition
2023	\$1,480	\$420 - \$2,400	\$620	\$230 - \$1,500
2022	\$1,440	\$375 - \$2,240	\$590	\$135 - \$1,450
2021	\$1,380	\$350 - \$2,700	\$590	\$145 - \$1,450
2019	\$1,200	Not Reported	\$530	Not Reported

Overnight and day camp tuition is least expensive in Canada. Overnight camp is most expensive in the West, and day camp is most expensive in the Midwest.

REGIONAL WEEKLY TUITION: OVERNIGHT AND DAY

Region	Overnight Camp Average Weekly Tuition	Overnight Camp Range of Average Weekly Tuition	Day Camp Average Weekly Tuition	Day Camp Range of Average Weekly Tuition
Canada	\$950	\$420 - \$1,460	\$330	\$230 - \$490
Midwest	\$1,370	\$710 - \$2,000	\$620	\$300 - \$1,100
Northeast	\$1,580	\$500 - \$2,400	\$590	\$290 - \$1,500
South	\$1,530	\$640 - \$2,000	\$430	\$290 - \$830
West	\$1,640	\$1,000 - \$2,200	\$540	\$380 - \$700

FINANCIAL AID

Financial aid needs are on the rise.

Day and overnight camps distributed approximately \$40 million in financial aid, about \$3 million more than in 2023. Overnight camps saw about a 30% increase in the amount of financial aid that families requested from their camps, while day camps saw almost no increase. In fact, about half of day camps saw a decrease in the amount of financial aid requested by families.

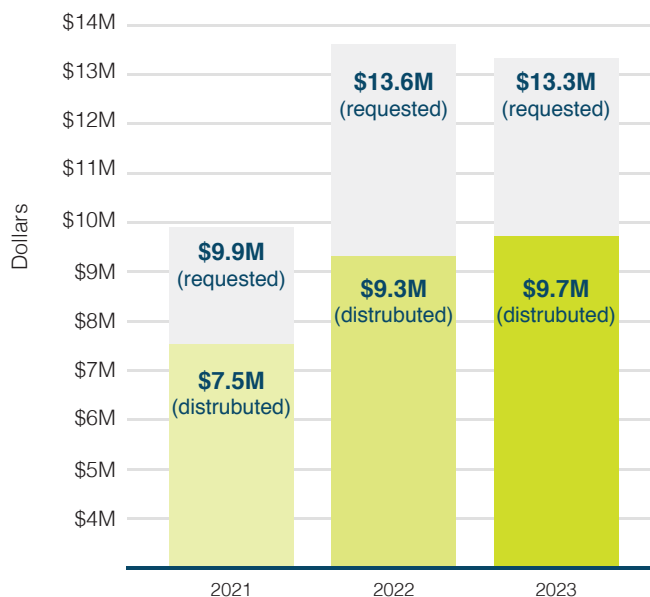
32% of families received financial assistance towards the cost of overnight camp from various sources including discounts directly from camp, One Happy Camper® grants, Federations, synagogues, and other community sources. Of those receiving financial aid for the cost of tuition, approximately 38% of families (about 5% higher than last year) said they would be unlikely to attend camp without this assistance*. Day camp saw a dramatic decrease in the number of campers awarded financial aid. As a result, the average award per camper increased even though the total amount of financial aid provided by day camps decreased.

**on the 2023 Camper Satisfaction Insights survey*

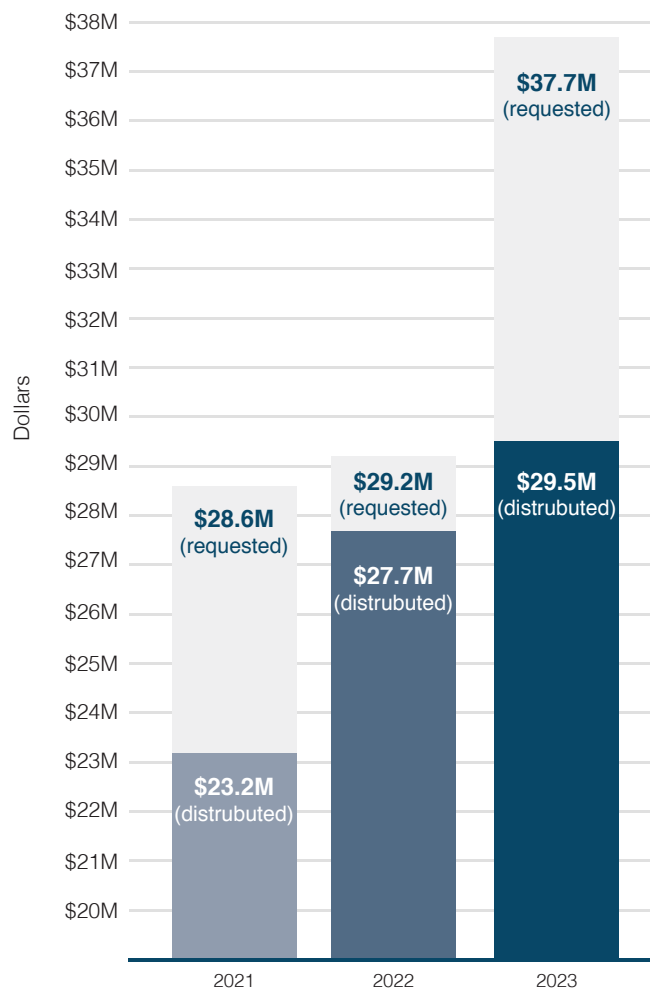


receive financial aid from the camp they attended

DAY CAMP FINANCIAL AID



OVERNIGHT CAMP FINANCIAL AID



OVERNIGHT CAMP FINANCIAL AID

TUITION	Overnight 2023	Overnight 2022
Total financial aid requested	\$37,700,000	\$29,200,000
#/% of campers requesting aid from camp's budget	17,200 (24%)	16,900 (23%)
#/% of campers receiving aid from camp's budget	16,300 (22%)	15,800 (22%)
Total financial aid disbursed from camps' budgets	\$29,500,000	\$27,700,000
Average financial aid requested per camp	\$187,000	\$195,000
% of campers receiving aid from any source	37%	40%
Average financial aid given out per camp	\$187,000	\$185,000
Average # of aid recipients per camp	103	105
Average financial aid award per camper	\$1,820	\$1,750

*These aggregate numbers are projections for the entire field of overnight camps.

DAY CAMP FINANCIAL AID

TUITION	Day 2023	Day 2022
Total financial aid requested	\$13,336,000	\$13,625,000
#/% of campers requesting aid from camp's budget	9,600 (13%)	10,600 (15%)
#/% of campers receiving aid from camp's budget	7,300 (10%)	9,000 (12%)
Financial aid disbursed from camp's budget	\$9,700,000	\$9,300,000
Average financial aid requested per camp	\$80,000	\$85,000
Average financial aid given out per camp	\$58,000	\$58,000
Average # of aid recipients per camp	44	56
Average financial aid award per camper	\$1,320	\$1,030

*These aggregate numbers are projections for the entire field of day camps.

OVERNIGHT CAMP EXPENSE VS. REVENUE

Between summers 2021 and 2022, the field's percent increase in expenses was outpacing the percent increase in revenue. This year, however, revenues and expenses increased at about the same rate. Camps were able to prepare for the impact of rising inflation on their operating costs and increased tuition accordingly. One of the drivers of expense increase was expenses associated with seasonal employees; this line item increased 5% on average from 2022 to 2023.

6% ↑
expense increase

7% ↑
revenue increase

OVERNIGHT REVENUE AND EXPENSES*

	Overnight Camps 2023	Overnight Camps 2022
Total Revenue	\$468,266,000	\$439,572,000
Average Revenue	\$2,930,500	\$2,930,000
Revenue Range	\$120,000 - \$16,860,000	\$135,000 - \$16,000,000
Total Expenses	\$435,639,000	\$410,980,000
Average Expenses	\$2,904,000	\$2,740,000
Expenses Range	\$135,000 - \$15,768,000	\$132,000 - \$16,000,000

*There was not enough data from day camps to create a parallel chart

OVERNIGHT REVENUE AND EXPENSES BY CAMP SIZE

Camp Size	Average Revenue	Revenue Range	Average Expense	Expense Range
Small (<250 camper capacity)	\$1,063,000	\$120,000 - \$2,908,000	\$1,097,000	\$135,000 - \$3,540,000
Medium (251 - 450 camper capacity)	\$3,547,000	\$846,000 - \$10,729,000	\$3,268,000	\$1,029,000 - \$10,723,000
Large (>451 camper capacity)	\$6,450,000	\$2,765,000 - \$16,860,000	\$5,796,000	\$2,774,000 - \$15,768,000

DAY CAMP REVENUE AND EXPENSES BY CAMP SIZE

Camp Size	Average Revenue	Revenue Range	Average Expense	Expense Range
Small (<250 camper capacity)	\$ 548,000	\$97,000 - \$1,000,000	\$493,000	\$105,000 - \$1,196,000
Medium (251 - 450 camper capacity)	\$1,309,000	\$615,000 - \$2,254,000	\$933,000	\$533,000 - \$1,789,000
Large (>451 camper capacity)	\$2,634,000	\$802,000 - \$4,952,000	\$1,976,000	\$1,071,000 - \$4,033,000

“

Bus travel has gone up over 100% since before the pandemic, which limits our ability to offer field trips. – Day Camp Professional

”

Post summer, approximately one third of overnight camps and two thirds of day camps reported a budget surplus. However, the remaining camps were breaking even or experiencing a budget deficit. Many camps also reported that they use budget surpluses to provide funding back to parent or umbrella organizations.

Camp Budget Summary	Overnight	Day
Budget Surplus	36%	75%
Breaking Even	28%	10%
Budget Deficit	36%	14%

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 IN SUMMER 2023

A majority of both overnight and day camps reported that COVID-19 had no significant impact on summer 2023, and most camps were able to keep cases contained and community impact to a minimum. Some camps reported persisting affects of COVID-19 from past summers including continued enrollment issues and behavioral/MESSH challenges coming up for both campers and staff.

CURRENT AND FUTURE NEEDS OF THE FIELD

Camps rely on FJC to provide content training in the form of webinars, resources, and curriculum for the professional development of year-round and seasonal staff. The chart below shows the content areas that camps reported as most needed. However, camps reported prior to October 7th, 2023, and we recognize that the field's priorities have shifted significantly since then. We captured that information in a pulse survey that collected additional information on emerging security, staffing, and mental health needs of camps. You can read more about the results of that survey [here](#). While the conflict in Israel has created a list of immediate needs for camps, the needs below that were identified in our Camp Census survey are still relevant.

PRIMARY EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES NEEDED

Overnight Camp	Rank	Day Camp
Mental, emotional, social, spiritual health resources	1	Mental, emotional, social, spiritual health resources
Character development and resilience building resources	2	Diversity, equity and inclusion resources
Parent communication and engagement resources	3	Parent communication and engagement resources

Camps reported staff training and resources as an important need for summer 2024. Overnight camps also reported needing more MESSH resources and support, while day camps need more opportunities for grant funding and recruiting staff.



We appreciate that FJC keeps on top of the needs of Jewish camps. We appreciate your webinars and sharing of current best practices for our field.
– Day Camp Professional



PRIMARY CAPITAL NEEDS

Overnight Camp	Rank	Day Camp
Housing for staff	1	Programming Space
Programming space	2	Bathrooms
Housing for campers	3	Pool & Accessibility for campers and staff with disabilities

Day and overnight camps are experiencing a need for facilities upkeep and upgrades, including new outdoor and gym spaces for programming, as well as housing for staff and campers. Additionally, with our changing climate, temperature regulation is becoming more of a priority for camps who report needing new air conditioning and other cooling systems in camp, such as improved swimming options (lakes, pools, etc.).

Capital needs are a big priority for camps across the field as camps prioritize growing camper enrollment and making camp more accessible, all while upkeeping older buildings and facilities. Camps identified the need for help fundraising for these projects as fundraising allows camps to complete capital projects without increasing tuition.

PRIMARY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Overnight Camp	Rank	Day Camp
Recruitment of new campers	1	Recruitment and retention of seasonal staff
Capital projects and associated fundraising	2	Recruitment of new campers
Rising operational costs & Recruitment and retention of seasonal staff	3	Rising operational costs

Overnight camps need support recruiting new campers and raising funds for operations and capital projects. Day camps need help recruiting staff and campers and managing the rising costs of operating camp.

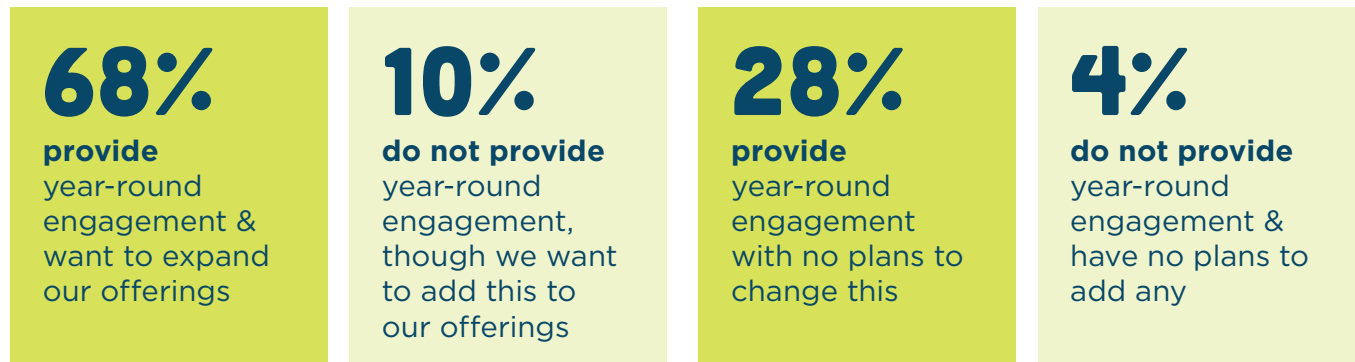
YEAR-ROUND ENGAGEMENT

In alignment with FJC's strategic plan, approximately two thirds of overnight and day camps in our network want to strengthen and expand their year-round offerings to their staff, campers, families, and alumni communities. There are numerous on- and off-site engagement opportunities for camps including hosting shabbat events, reunion weekends, and events for Jewish holidays throughout the year.

OVERNIGHT



DAY



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The field of Jewish camp has shown great resilience and has embraced a spirit of innovation, experimentation, and collaboration these past years. We know Jewish camps will continue to be a source of radiance and light for tens of thousands of children, teens, young adults, and families.

This report was made possible through the collective contributions of our camp leadership and Foundation for Jewish Camp (FJC) staff. While almost every member of the FJC team helped in some way, this report would not have been possible without the dedication and leadership of the following people:

Learning and Research: Nila Rosen, Bethany Berger, Maya Tipiere, Julia Bessen, Lawrence Wagner, Jenna Handler, Brent Novey, Gaby Toppelberg

Field Expansion and Operations: Rebecca Kahn, Staci Myer-Klein

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Executives: Jeremy J. Fingerman, Jamie Simon

We also want to share our sincere gratitude to the Jim Joseph Foundation for its belief in the power of Jewish camp and its investment in Foundation for Jewish Camp's data, research, learning, and knowledge capabilities.

ABOUT FOUNDATION FOR JEWISH CAMP

Foundation for Jewish Camp (FJC) fosters excellence and accelerates innovation at Jewish camps across North America by developing adaptive talent, deepening immersive learning experiences, and catalyzing field growth. Founded in 1998, FJC elevates Jewish camp on the cultural and philanthropic agenda, creating opportunities to engage even more young people in Jewish camp through groundbreaking programs such as One Happy Camper® and FJC's Specialty Camps Incubator. FJC advocates for over 300 day and overnight camps that provide campers and counselors each summer with a meaningful, personal, and lifelong connection to Judaism. FJC is a public 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

For questions about this report contact data@jewishcamp.org, and for more information, please visit: www.jewishcamp.org