

ONE HAPPY CAMPER®

NORTH AMERICAN SUMMARY 2025

Prepared by Foundation for Jewish Camp & Summation Research



2025

Evaluating the impact of the One Happy Camper Program (OHC) implemented by partner organizations throughout North America.

NORTH AMERICAN IMPACT OF THE ONE HAPPY CAMPER® PROGRAM (OHC)

This report evaluates the impact of the 2025 One Happy Camper Program (OHC) implemented by over 100 partner organizations (local Jewish federations, foundations, PJ Library, and camps) throughout North America. This past summer, 6,525 children received first-time OHC grants, a decrease of 4% from 2024. Additionally, this past summer, 788 children received returning-camper OHC grants, an increase of 58% from summer 2024.

The analysis of this year's program is based on survey research among 2,453 first-time OHC grant recipient families (45% response rate), a highly representative sample. This research has once again been supplemented, where appropriate, with data from the 2025 Camper Satisfaction Insights study (CSI), which included a total of 9,983 families from 100+ North American Jewish camps. The CSI study was also conducted by outside evaluators at Summation Research Group, Inc.

The findings indicate that OHC continues to be highly successful in (1) bringing thousands of children to overnight Jewish camp, (2) creating engagement and connections between camp families and sponsoring organizations, and (3) generating a "trial" first-time Jewish overnight camp experience that is creating "happy campers" who are highly satisfied, which leads to high levels of retention.

BACKGROUND

The challenge of passing along Jewish connection and commitment to the next generation has become one of the most important concerns of the American Jewish community. There is compelling evidence that Jewish overnight camp is a proven means of building Jewish identity, community, and leadership.

According to Foundation for Jewish Camp's (FJC) 2025 Camper and Staff Satisfaction Insights Surveys, 94% of families report that overnight camp connected their child to the Jewish people and the broader Jewish community and 94% of camper families reported high levels of satisfaction with their child's overnight camp experience. Camp is such an impactful experience that 60% of staff members reported that they had attended a Jewish overnight camp in their youth.

One Happy Camper has helped drive enrollment which has grown by 3.5% from 2024 to 2025. FJC estimates that 23,150 new campers attended Jewish overnight camp in 2025, representing 29% of the total overnight camper population at **160+ NONPROFIT JEWISH OVERNIGHT CAMPS** across North America. The OHC incentive program continues to drive enrollment by helping to reduce both the financial and attitudinal barriers that exist for many Jewish families.

Similar to 2024, the impact of the 2025 program has been assessed in terms of its return-on-investment, based on three distinct components:

- I. **OUTREACH:** The number and characteristics of new campers generated by the OHC incentive program.
- II. **ENGAGEMENT/CONNECTIVITY:** Relationships with partnering organizations and Jewish engagement created by OHC and the Jewish camp experience.
- III. **QUALITY OF EXPERIENCE:** Satisfaction and retention levels of OHC recipients.

2025: KEY FINDINGS

I. OUTREACH

In 2025, **6,525 CHILDREN** attended camp for the first time using an OHC incentive. We know, however, that like incentive programs for other goods or services, OHC "rewards" some families who would have sent their child to camp, with or without the incentive. To account for this, respondents are segmented into three groups based on their reported likelihood of sending their child to camp had OHC been unavailable. These three groups and the number of respondent families they represent are:

	2025 Total OHC (% OHC Respondents)	2024 Total OHC (% OHC Respondents)	2023 Total OHC (% OHC Respondents)
Required*	10%	9%	10%
Contributor**	65%	67%	64%
Bonus***	25%	24%	26%
(n)	2,453	2,502	2,341

* "1" on 1-5 scale--parents who were certain they would **not** have sent their child to camp without the incentive

** "2/3/4" on 1-5 scale--parents who may/may not have sent their child to camp without the incentive

*** "5" on 1-5 scale--parents who were certain they would send their child to camp, *regardless* of the incentive

(n) does not include any respondents who answered "don't know/not sure"

Based on this segmentation, we believe that 43% of the OHC respondents may not have attended overnight Jewish camp without OHC. This is calculated by combining everyone who "required" the incentive, plus *half* of those where the incentive "contributed" to their decision. Even more compelling is the fact that for many, OHC incentives helped influence their decision to provide their child with a Jewish summer experience. **THE RESEARCH SHOWS THAT FROM AN ARRAY OF SUMMERTIME ALTERNATIVES, ONLY 12% OF ALL RESPONDENTS SAID THAT JEWISH CAMP WAS ALWAYS THE PLAN.** This means that for 88% of respondents, Jewish camp was one of several options they were considering from among an array of *mostly secular* alternatives, including 31% who would have simply stayed home.

Consistent with previous years, OHC is helping sponsoring organizations reach **more** deeply into the **Jewish** community.

OHC HOUSEHOLD DEMOGRAPHICS

	2025 Required	2025 Bonus		Jewish Day School Only	All Other School Types		2025 Total		2024 Total
Synagogue-unaffiliated	34%	15%		12%	22%		19%		21%
Interfaith	25%	15%		3%	25%		19%		19%
At least 1 parent is from N. America	33%	22%		27%	24%		24%		37%
Someone in family identifies as a person of color	10%	4%		1%	7%		5%		5%
Somone in family identifies as part of the LGBTQ+ community	12%	7%		1%	9%		7%		7%

This outreach continues to lay the groundwork for a bright future. 49% of all OHC respondents did not have a parent who attended an overnight Jewish summer camp, up from 31% in 2024, which means OHC is reaching significantly more *NEW* to camp families. **In 2025, 51% of Total OHC recipients heard about the incentive from their camps and 31% from friends and family.** The OHC program has the potential to build future "legacies" among these new camp families.

Understanding the diversity of our community is a focus of Foundation for Jewish Camp. Here are some key demographics of our participants:

- 5% indicate they have someone in their family who identifies as a person of color.
- 7% of total OHC families say that someone in their family identifies as part of the LGBTQ+ community.
- 9% of total OHC families told us that at least one of their children has a disability.
Disabilities include individuals with intellectual, developmental, physical and/or sensory disabilities who require extra staff support or accommodation to be successful at camp.

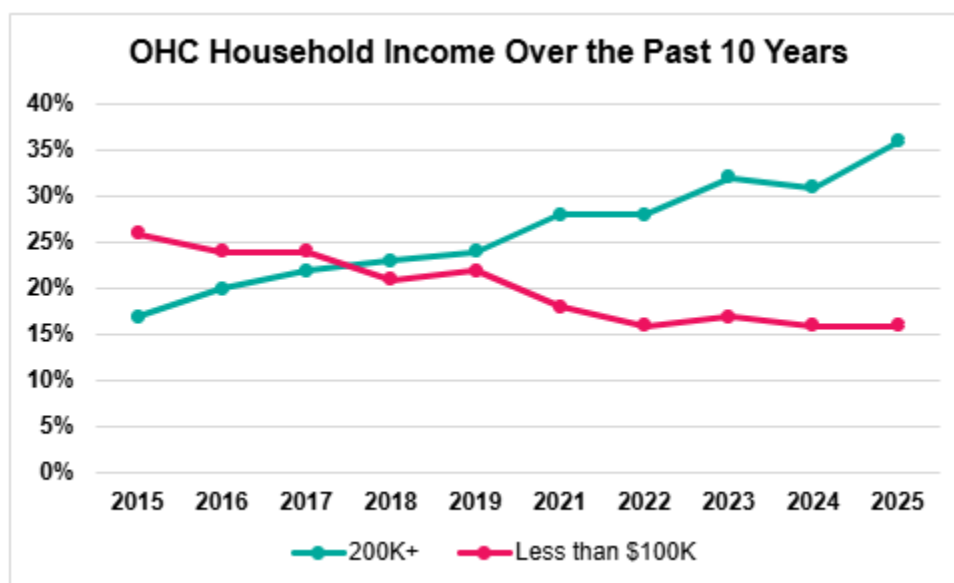
OHC AFFORDABILITY DEMOGRAPHICS

Family Household Income	2025 Required	2025 Bonus		Jewish Day School Only	All Other School Types		2025 Total		2024 Total
under \$100K	47%	5%		24%	13%		16%		16%
\$100 -\$200K	30%	19%		30%	28%		29%		32%
\$200 -\$300K	10%	21%		14%	21%		19%		17%
\$300K or more	2%	35%		12%	19%		17%		14%
Prefer not to answer	10%	20%		20%	19%		19%		21%

According to the 2025 Camper Satisfaction Insights survey, 45% of all overnight camp families received some form of financial assistance toward tuition - from their camp, One Happy Camper® grants, federations, synagogues, other community partners, or family members.

Additionally, 32% of One Happy Camper families received funding from these other sources alongside the OHC incentive, demonstrating the importance of multi-layered financial support in making Jewish camp financially viable for many households.

More higher earning families are applying for OHC now than in the past. From 2015 to 2025, OHC household incomes have shifted. As shown in the chart below, OHC families with incomes of \$200K+ have more than doubled in the past 10 years. Families with incomes of \$100K or less now only make up 16% of all OHC families compared to 26% in 2015.



** This graph represents only two of four possible answer choices to the household income question. It excludes the percentage of respondents who make between \$100K-200K and those that preferred not to answer the question.*

With so many summer options, FJC wanted to better understand the motivations of parents who send their children to Jewish overnight camp. In the 2025 CSI, parents were asked to select, from a list, what their goals were in sending their child to camp. Almost all families wanted their children to make friends and develop social skills, have fun, unplug from media and technology, and build character.

OHC FAMILIES' GOALS FOR SENDING CHILD(REN) TO OVERNIGHT JEWISH CAMP

Make friends and develop social skills	99%
To have fun	98%
Unplug from media and technology	96%
Strengthen character traits like integrity and confidence	96%
Have new experiences or try new things	95%
Develop an appreciation for nature and the outdoors	80%
Grow in faith and learn more about Judaism	80%
Equip families to continue the positive impacts of camp at home	67%
Deepen family engagement in the local Jewish community	56%
Deepen connection to Israel and Israelis	64%

II. ENGAGEMENT/CONNECTIONS

One Happy Camper grants reach campers and families who are less engaged in Jewish life. **FOR 52% OF OHC (NON-JEWISH DAY SCHOOL) GRANT RECIPIENTS, JEWISH OVERNIGHT CAMP IS THEIR PRIMARY IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE WITH JEWISH PEERS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR** (i.e., these recipients do not participate in Jewish youth group). And according to the 2017 OHC retention study, over **60%** of OHC recipients report a higher degree of involvement/ engagement with their temple/synagogue after their summer at camp. For many campers, year-round connections are being made where none may have previously existed.

For many families, OHC incentives continue to provide sponsoring organizations with an opportunity to engage them *programmatically, philanthropically, and spiritually.*

- 62% of OHC respondents are not currently members and/or donors of their sponsoring organizations, many with giving potential.
- 80% of OHC respondents believed the incentive "positively" affected their family's connection to the sponsoring organization.
- 76% of OHC respondents believed the incentive "positively" affected their family's connection to the overall Jewish community.
- 76% of OHC respondents were more likely to support the sponsoring organization.

III. QUALITY OF EXPERIENCE

Camper Satisfaction Insights (CSI) results show no meaningful differences between OHC and non-OHC families with respect to overall satisfaction and camp advocacy, meaning OHC campers behave and feel about camp, the same as other campers. CSI assess the impact of, and experience with, Jewish overnight camp and satisfaction with our "product."

While there are a few individual camp exceptions, the findings in all regions are, and have been, consistently outstanding:

	N. American All Campers	N. American OHC Campers
Overall Satisfaction	94%	94%
Likelihood to Recommend	95%	93%
Likelihood to Return to Camp	88%	88%

Based on "5"/"4" ratings on a 5-point scale

Moreover, as further evidence of the quality and value of the summer's experience. CSI has shown that **children attending these camps are being infused with Jewish education, awareness, and identity:**

	N. American All Campers	N. American OHC Campers
Overall created an environment that fostered Jewish pride	95%	96%
Camp's impact on your child's Jewish identity	91%	91%
Camp created an inclusive and protective space free from antisemitism	98%	98%
Camp created a sense of safety and belonging	97%	97%
Camp strengthened my child's connection to Israel	80%	80%

Based on "5"/"4" ratings on a 5-point scale

The 2017 OHC retention survey demonstrated that OHC grant recipients behave like all other campers. Once again, the results were overwhelmingly favorable, with return rates in the summer following the first-year incentive exceeding 85%.

The vast majority **(87%) OF OHC RECIPIENTS RETURN TO CAMP FOR A SECOND SUMMER**; retention grew for the third summer as over 90% of second-year campers returned.

OHC recipients do not request or require more scholarship funding than other campers and they receive scholarship funds at the same rate as other campers.

FJC is conducting another OHC Retention Study surveying recipients between summers 2021-2025. Results will be shared when available.

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS - MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT

51% of Total OHC recipients heard about the incentive from their camps and 31% from friends and family. **It is essential that every Jewish professional within the community is aware of the local OHC program and the myriad of Jewish camp opportunities.**

76% of OHC recipients started their camp search/summer planning at least 9 months in advance, while 57% began thinking more than a year ahead. Our findings reinforce the need to start recruitment at least 9 months prior to the beginning of camp.

73% of OHC families begin their search by contacting a camp that a friend or family member either attended or recommended. It's important for each camp to maintain attractive and up-to-date marketing materials (including their websites) and quality customer service year-round.

STUDY BACKGROUND

This research was conducted via an online survey, administered through the One Happy Camper registration system, and emailed to the applicant's parents AFTER they were notified that the grant had been approved. This study was conducted by outside evaluators at Summation Research, Inc.

2,453 surveys were completed out of a possible 5,402 North American OHC recipients who were sent the survey, for a response rate of 45%, 6% points lower than the 51% response rate in 2024. Not all OHC recipients were invited to respond; parents of siblings who attended camp were only asked to fill out one survey and select communities opted not to participate.

Charts represent Total OHC respondents, except where noted. Additional findings can be found in the Detailed Findings summary. Contact the Foundation for Jewish Camp for this information.