

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



HEALING THROUGH HAPPINESS





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A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

Thanks to your generosity, 2024 was a year of transformative growth for Campfire Circle (formerly Camp Ooch & Camp Trillium). Together, we reached 45% more medically fragile children and their families this year, bringing camp experiences to 1,600 more campers across Ontario compared to 2023.

By deepening our partnerships with our paediatric healthcare partners, we reached 40% more patients in hospitals—an impact felt by 2,970 children who found moments of fun and connection during serious medical challenges.

This year, our overnight camps at Muskoka and Rainbow Lake welcomed more campers than ever before, expanding our reach by 25% and giving 500 more kids and families the chance to experience the joy of camp all-year round.

Alex saw our increasing impact firsthand while serving as a cabin counsellor at our serious illness session in Muskoka. For over 100 kids with heart disease and serious blood disorders, like sickle cell disease, this week was a powerful reminder of the kind of experiences only Campfire Circle can provide.

We also hosted our first weekend for families of children with medical complexities, in partnership with Emily's House Children's Hospice and medical advisors from SickKids. One mom, Nidra, shared: "We loved every minute of it. It was amazing that I could take my son with his wheelchair on the high ropes. I could never have imagined Muhammad doing that kind of activity." You can read more about Nidra's story on page 9.

These are the moments your support makes possible. And we're just getting started. With your continued partnership, we'll reach even more children and families in 2025.

Thank you for being an integral part of our circle.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Grossklaus
Board Chair

Alex Robertson
CEO, Campfire Circle





ABOUT CAMPFIRE CIRCLE

Since 1983, Campfire Circle (formerly Camp Ooch & Camp Trillium) has brought healing through happiness to kids with cancer or serious illness and their families—at no cost to them.

IN HOSPITALS

Although we are a privately funded organization, in Ontario's paediatric healthcare system, Campfire Circle plays a key role in providing play-based programming, combatting isolation, supporting frontline healthcare teams, and ensuring equitable access for kids too sick to go home. We have teams at The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids), McMaster Children's Hospital, Children's Hospital at London Health Sciences Centre, the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO), Kingston Health Sciences Centre, and satellite centres across the province.

OVERNIGHT CAMPS

Campfire Circle offers an opportunity no one else can: medically accessible, overnight camps with no financial barriers. Muskoka is the only camp in Canada that can provide IV chemotherapy and blood transfusions, while Rainbow Lake hosts family camps, fostering healing and connection with onsite medical support.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Campfire Circle's free, medically accessible community programs bring the camp experience close to home, offering support for children, siblings, and caregivers. For many, these programs are a series of "firsts"—their first time away from parents, outside the hospital, or trying a new activity. From day camps to tent camping to sporting events, we make joy and belonging accessible year-round across Ontario.



OVERNIGHT KIDS CAMP

Overall Camp Experience:

Campers rated their camp experience a **9.7/10**.

Camp Connectedness:

Campers reported feelings of connection were very high with an average score of **5.6/6**.

Friendship:

93% of parents reported their child made a friend at camp.

Confidence:

92% of campers either often or always felt confident in themselves at camp.

Belonging:

97% of campers felt a sense of belonging at camp.



IMPACT RESULTS

We consistently assess our programs by analyzing evaluation data and listening to camper family feedback. Year-over-year results help us refine accommodations, programming, and accessibility to better serve medically complex children and their families. Here's what our community shared with us in their 2024 camper surveys.

FAMILY CAMP

100%

said they **felt welcomed and included** at Family Camp.

97%

said Family Camp is **an important support system** for their family.

97%

said Family Camp helped **reduce caregiver stress**.

100%

would recommend Family Camp to other families.

90%

said it's important that they can access **camp programs that are free**.

HERE'S WHAT
**OUR CAMPERS
AND THEIR FAMILIES**
HAD TO SAY:

“

Our child is more confident, speaks enthusiastically about his experiences at camp, and does things there we never ever thought he would ever be able to do.”

“

Our daughter is definitely more confident in making decisions and how she feels about certain situations. **It's not 'I can't' anymore, it's 'I'm going to do it my way.'**”

“

We send our child to camp as we know it's a good experience for them being a child with a global developmental delay and medical challenges. **This is the only summer experience they can participate in** as the camp has all the supports required to help them.”

“

My kids have grown so much in their capacity to be themselves and be self-confident. The role models and staff are a huge part of this. Thank you.”

“

Thank you for such a magical experience. **Every time is better than the last.** This past week brought some healing and joy to my family that I am eternally grateful for.”

“

I learned new things about myself throughout the duration of the program, and it led me to grow into a stronger, more professional leader.”

IN 2024, YOU MADE POSSIBLE:

5,000
unique campers
in 2024

27,648
total program
experiences

29% new families
served this year

100 medical
volunteers
from **19** medical centres
across Ontario

2,970 patients | **12,300** program
experiences in hospitals
across Ontario had

2,534
overnight
campers

8,882 administered
at programs
in 2024



GROWING OUR CIRCLE

In 2024, thanks to donor support, Campfire Circle expanded its reach to include more children with serious illnesses. In August, we hosted a week-long overnight camp session in partnership with Camp Oki and Camp Jumoke for more than 100 kids with heart disease and serious blood disorders, such as sickle cell disease.

This specialized camp addressed key challenges—social isolation, emotional stress, physical limitations, and lack of independence—by providing a safe and supportive space for kids to build friendships, gain confidence, and enjoy tailored experiences. For parents and caregivers, it offered much-needed respite.

“Providing a sense of normalcy for kids with serious blood disorders and other chronic conditions is so important,” says Dr. Jodi Odame, a Haematology/Oncology Fellow at SickKids. “We often have parents come to us and say, ‘Ever since my child has been at camp, he’s been so happy. They can’t wait to go back.’ They made friends that now they are able to talk to about what they go through every day. So, we do see that impact lasts throughout the rest of the year.”



FAMILIES TOLD US:

“This is the only overnight camp that willingly and openly accepts [my son] and his rare heart condition.”

“Because with her heart condition, [my daughter’s] opportunities to do ‘normal’ kid stuff is limited. This is the one week per year she can have an amazing time without having to worry if she can keep up with other kids.”

“My son is more independent and takes more responsibility for his condition.”

OFFERING LIFE-CHANGING PROGRAMS TO MORE FAMILIES

In September, Campfire Circle was thrilled to offer a weekend at camp for 16 families of kids with medical complexities. Our team worked in partnership with Emily's House Children's Hospice in Toronto and our medical advisors from SickKids Complex Care team and SickKids Paediatric Advanced Care Team (PACT) to ensure it was a safe and successful experience.

Parents of medically complex children often face chronic stress and exhaustion. Families may not get the chance to travel and often don't get the opportunity to simply be a parent because they are too busy being the doctor, the nurse, and the caregiver.

"For children we follow in complex care, really often their medical needs are at the forefront, and each and every day is spent giving medication, providing feeding, supporting them in every single thing they do," says Dr. Julia Orkin, the Medical Director of the Complex Care Program at SickKids. "And often the needs for their social engagement, their interaction, their play, their enjoyment, their quality of life often can come second to those medical needs. To partner with Campfire Circle, to remember that these are children who deserve every opportunity, as every other child does, to have enjoyment, to have laughter, to have play, is truly the goal."

Nidra and her kids, eight-year-old Muhammad and three-year-old Mustafa, were among these families. Diagnosed with FOXG1 Syndrome, a rare disorder that affects brain development, Muhammad communicates non-verbally and feeds through a G-tube. Nidra never imagined her family could enjoy an overnight camp adventure outside the city, given her son's high medical needs and the nursing care he requires.

"Muskoka was just so beautiful. It was a great opportunity to socialize, to have that break for myself, and to see my child doing all those activities that a child of his age without any medical needs could do."

HERE'S WHAT OTHER FAMILIES SAID:

"It was really nice to have a lovely, safe environment to have a good time with all family without being worried about the well-being of my complex care child."

"I saw him very happy even though he is blind and he can't move any part of his body, but he was enjoying the camp a lot."





OUR HOSPITAL PARTNERS

Campfire Circle's programs are offered at The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids), McMaster Children's Hospital, Children's Hospital at London Health Sciences Centre, Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO), Credit Valley Hospital, Kingston Health Sciences Centre, Southlake Regional Health Centre, Scarborough Health Network, and children's hospices and satellite centres across Ontario.

As the play partner for Ontario's paediatric hospitals, Campfire Circle turns hospital rooms into spaces of joy, delivering crafts, games, and music that bring laughter and connection to kids with cancer or serious illness and their families. Each craft, song, or game is thoughtfully planned to meet kids where they are, bringing them comfort and connection when they need it most. Kids like Sadie.

Nine-year-old Sadie has spent much of her childhood in treatment for acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL). Diagnosed on Christmas Eve in 2019, she spent her holidays at SickKids and endured over 800 days of treatment. When Sadie relapsed in 2023, she braved 55 days in hospital, underwent nine lumbar punctures, received 47 doses of IV chemotherapy, had three cycles of immunotherapy, and spent 84 days on an IV. In 2024, Sadie spent another holiday season in the hospital.

"Campfire Circle makes such a big difference in our lives," says Sadie's mom, Julie. "They give her a chance to just be a kid again, even in the hospital. Those moments of fun and joy have meant everything to us."

SickKids[®]

CHEO


Children's Hospital
London Health Sciences Centre


McMaster Children's Hospital

Kingston Health Sciences Centre

Centre des sciences de la santé de Kingston

2,970
Total Unique Patients

12,300
In-Hospital Experience Delivered

2,719
Arts and Crafts Kits Delivered

STUDYING OUR IMPACT IN HOSPITALS

In 2024, in partnership with Trent University, researchers studied the psychosocial outcomes associated with participating in Campfire Circle's in-hospital programming, and we're excited to share the study results. This study explored the impact of Campfire Circle's in-hospital programming on both caregivers and children undergoing treatment.

The final study results revealed key themes for both caregivers and children.

For caregivers, having their children participate in in-hospital programming offered: the ability to take a break, reassurance of their child's well-being, and for their child to feel "normal"; and for children: the opportunity to experience positive emotions both in a supportive environment and during a stressful situation.



CAREGIVERS TOLD US:

"I cried the first time [my child] spoke to one of the Campfire staff because [my child] was so shy and traumatized for so long. It was so nice to see [my child] finally happy and having fun."

"The Campfire team was always very positive and helped a stressful situation."

"Campfire Circle's in-hospital programming gave me moments of reprieve from the constant fear and stress."

Participating in Campfire Circle's In-hospital programming while on treatment was associated with higher total resilience in children and youth, suggesting a meaningful impact on psychosocial well-being.



CAMPERS TOLD US:

"I think that Campfire Circle was an amazing experience and if I ever do end up in the hospital again, I would definitely need them to come and hang out with me almost every day."

"I was happy playing with them because I feel not alone."

"They're awesome, helped in my times of need."

Overall, the study found that Campfire Circle's in-hospital programming offers a vital source of joy, connection, and resilience for children with serious illnesses, while also giving parents and caregivers a much-needed opportunity to step back and recharge.

VOLUNTEER IMPACT



Imo's first experience with Campfire Circle was as a camper. Diagnosed with liver sarcoma at nine years old, his mom encouraged him to go to camp.

At first, he didn't think camp was for him, but by the end of the session, everything had changed. "I was singing, dancing, and running all over the place, having the best time," says Imo.

Last summer, Imo came back to camp in a new role: volunteer. He joined Campfire Circle's week-long overnight session for more than 100 kids with heart disease and serious blood disorders, such as sickle cell disease.

"A lot of these kids experienced camp for the first time, so seeing their faces and watching them try everything for the first time was incredible."

One of the coolest parts? Getting to be a co-counsellor alongside Campfire Circle's CEO, Alex Robertson. "I had a lot of fun and learned so much from him," says Imo.

For Imo, volunteering was about more than just reliving camp memories—it was about paying it forward. "I loved still being connected to camp and giving back, because I feel like camp gave me so much," he says. "Making sure these kids had the best experience, just like I did, was the best part."



459 individual camp
volunteers filled
1,142 roles

Volunteer ages
range from
19-76

67,257
total hours of
volunteer time

94% agree that
Campfire
Circle is a great place to
volunteer

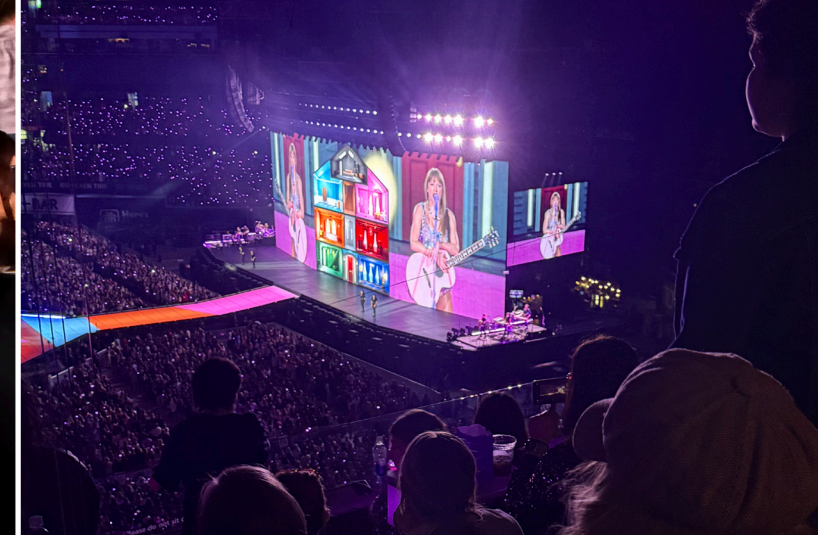
DONOR IMPACT

AN EPIC RIDE

R2//NYC celebrated a milestone year, with 50 cyclists taking on the five-day, 850-km ride from Toronto to New York City from September 11-15, 2024. Riders averaged 170 km per day, climbing 9,000 metres and raising over \$1,040,000—pushing the event past its **\$1 million goal**. These funds will provide 416 kids with the life-changing experience of camp.

In its seventh year, the ride introduced a new two-day, 366-km Toronto-to-Buffalo route, offering 13 additional cyclists a chance to participate. Riders like Trevor Delaire, who rode in memory of his daughter Ainsley, made the journey deeply meaningful. "Campfire Circle helped our son, Spencer, cope through its bereaved siblings program," says Trevor. "We've had a special connection to camp ever since."

Congratulations to all of our riders on their amazing accomplishments on the bike and for raising more funds than ever!



SWIFTIES UNITE FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE NIGHT

In November, 16 campers had the opportunity to shake it off with Taylor Swift at her final concert in Toronto. Thanks to the generosity of the Moreira-Dovigi family, this incredible gift offered kids with cancer or serious illness a once-in-a-lifetime experience filled with music, friendship bracelets, and unforgettable memories.

"Our family wanted to donate 20 tickets to those who deserve it most," says Fernanda Dovigi. "Every child deserves to sing, dance, and have fun."

We are grateful to the Moreira-Dovigi family for donating additional tickets that we used for a fundraising raffle, giving the public a chance to win Taylor Swift tickets while raising over \$100,000 for programs that bring joy to kids in hospitals and at camp. We are proud of you!

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS: MAKING MEMORIES THROUGH MUSIC

Campfire Circle's community programs bring families together for unforgettable moments of joy, connection, and fun beyond the hospital walls and offer a way to reconnect between overnight programs. On March 23, we hosted a Live Music Brunch featuring singer John Fellner from Slight Music, where kids and families came together to share in the joy of music and community.

2,871
experiences
provided through
community programs

64 community programs last year in **Toronto, Hamilton, London, and Ottawa**



RALLYING TOGETHER: COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING

SOLO SAIL

For more than 20 years, David Morralee has been making waves for Campfire Circle, raising over \$150,000 through events like car shows, ski invitationals, and most recently, Solo Sail. What began in 2020 as a solo six-day, 300-km journey on the Ottawa River has grown into a community-powered event, with nearly 10 sailors joining the cause in 2024. We are grateful for “Super Dave” and his dedication to bringing the joy and healing power of camp to hundreds of kids with cancer or serious illness.



GOLF TOURNAMENT

In September, Osisko Gold Royalties teed up their first-ever charity golf tournament at St. George’s Golf and Country Club and chose Campfire Circle as their charity of choice.

With the rallying theme “Great Course. Great Cause. Great Day,” the day was a powerful show of community and commitment.

“I’m proud that Osisko Gold Royalties supports Campfire Circle,” says Jason Attew, CEO. “Our golf tournament in 2024 was more than a day on the course—it was a meaningful step toward making a lasting impact on children facing unimaginable challenges. I’m already looking forward to our second annual event!”

The tournament raised an incredible \$112,000—enough to make 45 weeks of life-changing camp possible.



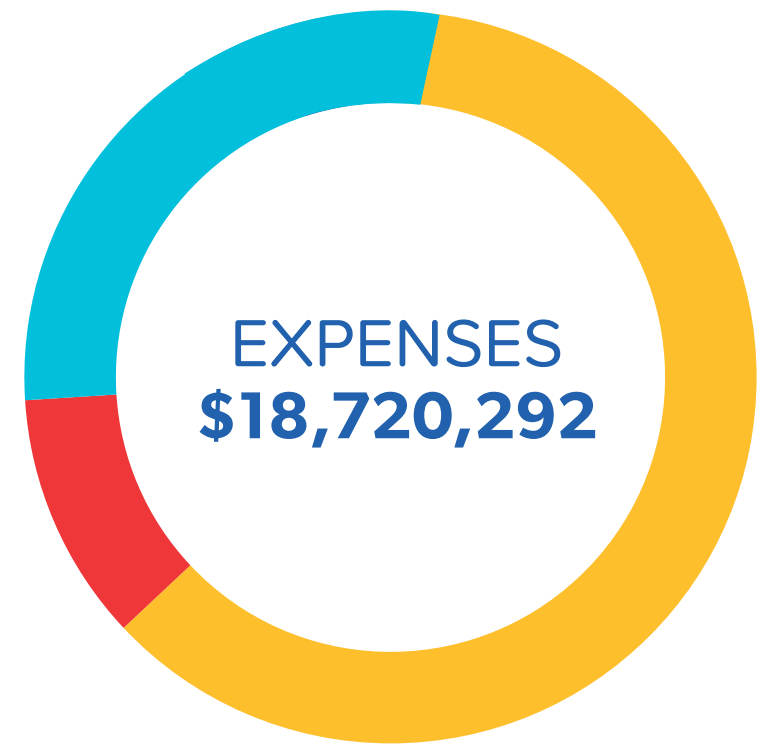
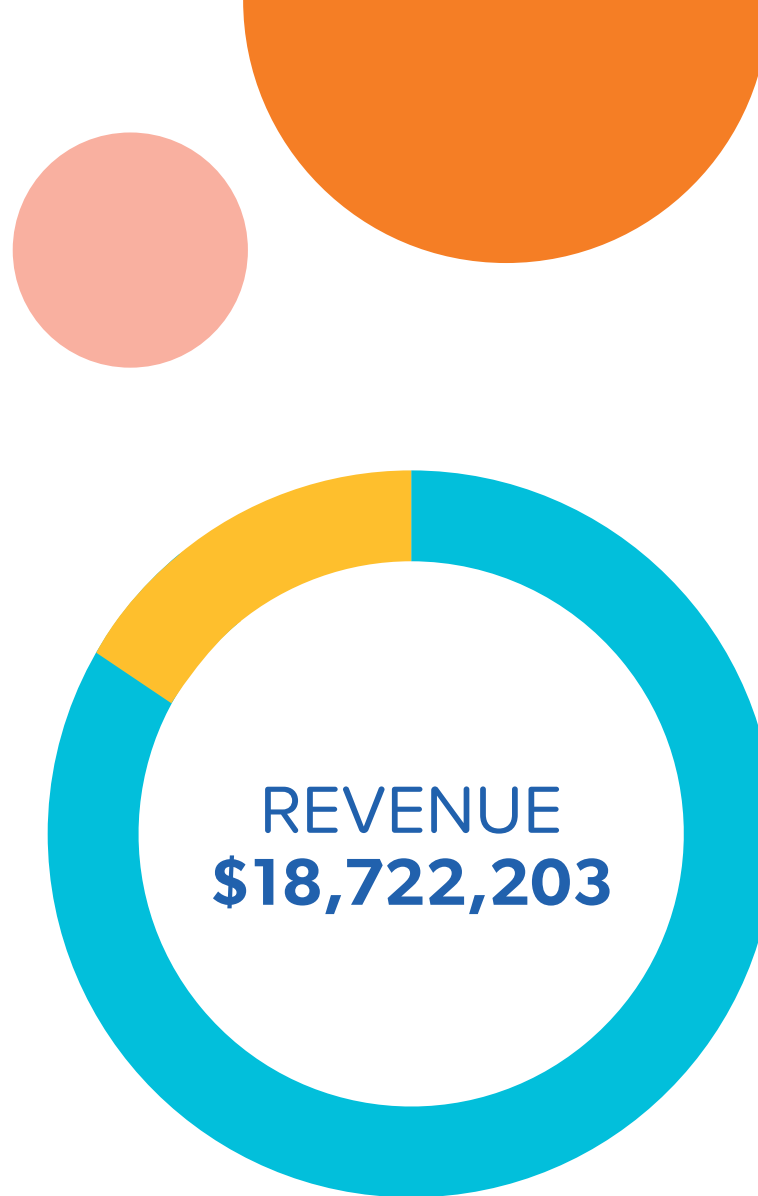
FINANCE UPDATE

2024 marked a pivotal year of progress, with strong revenue growth, prudent financial management, and a return to an operating surplus. We ended the year in a stable, break-even position, aligned with our 24-month post pandemic recovery plan, reflecting our commitment to donor stewardship and long-term impact. Despite this progress, urgent need continues to grow. Our focus remains on expanding programs to reach more children and families today, while investing in sustainable, long-term capacity to meet future needs. As a privately funded charity, we are grateful to our community for financially supporting these essential programs.

Campfire Circle was accredited by Imagine Canada in 2021. This accreditation recognizes our commitment to operate at the highest level of accountability and transparency. When you give to Campfire Circle, you are investing in a world where children thrive and families heal.

2024 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

*The financial information in this update is drawn from Campfire Circle's audited financial statements.



*Amortization – included under camp programs



THANK YOU!

With your support, we are providing critical programming for children with cancer or serious illness and their families. Thank you for your incredible generosity.

We are grateful to our Board of Directors, our faithful donors and our trusted partners.

[Click on the links below to learn more about their support.](#)

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Ontario
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An agency of the Government of Ontario
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