

CAMP SHRIVER AT UMASS BOSTON



2017
IMPACT
REPORT

CAMP SHRIVER

... SO ALL CHILDREN CAN LEARN AND PLAY —AS EQUALS



New in 2017

Camp Shriver's Saturday Camp is being held in partnership with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Dorchester. This program meets twice each month from October to May, continuing to serve children from Camp Shriver as well as new campers from the local community.

While recreational programs offered by schools and community agencies may accept children with disabilities, few—if any—are designed to enroll an equal number of children with and without disabilities. That is what makes Camp Shriver at UMass Boston unique. Camp Shriver serves an equal number of children with and without disabilities so that all children can play and learn—as equals.

For the past 13 years, Camp Shriver at the University of Massachusetts Boston has welcomed over 1,300 children, half with and half without intellectual and developmental disabilities, ages 8-12, from low income families in the Boston area to a free inclusive recreational camp.

Camp Shriver's mission is to bring children with and without disabilities together to provide opportunities for social and motor development, while promoting positive peer relationships among campers.

These social skills and positive peer relationships are essential for creating welcoming inclusive communities in classrooms and communities. At Camp Shriver, campers have a chance to interact with a diverse group of their peers, broadening their community to include children with disabilities, children from different backgrounds and children from different neighborhoods around the city. The benefits of these relationships will help children, with and without disabilities, become more fully active participants in their schools and communities.



THE NEED FOR INCLUSIVE PROGRAMS

Without inclusive programs such as Camp Shriver, children with intellectual and development disabilities are denied the beneficial impact of an inclusive environment. Numerous studies have demonstrated that inclusive camps improve the social participation and even self-esteem of children with disabilities (Marsh, 1999; Brannan, Arick, Fullerton, & Harris, 2000; Siperstein, Glick, Harada, Bardon, & Parker, 2007; Siperstein, Glick, & Parker, 2009). In fact, through participation in integrated activities such as inclusive sport instruction with children without disabilities, inclusive camps can enhance the social skills, independence, and resourcefulness of children with disabilities (Brannan et al., 2000).

However, the beneficial impact of an inclusive recreational camp is not only for children with disabilities—benefit is equally shared by children without disabilities. For campers without disabilities, inclusive camps provide the opportunity to develop a more realistic understanding and appreciation of what it means to have a disability and increase their acceptance of their peers with disabilities (Brannan et al., 2000). This is more important than ever before: a study of Boston-area children (Siperstein, Leffert, & Glick, 2007) found that children with disabilities were three times more likely to be rejected by their classmates than their peers without disabilities. This rejection leads to social isolation, so that outside of school, children with disabilities spend a great deal of their time alone. A comprehensive national survey showed that non-disabled youth are unwilling to socially interact with their disabled peers outside of school (Siperstein, Parker, Norins, & Widaman, 2007).

The social skills learned and practiced in inclusive environments make a significant difference in a child's life—a recent longitudinal study showed that a child's early social competence is predictive of major outcomes in adolescence and adulthood across the domains of education, employment, criminal activity, substance use, and mental health (Jones, Greenberg, & Crowley, 2015).



THE CSDE MODEL OF INCLUSION

Founded in 1976, the Center for Social Development and Education (CSDE) at the University of Massachusetts Boston is a multidisciplinary research institute whose mission is to promote the social development and overall quality of life for children with disabilities. The principles of the CSDE model of inclusion—based on 40 years of CSDE research and evaluation—are found in Camp Shriver programming:

- 1) 50/50 Population:** 50% of campers have an intellectual or developmental disability to reflect our commitment to serving children with and without disabilities in a truly inclusive environment where every child has equal opportunities for participation and friendship;
- 2) Need-Blind Staff in a Low 4:1 Camper-to-Staff Ratio:** Staff (outside of the Camp Director and Inclusion Specialist) are not informed which campers have a disability. Experienced staff are trained in inclusive recreation best practices and adapt activities to focus on all children's individual skills and abilities, not on a particular label;
- 3) Inclusive Activities:** Campers rotate in teams through four activity periods, transitioning deliberately from high to low impact activities, which allows campers to maintain their energy level throughout the day. Inclusive accommodations are made to all activities (swimming, soccer, basketball, kickball, crafts and more) following principles of universal design to promote participation. What participation looks like is different for all campers, especially campers with disabilities—meaningful choices are offered to all campers in every activity, such as choices between different variations of activities and choices between different equipment during activities.
- 4) Social Development:** Staff promote a culture of social responsibility by modelling and encouraging positive social behaviors among campers during structured and unstructured time. Social skills such as encouraging your peers, inviting others to play with you and joining in groups that are already playing are the building blocks of friendships and positive peer relationships.

With this model, Camp Shriver is creating inclusive communities where all children have equal opportunities to fully participate.



CHOICE IN RECREATIONAL CAMPS

... WHY SO IMPORTANT?

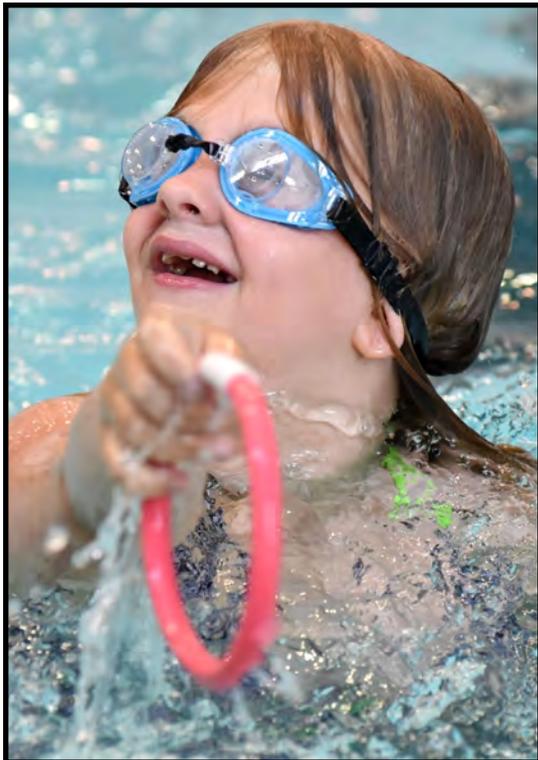
The importance of providing choices for children at camp is often underestimated, especially in an inclusive camp. Camps are generally seen as structured programs, where all campers follow a set schedule of activities with specific rules and guidelines, all pre-determined by the camp director and staff.

However, providing opportunities for children to make choices is vital for increasing engagement, enthusiasm and participation. When children—especially children with disabilities—have a chance to make a choice, they are more “enthusiastic about learning skills needed to participate, more readily apply those skills to other settings, and are more likely to continue to participate in those activities.” (Dattilo, 2017)

Many camps, including Camp Shriver, provide opportunities for campers to choose between activities during a free period, such as whether to jump rope, play four square, or draw with sidewalk chalk.

Uniquely, however, Camp Shriver’s model of inclusion also highlights the importance of providing choices for campers during activities. For example, in a game of basketball, campers can choose which line they shoot free throws from, or whether they will shoot a basketball or a lighter beach ball. In swim, campers can choose whether they want to stay in the shallow end or complete a swim test and play in the deep end; campers can also choose to play with the rings that sink to the bottom of the pool or the water bottles that float on top.

These meaningful choices are offered to all campers in every structured and unstructured activity—that is, during the gym or field activity period as well as during free time. In this way, Camp Shriver fosters an inclusive environment where every child can participate to the best of their ability.



SERVING CHILDREN

... OF DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS.

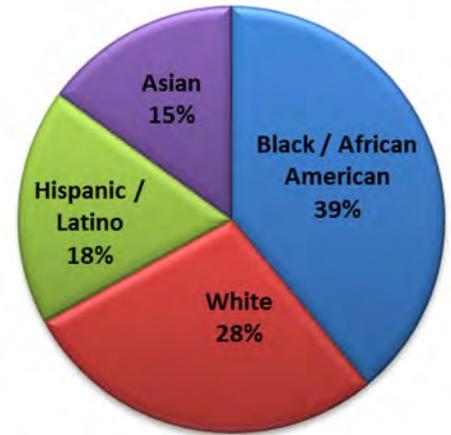
At Camp Shriver, we remain committed to welcoming children, ages 8-12, boys and girls, with and without disabilities, from low-income urban neighborhoods and ensuring diversity among its campers.

In 2017, over 350 applications to Camp Shriver were received. 134 campers with and without disabilities were accepted from Boston (75%) and Quincy (25%). The majority of campers lived in the neighborhoods surrounding UMass Boston, including Dorchester, Hyde Park, Jamaica Plain, Mattapan, Roslindale, South Boston and Roxbury. The ethnicity of our campers are representative of the communities in which they live: 72% of campers are from minority groups. We are committed to maintaining this level of diversity in our camp population: 39% of campers were Black/African American, 28% were White, 18% were Hispanic/Latino and 15% were Asian.

At the heart of Camp Shriver's unique inclusive experience, an equal number of children with and without disabilities are brought together to engage in the same recreational activities alongside one another. Our campers with disabilities are children with intellectual disabilities, on the autism spectrum, and who have other developmental delays. In 2017, 50% were children with a disability and 50% were children without a disability.

Additionally, Camp Shriver partners with schools and community groups that serve children from low-income neighborhoods to identify families that might be interested in and benefit from a free summer sports camp. In 2017, 66% of Camp Shriver families were low-to-moderate income as defined by the Federal Financial Institution Examination Council.

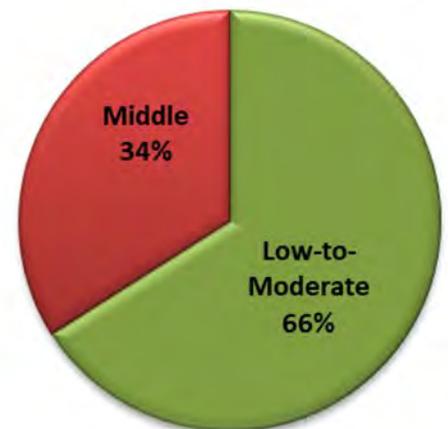
Camper Ethnicity



Camper Disability Status



Family Income Levels



ONE CAMPER'S STORY – MADDISON

Maddison sat on the edge of her seat at her team table. She made sure her seat was closest to the lunch line. As soon as Director Mark called the color of her team, she would be ready. She would jump up and run to the line. She would be first. She had to be first...

For Maddison, an 11-year-old girl with a learning disability and PTSD, being first in the lunch line wasn't something fun. Being first to the food was a manifestation of her PTSD. Having grown up in an environment where meals were scarce, hunger was constant and food was taken away as a disciplinary measure, Maddie was compulsively driven to make sure she got her share of lunch. Additionally, her learning disability further complicated the issue, making it more difficult for Maddie to process the information that she was no longer in that toxic environment. Her anxiety and emotional issues made it difficult for Maddison to fully participate in camp.

Director Mark worked closely with the Inclusion Specialist and staff to help Maddison develop the tools to stop perseverating and enjoy the moment. It began with a visual cue at lunch, walking Maddie up to the lunch line after every single camper had gone through to show her how there was so much food remaining the campers could have seconds. Mark would switch up the order of how he called her table so that Maddie could practice patience and see that there was always plenty of food.

With Camp Shriver's careful understanding of how Maddie's learning disability related to her PTSD, Maddie was able to learn the tools that helped her not only make it through the camp day—Maddie was able to thrive. She noticed when other campers were anxious to eat and would give those campers her spot in line. She passed out the lunch trays to her team, waiting until the very end to take her own. She became the camper on her team who brought the team together, always ready to help, and always there to be a good friend.

When she was safe and comfortable in camp—no longer in blind survival mode—Maddison made sure that everyone else felt safe and comfortable, too, creating the welcoming, inclusive community that Camp Shriver is all about.



IMPACTING CHILDREN

... THE IMPACT OF CAMP SHRIVER ON CAMPERS

A thorough and rigorous evaluation is conducted each year by research staff from the Center for Social Development and Education to assess whether Camp Shriver is successful at our mission: to bring children with and without disabilities together to provide opportunities to promote social and motor development, while fostering positive peer relationships. Assessment instruments and methods are drawn from the scientific literature and adapted to measure campers' social skills, social relationships and motor skills through individual camper interviews and staff observations and ratings. Camp Shriver has had demonstrated success in meeting its objectives since its inception in 2006 and has published the results in a variety of professional and peer-reviewed journals. From the 2017 evaluation, we learned:

Camp Shriver's model creates a community in which all campers feel included and supported

To successfully help campers develop social and motor skills, Camp Shriver must first create an environment where campers feel included and supported through the CSDE model of inclusion. This supportive structure creates a sense of belonging among all campers: in 2017, almost all campers (86%) felt proud of belonging to their team and included in activities most or all of the time. Even more indicative of the inclusive environment established at Camp Shriver, most or all of the time, campers felt like part of their team (86%) and that their teammates liked them the way they are (80%). This supportive environment paves the way for campers to feel comfortable to attempt and practice new social and motor skills.

This supportive environment is also one of the primary reasons why parents choose to send their child to Camp Shriver. Parents believe that it is somewhat or very important that their child attend camp in an environment that has a good reputation (97%), is inclusive (96%), and provides opportunities to meet new children in a recreational environment (96%)—and these percentages were the same for parents of children with a disability and parents of children without a disability. Clearly, the opportunity to participate in an inclusive, diverse environment is important to all families, no matter what the disability status of their child is.

Camp Shriver improves the social skills of campers

Once campers feel supported on their teams, Camp Shriver staff promote a culture of social responsibility by modelling and encouraging positive social behaviors among campers during structured and unstructured time. Some social skills are critical for creating a positive environment for inclusion to take place: social skills such as offering to help peers and encouraging on peers. Camp Shriver sees a great need to improve these skills, especially for children with disabilities, as only 20% of campers with a disability enter camp displaying these social skills (as compared with 40% of campers without a disability). Campers with a disability who had room to grow in these social skills made remarkable gains over the course of camp, with half of this population improving their social skills: 52% of these campers offering to help other campers more often, and 49% of these campers encouraging and cheering on peers more often.

Not surprisingly, the two social skills where Camp Shriver sees the greatest improvement are the two social skills critical for Camp Shriver's mission to develop positive peer relationships: inviting other campers to play with you and joining in groups that are already playing. Campers with disabilities demonstrated a greater need to improve in this area than campers without disabilities, as would be expected: only 17% of campers with a disability enter camp already displaying the skill of inviting other campers to play with them, as compared with 43% of campers without a disability; only 38% of campers with a disability enter camp already displaying the skills of joining others who are already playing, as compared with 72% of campers without a disability.

Nevertheless, all campers who had room to improve made significant gains in these areas. Over half of the campers with a disability (56%) improved in inviting other campers to play with them and, significantly, 83% of the campers without a disability improved in this important social skill for inclusion. Almost two-thirds of campers with a disability (62%) and 92% of campers without a disability improved in joining other campers who are already playing.

... THE IMPACT OF CAMP SHRIVER ON CAMPERS (CONTINUED)

Camp Shriver fosters friendships and positive peer relationships

The focus on the development of social skills is important as social skills are the building blocks to making and keeping friends. This is especially important for children with disabilities who often lack opportunities to develop peer relationships. In 2017, almost all campers (88%) were named as a friend by another camper, and 71% of campers had one or more mutual friendships. Most importantly, the majority of campers without disabilities (72%) named a peer with a disability as a friend—notable, when compared with recent data that shows only 30% of children in school will name a peer with a disability as a friend. Campers with a disability were more likely to name a peer without a disability as a friend as well (77% of campers with a disability named a peer without a disability as a friend / 68% of campers with a disability named a peer with a disability).

However, Camp Shriver recognizes that there is still a great need for improvement in this area. While the overall averages of friendships created are strong, there exists a discrepancy between children with and without disabilities. 100% of campers without a disability were named as a friend by another camper, as compared to only 76% of campers with a disability. Qualitatively, coaches and counselors are observing more friendships and many factors may be impacting this nomination rate (absence rate, evaluation tools, and the more significant needs of campers). Camp Shriver will continue to closely monitor this friendship data in future years.

Camp Shriver promotes motor skill development

Camp Shriver provides opportunities for motor skill development by increasing camper participation in all activities. Overall, campers participate in over 60 hours of instruction on the field, in the gym and in the pool. This time spent promoting motor skills additionally influences how campers feel about their motor skills; by the conclusion of camp, campers overwhelmingly believed that they improved their motor skills: 85% of campers believed they improved at swimming in the pool and in basketball and other gym activities; 80% believed they improved at soccer and other games played on the field.

Camp Shriver parents believe the positive effects of Camp Shriver last throughout the year

Parents overwhelmingly report the great influence they feel Camp Shriver has on their child throughout the year, and significantly, parents of children with and without disabilities are reporting very similar results. Parents of children with and without disabilities believe that as a result of Camp Shriver, their child is more confident (100%), more patient (96%), more active during the school year (95%), and more active in school activities (88%). 98% of parents (96% of a child with a disability and 100% of a child without a disability) believe their child develops leadership skills.

Parents of children with and without disabilities are reporting different levels of impact in categories that may be tied to the opportunities that are presented to children with and without disabilities. For example, while 100% of parents of children without disabilities reported their child was more involved in community activities, only 75% of parents of children with disabilities reported the same. Potentially, this discrepancy has more to do with activities offered in the local communities—are there less opportunities for children with disabilities to participate in community activities? Similar differences were seen in parents reporting more involvement in sports in the community (89% of parents of a child without a disability and 67% of parents of a child with a disability). Future evaluations will inquire into whether or not parents believe their child has opportunities to participate in their community to determine whether or not Camp Shriver is able to effect change in these categories, as well as how parents are defining these categories for their children.

In conclusion, Camp Shriver has had demonstrated success in meeting its objectives since its inception in 2006 and the evaluation results are used to continuously revise and improve Camp Shriver. The evaluation has been published in encyclopedias (Encyclopedia of Intellectual and Developmental Disorders), scientific journals (Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities), psychology magazines (Monitor on Psychology), camping magazines (American Camping Association) and on NPR's *.It's Only a Game*.

ONE CAMPER'S STORY – SERINA

Serina wasn't swimming. Her whole first week of camp, she managed to avoid the pool, even though, as a returning camper, she knew just how much fun the pool activities are. Finally, she decided it was time to tell someone. She pulled aside Dominique, Camp Shriver's gym coach, before lunch one day to confess what she was too embarrassed to tell anyone else. Her bathing suits just didn't fit her any more. Dom understood immediately.

Serina, a 12-year-old returning camper without a disability, was one of the biggest girls in camp—she was tall for her age and had matured a lot over the school year. Serina was extremely sensitive to the fact that she now looked different than a lot of her friends at camp. But she also knew how important it was at Camp Shriver to be with her team and participate to the best of her ability.

Dom was there for her. That day, after lunch, they picked out three bathing suits online, which Camp Shriver ordered and picked up the next day. Dom made sure that Serina felt comfortable, that Serina knew the staff was here to support her, and that the staff would do whatever was necessary to make sure that Serina had a successful summer.

Serina gratefully expressed thanks the best way she knew how—knowing that she was bigger, she also worked on being a bigger, better example for her fellow campers. Serina happily waited and was the last in line, allowing the other campers to go first. She noticed when someone was on the sidelines and made sure to invite that camper into the activity.

When a camper needed some extra time and a quick hug, Serina was there. When a camper was not having a good day, Serina was there—and sometimes that meant intervening and asking her peers to stop behaviors that were alarming the upset camper.

Serina felt comfortable taking the initiative and intervening to make her fellow campers' days more positive. With these important social skills, Camp Shriver has no doubt that Serina will go on to become a leader in creating welcoming and inclusive communities wherever she is!



CAMP SHRIVER...
IN THE CAMPERS' OWN WORDS

I meet new friends, learn new skills, and do things I've never done in my life!

Camp Shriver is fun because it brings people that are different, together.

We get to do physical activity, different sports and play new games!

My friends at Camp care about me.



My friends encourage me to participate in every game!

I can trust my friends at Camp Shriver—they will always be there for me.



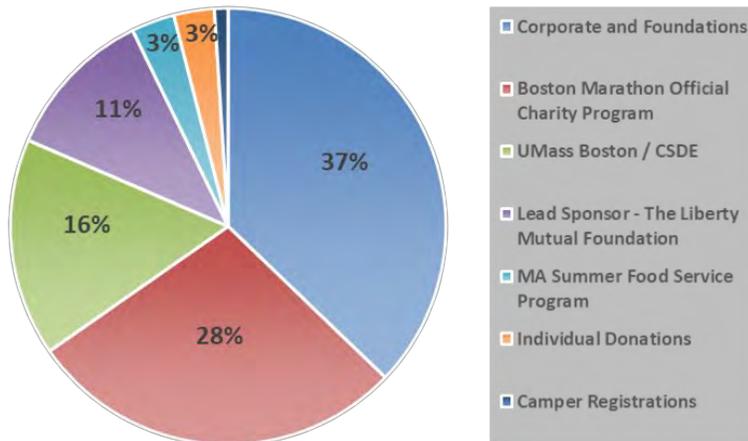
The counselors are the best!



My friends always say good stuff when I am feeling droopy—they build people up!

SUSTAINABILITY OF CAMP SHRIVER

Camp Shriver is a financially stable program, comprising support from the Center for Social Development and Education (administration and fundraising) and the University of Massachusetts Boston (facilities and transportation). Additionally Camp Shriver has been awarded multi-year grants from the Liberty Mutual Foundation and the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Eastern New England, as well as a long-term partnership with Boston Athletic Association as an Official Charity Partner of the Boston Marathon. We continue to actively solicit new and varied funding opportunities each year.



A GRATEFUL THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Camp Shriver and the Center for Social Development and Education would like to thank the UMass Boston community, the John Alden Trust, the Edith and Paul Babson Foundation and all of our friends and sponsors:



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INSURANCE



OFFICIAL CHARITY

A special thank you to the Boston Athletic Association and all our runners, who have raised over \$450,000 since 2013 as an Official Charity of the Boston Marathon. Go, Team!

CAMP SHRIVER

AT UMASS BOSTON



2017