



## SUMMER CAMPS

*“It’s easy to make a person feel like there’s no way out. But there’s always a way out.”*

Across the United States, there are thousands of children who have never been out of their urban surroundings – surroundings rife with violence, drugs, poverty, and hopelessness. So when school lets out for the year and those children suddenly have the entire summer ahead of them, they can become even more vulnerable to the ills of the world.

But many families have found a way to not only keep their children safe during the summer, but also expose them to the wonder of nature, the joy of new friends, the thrill of fresh experiences, and the exhilarating possibilities of a Salvation Army summer camp.

*“I think the camps really provide an opportunity for young people just to get away and be young people.”*

At Salvation Army camps across the country, children are given opportunities to participate in activities like archery, canoeing, rope courses, zip lines, swimming, sports, hiking, and more. They are fed nutritious meals, which for many is a new experience as well. And they meet new, diverse friends and are led by counselors who shower them with love and encouragement.

The entire experience, from beginning to end, is eye-opening, heartwarming, and, in many cases, life-changing. Just ask the counselors, many of whom come from the same urban backgrounds as the campers, attended a Salvation Army camp themselves when they were younger, and had a world of opportunity opened up to them.

*“I just wanted to change someone else’s life like camp has changed mine.”*



For children who have never experienced life outside of the city, summer camp not only introduces a new environment, but also presents new spiritual opportunities. From Bible studies to chapel services, campers are taught how much God loves them and how to return that love through song and worship. And they are equipped with a hope that exceeds anything they have ever known.

That hope – and the love they experience at camp – is something children bring home with them, something that stays with them long after their days at camp are over, and something that they are bursting to share with their family, their friends, and their community.

*“When they go back home into whatever situation they’re coming from, they have something to share. And I hope it’s love.”*