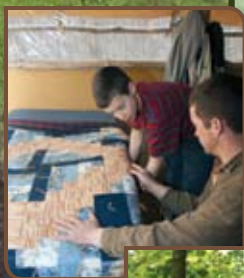




Ohio Wilderness Boys Camp



Renewing Hope for Hurting Families...

COMMENTS...

*Thanks for giving us hope
and shining light upon our
family's situation.*

- parent

*Making a world of
difference in my son.*

- parent

*The change in our son has been SO positive that even
family acquaintances have remarked at the improved
behavior of our son. Everyone [who] knew him before
Camp remarks on how much he has matured this past
year... Camp has been the blessing we've prayed for and
the hope for our son we could not provide ourselves.*

- parent

We believe that a child's behavior is influenced by his attitudes,
and that his attitudes are shaped by his values. In order to
realize lasting change with a troubled boy, we must do more than
control his negative behavior.

the NEED

Census and juvenile crime statistics continue to reveal the need across our nation to guide troubled boys to more positive choices and better life habits. Parents, and especially single moms, often cannot handle growing sons who no longer respect or obey them. Adopted and foster care children can have difficulty coping with their past and act out inappropriately toward those who have chosen to love and guide them. Educators at times find a boy unresponsive to their teaching and a hindrance to the rest of the class. For these and other reasons, there continues to be a need to help those boys who require more intensive care than the normal home and school environment can offer.



Camp is permeated by the spirit of **Hope** that; indeed, problems **can** be solved and broken relationships healed.

the VISION

Ohio Wilderness Boys Camp helps boys experiencing trouble work toward appropriate behavior through mentors in a setting that appeals to them: the out-of-doors. Our program uses natural consequences for a boy's good and unacceptable actions that immediately and directly impact him. Living in a world of instant and personal consequences within a peer group experiencing similar results of behavior has a profound effect on a boy. The average Camp stay for a boy is 18 months and is divided into 6 - week 'sessions' with a Homevisit following each session. This therapeutic camping environment has changed very negative behaviors and habits in boys. Camp is led, supported, and staffed by the conservative Anabaptist churches of Ohio and nearby states.



the STAFF

Two responsible, positive young men lead each group of ten boys 24 hours a day as counselors (Chiefs). Groupwork Supervisors and the Program Director oversee and help the Chiefs. The Camp Director, Cooks, Maintenance Supervisor and Secretary provide the support team needed beyond that in the office, kitchen, and shop. Family Workers interact with the families before, during, and after their son's stay at Camp. The number of boys at Camp is limited to forty so that every staff member can per-

sonally be acquainted with each Camper. At Camp we are not trying to 'fix' a boy. Neither do we do things 'for' our boys or 'to' our boys. In all that we do, we do things 'with' our boys. We provide a caring, highly supportive structure in a boy's life that helps him succeed where he knows he has a history of failure. Campers set their own attitude / behavior goals and then our entire Camp staff strives to make him successful.

the FACILITY

Ohio Wilderness Boys Camp utilizes over 600 acres of upper Ohio River valley wilderness, which is stimulating for boys. This natural space is tolerant of boys' socially-unacceptable behavior so that their deeper needs can be identified and met. Much of every boy's stay at Camp will be in the primitive campsite that his group designs, builds, and maintains. The

groups also use a modern shower house, dining hall

(called Chuck-wagon), and library. Also, at the Camp Trading Post, boys purchase needed items through a Camp checkbook while learning about budgeting, saving, and wise spending habits. Camp's office and maintenance shop round out the non-wilderness part of Camp. The staff is housed on property for 24-hour availability to our Campers.



FAMILIES

Often sending their son to Camp is a much needed respite and time of healing for the other family members. And like their boy, each Camper's family has its own unique strengths and weaknesses. Parents meet during each 6-week session to share encouragement and learn the principles that Camp is teaching their sons. Weekly study assignments help each family learn and grow to have the structure, routine, and stability needed to raise a boy that is experiencing emotional instability. The progress made by both Camper and family becomes evident when the boys spend 4-5 days at home at the end of each session. Families come to Camp every 90 days for evaluations with their son and special events like Families Day in the spring.



"We appreciate what the Lord has done through [OWBC] for our son. Camp has been a real blessing to our family."

~a graduate's parents

PROGRAM HISTORY

The Wilderness Road Therapeutic Camping model was born out of the medical and social problems caused among children by the intense urbanization of the early 1900's. Education and child-development pioneer John Dewey was promoting new ideas about the value of experiential education. In 1925, John Dewey recommended one of his students, L.B. Sharp, to work with Time-Life magazine to reorganize Life's summer camps and set them on an educational basis with the goal of further helping hurting children in New York State.

In the mid-1940's, the Salesmanship Club in Texas heard about the success of the New York programs and hired Campbell Loughmiller to run a similar program. Using Sharp's model and realizing the value of relationships, Loughmiller and the program sponsors soon discovered the value of long-term, primitive camping for behaviorally maladjusted boys and developed the Wilderness Road Therapeutic Camping model.

Over the last 60 years, Camps have operated across the United States serving thousands of boys resulting in a finely tuned therapeutic program. The Wilderness Road Therapeutic Camping Association (WRTCA) oversees the present-day Camps who hold true to the founder's basic principles. These

Camps employ a universal Biblical ethic as we help boys learn to choose

attitudes and actions that are right, instead of those that damage themselves and others. The WRTCA conducts training and provides assistance to new Camps beginning to help boys who are experiencing trouble. As the Camps interact with the educational, correctional, and mental health care professions, the WRTCA Program continues to evolve into a blend of the current child care approaches and the tried and true methods that continue to stand the test of time.

Over the decades, studies show that Camp is 70-85% successful at helping boys grow beyond their behavioral and attitude problems. Post-graduation follow-up has become more important in recent years as each Camper returns home to his community to live out what he has learned at Camp.

As a new millennium has begun, our children face new and different stresses that include the 'uninvolved father' as part of a totally changed family structure, changing societal morals, wide-spread use of behavior modifying drugs for children, and the influences of a rapidly changing technological age. The combined staffs of WRTCA Camps are committed to courageously care for boys with behavior issues in order to bring lasting, positive change that they may become useful members of our communities.

For a more complete description of Wilderness Therapeutic Camping consult Wilderness Road by Campbell Loughmiller, published by Hogg Foundation of Mental Health – University of Texas, Austin. Available from WRTCA.





HABIT FORMATION: STRUCTURE & ROUTINE

While at the Camp, boys have routine and structure which creates positive habits in their lives. At the most basic level is what we call the A, B, C's of Camp: 1) Clean Camper, 2) Clean Camp Tent, and 3) Clean Campsite. Orderliness and a 'Camp' way of doing things gives boys a feeling of 'it's done right' in their external world which helps them know what to aim for in their internal world. Living in a place where many things can be counted on, such as: three delicious meals served on time at Chuckwagon, a hot shower, wake-up time, and living according to our agreed-on plan for the day all give stability to our Campers' lives. The interest, encouragement, and care of staff, and especially his Chiefs, is the most important constant for our boys.



The daily Camp routines are designed to accomplish not only hands-on physical achievements, but also essential life skills such as planning, teamwork, and personal responsibility.



GROUP LIFE

Living life as a group of ten boys in a primitive environment creates an interdependence as life experiences are shared. At Camp, boys learn to work together as they plan their daily activities in a balanced way to get needed work done, enjoy fun activities, and learn new things as a group about the world in which they live. Boys can look forward to their plans and carry them out. They also learn from each incident through fair evaluation as the day progresses and as they review the whole day prior to bedtime, sharing with each other how their experiences affected them personally.

Plan..Do..Evaluate is a cornerstone of Camp. It helps our boys conquer impulsivity, lack of direction, and meaning for the moment; not learning from previous experiences, unpreparedness, and not having a sense of personal accomplishment due to the lack of any plan.



PROBLEM SOLVING

Camp serves ‘boys experiencing problems.’ For all of us, though, life consists of a multitude and myriad of problems to solve. Most of our problems are small, practical ones – such as, how to fix something – while some are much more significant – like the loss of income or a loved one’s death. Adults, and even most children, work through these difficult times in life and mature because of them. Our Campers, however, are characterized by an inability to work through their larger life struggles in a positive way. This inner frustration results in their small issues becoming overwhelming, which bring verbal and physical outbursts or sullenness. These responses can pull family, friends, educators, and authorities into a downward spiral of unpleasant experiences on possibly a daily basis.

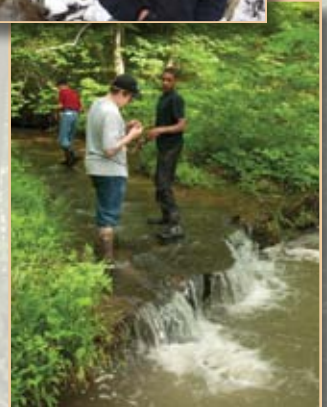
A primary goal for each boy at Camp is that he learns problem solving. Life at Camp is full of little ‘problems’ that our Chiefs can help a boy become successful at solving: a messy bed, an incorrectly set table, an empty stomach, or a muddy trail. Building on the success of small and natural problems solved, we tackle behavior and attitude struggles in the same, familiar way: every day...throughout the day. Camp celebrates small problem solving successes, and lends support to solve more difficult challenges. We teach boys to: 1) identify a problem to understand if we are looking at the surface or root of it, 2) offer solutions and recognize the pros and cons of each, 3) choose and execute a solution, and 4) evaluate whether the chosen solution and execution could be improved upon.





At Camp we look at challenging situations as problem solving opportunities. Such teachable moments do not hold until an appointed counseling session, so we begin immediately by allowing the task that the boys were in the middle of to wait until the group solves the problem. This makes everyone friends again so life can be enjoyed anew. At Camp, every problem, natural or emotional, big or small, is an opportunity to learn and grow for everyone – each boy in the group and staff members alike. Problems at Camp are not avoided nor looked at negatively but embraced and overcome using whatever resources are necessary.

All of Camp is behind problem-solving! While at Camp, a boy learns to solve his major problems and help others do the same. When a boy graduates from Camp, his life will not be problem-free, but he will know how to own and solve them appropriately.





EDUCATION

At Camp, all of life is up for investigation, and learning takes place every day, throughout the day, and in every situation the Camper finds himself. Staying under budget while planning a menu that includes all of the food groups is so personal that he will not only eat it, but also serve it to his group so they can enjoy the experience together...or laugh at a small failure. Birds, flowers, aquatic life, and all of creation beg to be explored, experienced, and studied. Writing an article about these experiences for the Camp newspaper, a letter home, making weekly plans, and trip plans all afford opportunity for language arts improvement in a personal way. Designing tents or even a bridge motivates to improve math skills. Six-week session themes bring history, geography, physics or economics alive to boys. At Camp, education is life-wide.

The education program at Camp is “life-wide education.” This means that using a boy’s natural curiosity in our educationally rich environment, we can capture many “teachable moments” throughout the course of a day.

TRIPS

It is valuable to see how strong newly-formed habits have become when removed from the comforts and structures of Camp. Boys take fun and exciting trips away from Camp if they are willing to do the research and planning necessary for such an outing. A trip might have an educational theme like “Dairy” where farms, cheese plants, ice cream factories and retail dairy stores might be visited. Or it could take the form of a two-week canoe trip, or a three-week backpacking trip. Menus and food lists, gear and supplies lists, itineraries, restocking points, check-in places, and a host of other planning details help boys think ahead, be prepared, and plan for success. As they are away from the larger staff team, they learn to depend more on their Chiefs and group to handle the unexpected. Boys grow through Camp trips they participate in.



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Licensed by:
Ohio Dept. of Health,
as a Residential Camp



Our mission is to provide quality care for boys experiencing problems and their families without regard to race, ethnic origin, religious creed, or economic status. We work together with parents, referring agencies, and schools to address the unique needs of each child.

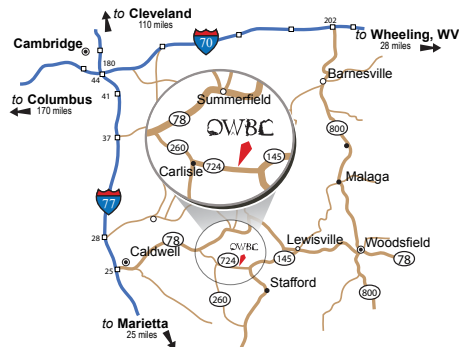
the LOCATION

We are located in the Upper Ohio River Valley of south-eastern Ohio, about 50 minutes drive south of Interstate 70.

GPS Coordinates:

North 39° 45'

West 81° 19'



COMMENTS...

This Camp has been exactly what my troubled son needed. It has restored Hope. Everyone around my son will now see the person he is. This experience has given my family a new lease on Life. He now has life skills that he can always use! Thank you Chiefs and Staff.

- parent

We appreciate all the staff and their hard work. Our son has really improved emotionally.

- parents

The Camp has given us hope for our son when we were ready to give up. They have been able to meet him where he is at and address his needs.

- parents

Sir:

Just a brief note to tell you how much I enjoyed your group on Tuesday at Schoenbrunn and to thank you for coming. I have been guiding tours for several years and your group was the finest I have ever done. I can't tell you when I have taken as much pleasure in conducting a tour as I had with yours. After learning a little about your Camp, I was a bit leery of the group. I was pleasantly surprised. The group was more attentive and inquisitive than any I have ever experienced. As I told one of your counselors, they may be troubled, but they are not stupid. The questions from the students and staff alike showed a great interest in what they were seeing. It was wonderful to see several of the boys taking notes and grave rubbings.

Please come back and see us often. It will be our distinct pleasure to have you.

*Respectfully and sincerely,
Tour Guide*



Ohio Wilderness Boys Camp