

# Kids On The Go - Traverse City

## 2021 CAMP REPORT



[kidsonthegocamptc.com](http://kidsonthegocamptc.com)





# Moving Forward

As a pediatric physical therapist, I constantly problem solve and adapt to help kids achieve their goals. So, when I noticed our region's need for more children's therapy services, I started problem-solving and dreaming up a solution. In 2019, I assembled a group of community leaders, healthcare providers, and parents who shared a goal of creating a free summer therapy camp for local children. We partnered with Kids On The Go, a non-profit camp in metro-Detroit that I previously worked for as a PT, and after much preparation our Traverse City camp was ready to launch.

Then Covid-19 hit. But in true physical therapist style, we kept moving forward. Our team switched to a virtual camp in 2020 and provided free therapy for local children all summer. We found creative ways to fundraise during a pandemic, promoted our camp on virtual platforms, hired more staff, recruited volunteers, and when summer 2021 rolled around, we were flooded with families enrolling their kids in Traverse City's newest (and only) free summer therapy camp.

I'm happy to report our very first in-person camp was a success! For six wonderful weeks, our talented staff led an incredible group of campers through themed activities to further their skills and abilities. I'm so proud of our team for navigating all of the pandemic-related challenges and for keeping our campers safe, happy, and healthy. As a PT, I know we must keep moving forward to our next goal. I have big dreams for this little camp, and I'm thrilled to see the positive impact we have already made in our community. I can't wait to see what the future holds.

Dr. Natalie R. Ramsey  
Pediatric Physical Therapist  
Director, Kids On The Go - Traverse City

# Our Campers

During our 6 week long 2021 summer camp, children met 2 times per week for 2 hour sessions. Our programs are custom designed for children with special needs, ages 3-8 years old. We were excited to offer free enrollment to 15 campers this year, who each enjoyed our fun and interactive weekly themes with a therapeutic twist.

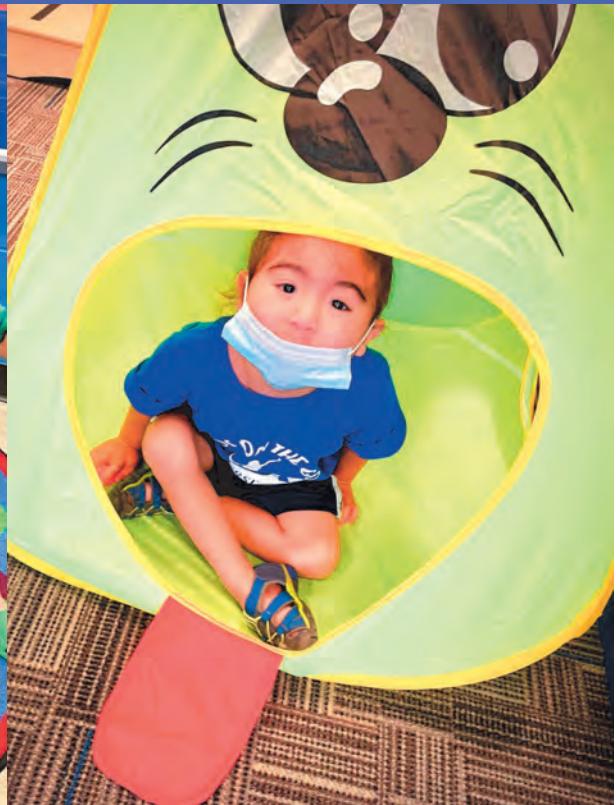
Our morning camp group consisted of 8 children ages 3-5 years old, 7 boys and 1 girl, and our afternoon group was made up of 7 children ages 4-8 years old, 5 boys and 2 girls. Each session was led by a team of 4 therapists and 1 student volunteer.

Our highly trained therapist staff built specialized programming around our campers' various medical diagnoses, including Down Syndrome, hypotonia, autism spectrum disorder, sensory processing disorder, visual impairment, gait dysfunction, ADHD, developmental delay, agenesis of corpus callosum, cleft lip and palate, apraxia, Koolen-de Vries Syndrome, epilepsy, and dysphagia.

**15**  
**Participants**

## 2021 WEEKLY THEMES:

- Blast Off To Summer
- S'More Fun (Camping)
- Dino World
- KOTG Olympic Games
- Rock On (Music)
- Calling All Superheroes





## Our Staff

Helping kids with special needs requires specialized staff. We are proud to employ highly trained pediatric therapists who come from a wide range of clinical backgrounds and bring a wealth of knowledge to our program. This year's camp was staffed by one physical therapist, one occupational therapist, and two speech language pathologists, all of whom have Masters or Doctoral level degrees and many years of experience and training. Our therapists have a combined 26+ years of university education!

Each year, our therapist team helps customize camp programming to fit each camper's individual therapy goals. Plus, our therapists and volunteers bring the fun and energy to every camp session. We sing, we dance, we get silly, and we are there to help address to the unique social, emotional, sensory, and physical needs of each camper.

**100%** of families felt the staff were experts in their field

# Equity & Inclusion

At Kids On The Go, we believe therapeutic healthcare resources and services should be accessible and available to children of all ages and abilities. Thanks to the generous support of donors and sponsors our community, we are able to offer our camp programs 100% free of cost to campers and their families.

During our first year of in-person programming, we received an overwhelming response from families interested in expanded services for their children. We received over 30 applications for our 15 available camp spots this summer. We also spoke with many families interested in services for older children outside of our current 3 to 8 year old age range. Local families are interested in sports-specific groups, social groups, collaboration projects with various programs, and even parent workshops to help support and assist family members facing unique challenges.

One of our goals for the upcoming years is to raise adequate funding to meet the needs of our community and keep our camp free for all. We look forward to offering expanded programming in the future.

**100%** of families believe Kids On The Go helps expand pediatric resources in our region





# Our Camp Location

## Immaculate Conception Elementary School

Constructed in 2019, Immaculate Conception Elementary School provides a spacious and accessible setting for our campers to learn and grow. Located in beautiful downtown Traverse City, campers are able to advance and enhance their physical, occupational, social, and communication skills with our therapist team.

Out of the families surveyed in 2021, **88.9%** were highly satisfied with the facilities at Immaculate Conception Elementary. We are grateful for the continued support from Grand Traverse Area Catholic Schools, and look forward to continuing our partnership with them to help serve our community together.

**100%** of families felt that their child was in a safe, clean, and health-conscious environment at camp

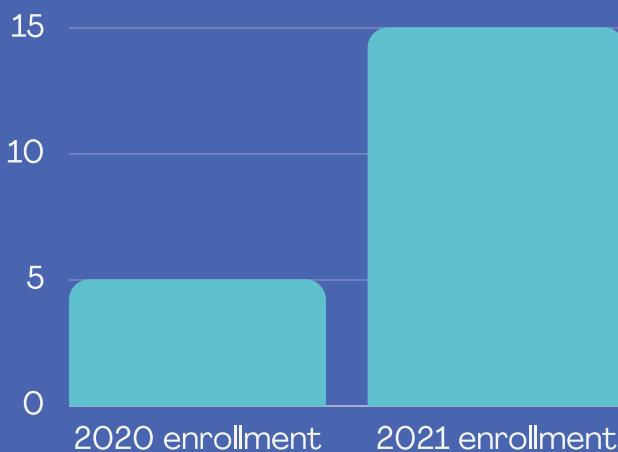


# Camper Demographics

**20%**  
**FEMALE**

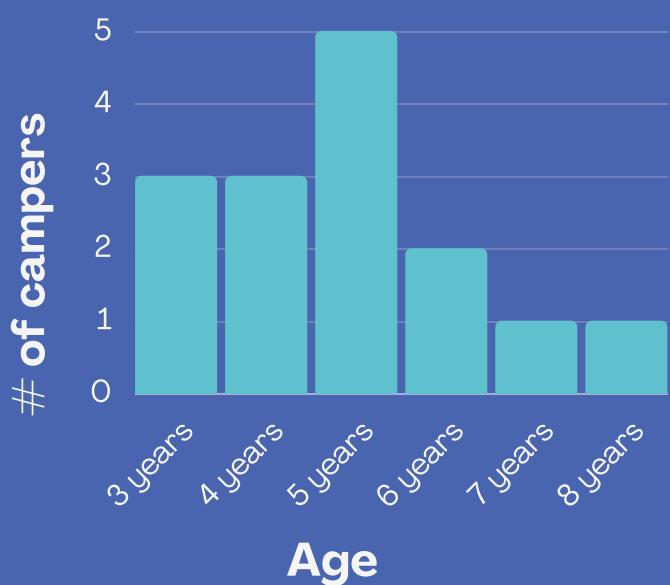
**80%**  
**MALE**

**200% Enrollment Increase**



**87%**  
**first time  
participants**

In 2021, we were happy to welcome back **100%** of our staff therapists from the previous summer. We saw a large increase in new camper interest enrollment, plus strong attendance and participation during camp. In order to better serve the needs of our community, we hope to expand our current programming to include more campers ages 3 - 8 years old, offer various opportunities for community inclusion and collaboration, plus provide additional programs for older children in the future.



**100%** of families felt their child was well supported by staff, and we offered appropriate staffing to meet their physical, sensory, social, and emotional needs



# Communities Represented

In 2021, Kids On The Go camp drew applicants, participants, and staff from a wide range of Northern Michigan schools, counties, and communities who were in need of summer opportunities.

## 10 SCHOOLS

Courtade Elementary	Willow Hill Elementary	Eastern Elementary
Traverse Heights Elementary	Mill Creek Elementary	Little Blessings Daycare
	Silver Lake Elementary	
Kingsley Elementary	Immaculate Conception Elementary	Lake Ann Elementary

## 5 COUNTIES

Leelanau County

Antrim County

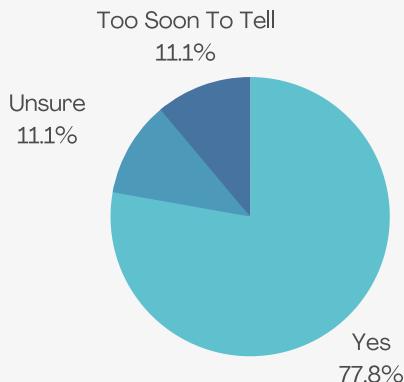
Grand Traverse County

Missaukee County

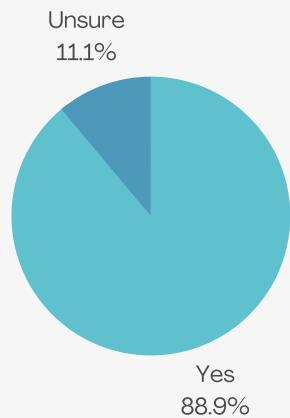
Kalkaska County

# How Did We Do?

Following our camp program, all participants' families were emailed a 34 question feedback survey where they could anonymously share their ideas, thoughts, and suggestions. This feedback is then reviewed by our Director, therapist team, and Advisory Board to help plan, adjust, and budget our future programs to adapt to the needs of our local community.



**Do you feel your child's therapy goals were addressed this summer?**



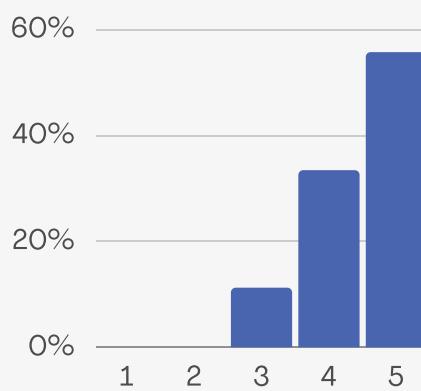
**Does your child now feel more confident or independent with speech, gross motor, and/or fine motor skills?**

**100%**

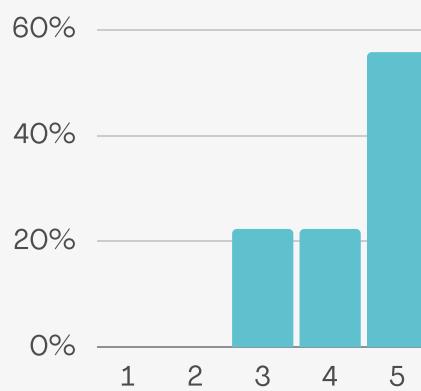
**of families felt their child made progress with social skills and group participation**

**Over the course of the program, do you feel your child made progress with:**

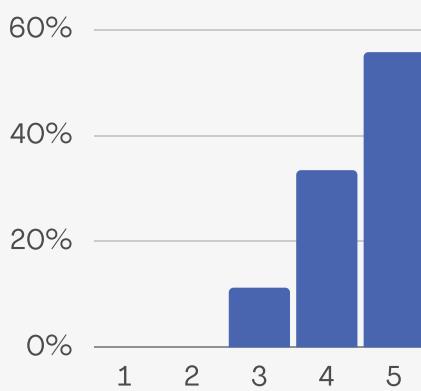
Speech/communication skills



OT/fine motor skills



PT/gross motor skills



1 = strongly disagree    5 = strongly agree

**60% survey response rate**



# Family Feedback

Here is some feedback shared from our incredible camp families, parents, and caregivers:

"**Awesome experience** for our son. He learns best with routine. He came and went with a smile everyday."

"Her eagerness to go to 'camp school' showed how much she loved it there. Getting to socialize with her peers is **so necessary and needed in the community.**"

"Our son learned how to better join a group which is absolutely critical for him. We are **VERY** grateful."

"I really felt the staff **cared for my camper** and had his best interests at heart. That felt really good."

"Progress in speech was a huge goal for us and we feel that he is making leaps and bounds at the moment! Every time we pulled into the parking lot he would say "I SO EXCITED!"... 3 words! Together! Another really big goal was to get him to be more interactive in groups. He typically is fine to be by himself or wander off to do his own thing. He seemed to enjoy group activities and looked to be part of them in all the photos I saw!"

"Our son came home singing a new song the very 1st day."

"I loved the engaging units, mixed in with therapies that **addressed individual goals.**"

"Every therapist seemed very engaging with each camper and were very willing to talk afterwards about what they did during camp. Also if any parent had any personal questions about their child they were always willing to talk."

"The staff did amazing! It was full, open communication and I really appreciate that. They did a great job!"

"**Loved the program!** So glad we could be a part!"

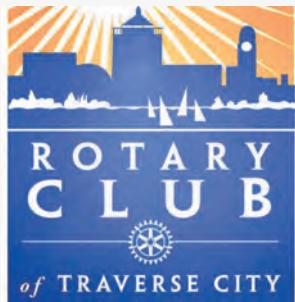
"My son had so much fun and definitely showed progress all around. I am thankful and appreciative for this opportunity we were given! Thank you!!"

**100%** of families plan to enroll their child in Kids On The Go camp again next year



# Thank You Sponsors

As a 501c3 non-profit organization, our camp is 100% supported by donations. Our Traverse City program would not be possible without the generosity of our donors and sponsors and we are grateful for their continued support!



Mary Kay Trippe   The Zimmer Family   The Miller Family  
The Wentzloff Family   Amanda Wolff   Jim & Peggy Anthony   George Miller II  
Sarah Masak   The Canfield Family   The Michelin Family  
The Les and Anne Biederman Foundation



## Making Fun Therapeutic



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