



# Evolutions

## The 2018 Texas Lions Camp Impact Report

Submitted by

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**Why fit in, when you were born to stand out?**

**-Dr. Seuss**

## PARENT REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The mission of Texas Lions Camp (TLC) is to provide, without charge, a camp experience for physically disabled, hearing/vision impaired, and diabetic children from the State of Texas, regardless of race, religion, or national origin. Through camp, TLC provides an atmosphere where campers learn the "Can Do" philosophy and achieve maximum personal growth and self-esteem. To this end, TLC has identified the need to further understand where it is succeeding in these goals and where it has opportunities for further development. Thus, the primary objective of this report is to begin telling TLC's story through the establishment of a methodologically rigorous evaluation program. The methods underpinning this project were designed to track year to year changes in parent camper, and staff development, to establish and monitor trends over time, and to identify areas of strength and where improvement may be necessary. Through this rigorous evaluation process, TLC serves as a national role model for Lions camps and peer organizations serving children with health challenges and medical needs, and the broader camp industry.

With the unique context of medical specialty camp in mind, the purpose of this project was to shift from the framework of evaluation capacity building established in 2017 to an ongoing process improvement model, where year to year comparisons are possible. As with 2017, this report provides a comprehensive evaluation of parental perceptions of the 2018 Texas Lions Camp experience and examines the effects of staff training on program quality. Further, this report and corresponding data will contribute to the body of knowledge regarding medical specialty camps and their potential impact on children and families. In this project, parents reported on their perceptions of camp and the impact of camp on their child's development before and after their child's TLC experience. Additionally, TLC staff responsible for implementing and delivering programs to campers were surveyed three times over the Summer 2018 season to examine the efficacy of training. Specifically, data were collected from parents across the 2018 eight-week TLC season. These sessions were intentionally designed to improve or develop self-esteem, autonomy (i.e., independence), relatedness (i.e., friendships and social skills), competence (i.e., confidence), and disability management skills. These outcomes were established through a diverse array of youth-centered activities including swimming, boating, fishing, nature studies, arts, music, dance, drama, sports, horseback riding, camping, cooking, animal husbandry, and archery.

Data were collected from parents of campers attending one of the camp sessions through the email address parents used to register their child for camp. A pre- and post-camp questionnaire was distributed to parents. The questionnaires included standardized scales that measured growth in the targeted outcome areas as well as open-ended questions that allowed further exploration of the possible impact of TLC on youth growth and development. Response Rates (RR) were exceptional as compared to prior studies utilizing a similar format. Out of 1,142 potential parental respondents who received links to the questionnaires, the overall RR was 49.91%, where 364 completed only the pre-camp measure (RR = 31.87%), 181 completed only the post-camp measure (RR = 15.84%), and 206 parents who completed both questionnaires (RR = 18%). Importantly, based upon the data collected in 2017 from parents and feedback from TLC stakeholders, the overall length of the survey was reduced in both the number of questions (28% reduction) and overall time spent in the survey (14:37 minutes in 2017; 8:41 minutes in 2018).

### ***PARENT SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS AND INSIGHTS***

Parent survey respondents tended to be mostly female (84%), to self-identify as either White (39%) or Latino (13%) and were between the ages of 40-49 years old (47%). Respondents reported prominent levels of education (Bachelor's Degree, 31%; Master's Degree 15%; Doctorate, 3%) and moderate levels of incomes (33% reported incomes above the Texas median household income of \$56,565). The majority of respondents (53%)

never attended camp as a child, those that did attend camp generally attended for 1 year (11%) or 2 years (9%). Most parents reported learning about TLC through a Lions Club member (15.2%), information provided through a doctor's office (12.1%), or word of mouth (11.1%). Parents preferred TLC communications to arrive through e-newsletters (365 parents), then Facebook (321 parents), and finally the TLC website (222 parents). When asked about the camp fee, most parents (62.6%) indicated they would be "not at all likely" to send their child to camp if they were charged the full camp fee.

The most commonly identified reasons parents sent their child to TLC was to give their child independence (25%) and the opportunity to increase self-care (17%). Parents expressed a high level of satisfaction with TLC by rating all camp components as 6 or higher on a 1-7 scale where 1= poor and 7= excellent. The three highest rated components of camp (all rated 6.47) were the camp medical staff, camp administration, and customer service. When TLC parent satisfaction ratings were contrasted with parent satisfaction ratings from a sample of camp parents identified by the authors. Parents in the comparable sample were more satisfied with camp (based on statistically significant differences) in areas that included program staff, check-in process, and check-out process. However, this comparison sample did not serve children with disabilities, thus year-to-year comparisons (TLC only) will be a more valuable tool for future assessment. Parent satisfaction with TLC was consistent across the summer and was not dependent on a child's disability/diagnosis or time of season. This finding indicates TLC experiences no diminishment in the quality of service they provide across the summer, and thus the influence effect of staff fatigue on targeted outcomes was not reflected in the 2017 data.

Parents perceived growth in their children all targeted outcome areas (i.e., autonomy, competence, relatedness, and self-esteem), and these impacts were supported by both the quantitative and qualitative findings. Parent reports of change in camper independence<sup>1</sup>, competence<sup>2</sup>, and positive self-esteem pre- to post-TLC were statistically significant ( $p \leq .05$ ). The qualitative findings also supported these growth areas, with parents stressing the positive impact of TLC on their child's level of autonomy, relationships, and feelings of empowerment, acceptance, and happiness. Outcome achievement was not influenced by age, gender, or dosage (i.e., how many years a child attended TLC). In other words, TLC was just as impactful on a first year 10-year-old male camper as it was for a third-year 12-year-old female camper. The growth in outcomes identified by parents reflected the program goals targeted by TLC. Furthermore, when given the opportunity to identify factors that influenced the TLC associated outcomes, parents suggested the sense of community facilitated by TLC and the opportunities youth had to experience challenge, exploration, and self-discovery through TLC meaningfully influenced growth.

## THE BOTTOM LINE

The supportive yet challenging culture and sense of community fostered by Texas Lions Camp is a powerful context for campers to develop the "can do" attitude. Across a range of age, gender, and ability level, campers are meaningfully changed in a positive direction because of their fellow campers and the staff serving them.



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<sup>1</sup> Independence is used interchangeably with autonomy throughout the report

<sup>2</sup> Competence is used interchangeably with confidence throughout the report

## STAFF REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Data were collected from TLC staff during the summer of 2018 to assess skills associated with camp employment as well as their perceptions of staff training. Staff employed by TLC were asked to complete questionnaires before training, after training, and at the end of the summer, which included demographics and other participant descriptive information, staff perceptions of camp employment skills, staff perceptions of training topics, and open-ended questions targeting how staff training contributed to their success. Response rates were excellent when compared to studies using a similar online format. Specifically, a total of 78 staff completed all three questionnaires (pre-training, post-training, and end-of-summer) for an overall response rate of 54%.

Respondents tended to be mostly female (73%) and between the ages of 18-22 years old (78%). A majority of respondents self-identified as White (9%) and 16% reported a Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin. Respondents tended to have a high-school diploma or equivalent (42%) or some college (40%). Regarding prior camp experience, 64% of respondents had no prior experience as a camper and 52% had no prior camp employment experience. The respondents were internationally diverse, with 37% identifying that they camp to the U.S. from another country to work at TLC. Additionally, 49% of staff identified that working at camp was part of their desired career path.

A Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance (RMANOVA) test was performed to compare staff perceptions of skill development items across three-time periods (pre-training, post-training, and end-of-summer). There was a significant effect of time (from pre-training to end-of-summer) on respondents' ratings of staff skill development. Specifically, there was a statistically significant decrease in staff perceptions of skills from pre-training to post-training in seven skill areas: experience working with children, developing personal responsibility, being a positive role model, following safety rules, being a team player, managing youth behavior, and having a positive attitude. From post-training to the end-of-summer measurement there was a statistically significant increase in staff perceptions of skills related to experience working with children, and a statistically significant decrease in staff perception of skills related having a positive attitude.

At pre-training, the five training topics identified as most important by staff were emergency procedures, child abuse, sexual harassment, disability procedures, and active shooter (ALICE). At post-training, the top five training topics most associated with staff skill development were camp mission, child abuse, sexual harassment, ACA standards, and disability procedures. At end-of-summer, the five training topics identified as most relevant for the role of a camp staff member were camper supervision, sensitive issues, disability procedures, active shooter (ALICE), and warm fuzzies. At pre-training, the five training topics identified as least important by staff were camp evaluation, electronic protocols, letters to yourself, Lions, and critter talk. At post-training, the top five training topics least associated with staff skill development were camp evaluation, group management, bias, food safety and parent expectations ("mother functions"). At end-of-summer, the five training topics identified as least relevant for the role of a camp staff member were professionalism, camp evaluation, bias, letters to yourself, and Lions.

A quantitative technique called Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) was used to analyze and graphically display staff perceptions of skill development and training components. Specifically, IPA was used to compare staff perceptions of the importance and relevance of skills needed for their camp staff position, as well as to compare staff perceptions of the importance and relevance of staff training components. Using the IPA approach, recommended actions were identified in four quadrants of a scatterplot focusing on "concentrate here," "keep up the good work," "low priority," and "possible overkill."

Two open-ended questions were asked on the end-of-summer questionnaire. The first open-ended question asked staff to identify how staff training helped them be successful in their role. Seven categories emerged related to how staff training contributed to staff success. Approximately 80% of staff identified ways staff training contributed to their success, and approximately 20% felt that staff training was not helpful. The most salient category was preparing staff for child supervision, care, and management. The second open-ended question asked what staff would change about staff training. Most of the responses to this question (40%) were related to changes in training structure and design, which included recommendations for improving how training is planned and implemented, including scheduling, instructional approach and design. Close to 20% of staff felt that no changes were needed to staff training.

## THE BOTTOM LINE - STAFF

TLC staff developed critical skills working with youth with disabilities and benefited from a training program that addressed topics highly relevant for their positions. Opportunities for improving staff training were identified to inform future training efforts, and a comprehensive report of this information is available in Appendix A.



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## **PURPOSE: PARENT REPORT**

This project and report have three primary objectives: (1) to identify potential youth growth and development resulting from a child attending Texas Lions Camp, (2) to examine potential changes in established benchmarks of outcomes and measures of interest for TLC stakeholders as part of ongoing assessment from Summer 2017 to Summer 2018, and (3) to continue the role of Texas Lions Camp as a national leader in evidence-based practice, research, and service.

## **METHOD**

### ***INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL***

This project was reviewed and approved through Clemson University's Institutional Review Board (approval # IRB2015-117) as part of a larger line of camp research on April 28, 2015.

### ***CAMP SESSIONS***

Data were collected across eight one-week camp sessions serving children with differing disabilities dependent upon the week. Sessions were deliberately designed to meet targeted outcomes: self-esteem, personal growth, autonomy, relatedness, competence, and disability management through a diverse array of youth activities comprising aquatics, boating, fishing, nature studies, arts and crafts, music, dance, drama, ropes course, recreation and sports, horseback riding, camping, cooking, tool workshops, archery, livestock husbandry and, unstructured play.

### ***PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURES***

Data were collected from parents of campers through the email address parents used to register their child for camp. A pre-and post-camp questionnaire was distributed to parents to track potential changes resulting from the camp experience. Specifically, the pre-camp questionnaire was distributed 14 days prior to camp, where parents were sent an initial email with a description of the study, instructions on how to participate, and an embedded link to the pre-camp questionnaire. Seven days later (1 week prior to camp), parents were sent a follow-up reminder about the pre-camp questionnaire along with a request to complete the pre-camp questionnaire if they had not already done so.

Correspondingly, the post-camp questionnaire was distributed 7 days after their child's camp experience. Similar to the pre-camp message, parents were sent an email with a reminder of the description of the study, instructions on how to participate, and an embedded link to the post-camp questionnaire. Fourteen days after their child's camp experience (2 weeks after their child's camp experience), parents were sent a reminder about the post-camp questionnaire along with a request to complete the post-camp questionnaire if they had not already done so. Incentives were provided through a drawing entry to win one of three \$100 gift cards upon completion of either questionnaires.

#### ***Response Rates***

In 2018 the overall response rate to the questionnaire was 49.91% (570 respondents who completed the questionnaire ÷ 1,142 potential respondents) as compared to 2017's 66.9% response rate. Specifically, 364 parents completed only the pre-camp measure, 181 completed the post-camp measure, 206 completed both the pre- and post-camp measures, with 570 total unique respondents to the questionnaire (those completing



Figure 1: Parent questionnaire response rates 2018

one or both versions). Importantly, a 49.91% response rate is **extremely** high, especially within a residential summer camp context (rates of 20-25% are considered excellent, and rates of 5-10% are typical). Additionally, within prior multi-year studies, response rates tend to lower within year 2 and stabilize within year 3, especially when the organization begins to share research reports with parents, demonstrating the “fruits” of the parents’ efforts in prior survey research.

## MEASURES

In addition to parent and youth demographic questions (e.g., parent gender, parent ethnic/racial group, youth gender, youth age) and other descriptive questions (e.g., parent camp experience, number of children), the following standardized measures were incorporated into the parent questionnaires.

**Parental Satisfaction.** A 16-item measure of parental satisfaction with various components of the camp experiences, particularly components that parents experienced firsthand (e.g., camp customer service, camp registration process, camp buildings and grounds), was developed based on established satisfaction items that the report authors developed in previous studies of camp parents, as well as previously designed TLC items

**Parent Perceptions of Autonomy, Relatedness, and Connectedness.** The 24-item Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction and Frustration scale (BPNSFS) was used to measure parent perceptions of their child’s development resulting from their TLC participation, specifically *autonomy* (i.e., “choice and not dependence”), *relatedness* (“sense of connectedness”), and *competence* (i.e., “sense of mastery”) across 6 factors related to satisfaction and frustration (Chen et al., 2015). “Need Satisfaction” was represented by “well-being” in three dimensions: autonomy satisfaction (e.g., *My child exhibits a sense of choice and freedom in the things they undertake*), relatedness satisfaction (e.g., *My child feels that the people they care about also care about them*), and competence satisfaction (e.g., *My child feels confident they can do things well*). In contrast, the “Need Frustration” factor was represented by “ill-being” in three dimensions: autonomy frustration (e.g., *Most of the things my child does they feel like they have to*), relatedness frustration (e.g., *My child feels excluded from the group they want to belong to*), and competence frustration (e.g., *My child has serious doubts about whether they can do things well*). All items were rated on a 1 to 7 Likert scale where 1 equaled completely untrue and 7 equaled completely true.

**Parental Perceptions of Developmental Outcomes (PPDO).** Beyond the measurement of psychological need satisfaction and frustration, parents also reported on the skills and developmental outcomes resulting from their child’s experience at TLC. The PPDO (Gagnon & Garst, 2019) also uses a satisfaction and frustration approach, but measures attitudinal and behavioral changes. Specifically, 4 satisfaction constructs are captured in the PPDO: (1) Responsibility Satisfaction (e.g., *my child...takes responsibility for their own actions*), (2) Attitude Satisfaction (e.g., *my child... doesn't get frustrated easily*), (3) Exploration Satisfaction (e.g., *my child...*

*participates in new learning experiences*), and (4) Self-Regulation Satisfaction (e.g., *my child... properly handles success and failure*). Similarly, 4 frustration constructs are also captured in the PPDO: (1) Responsibility Satisfaction (e.g., *my child... avoids accountability for their actions*), (2) Attitude Frustration (e.g., *my child... gets upset without good reason*), (3) Exploration Frustration (e.g., *my child... is disinterested in learning something new*), and (4) Self-Regulation Frustration (e.g., *my child... struggles to cope when things don't go their way*). All PPDO items were rated by parents on a 1-7 Likert style scale where 1 indicated *strongly disagree* to 7 which indicated *strongly agree*. In the case of the satisfaction items, higher scores were preferable, and in the case of the frustration items, lower scores were preferable.

### *Open-Ended Question*

In addition to the previously described measures, several open-ended questions were included in the parent questionnaires. Specifically, for the purposes of this report and based upon stakeholder feedback from the 2017 study, TLC stakeholders identified an area of interest relating to recruiting challenges, where Lions reported difficulty in recruiting children to participate in TLC. As such, in the TLC 2018 parental questionnaire, parents were asked, "Based on families you know that include a child with a disability, what are reasons why parents wouldn't choose camp for their child?"

### **DATA SCREENING, PREPARATION, AND ANALYSIS**

Data were analyzed using standard statistical practices and procedures in the social sciences. Quantitative data (i.e., numerical and categorical data) were analyzed with SPSS and EQS software using descriptive, inferential, and latent statistics [e.g., multiple regression, t-tests, ANCOVA, structure equation modeling]. Qualitative data (i.e., short answer, descriptive text) were analyzed using Microsoft Excel and the NVivo software package. A random sampling approach was used to select a sample of 85 responses (~20%) from the 340parent responses to the open-ended questions. Using conventional content analysis, these responses were open coded into words or phrases with specific meaning and then comparatively coded into broader categories based on conceptual and/or thematic relationships among codes.

## **PARENT RESULTS**

### **PARENT AND YOUTH DESCRIPTIVES**

Parents provided descriptive and demographic information as a part of the pretest questionnaire (see Figures 2 through 8 and Table 1). Respondents tended to be mostly female (83.2%), between the ages of 40-49 years old (47.3%; Average Age = 43.19 years), and self-identified primarily as either White (74.7%) or Latino (16.6%). Additionally,, parent respondents tended to be highly educated (Bachelor's Degree, 31%; Master's Degree 16.3%; Doctorate, 2.3%), and reported a wide range of annual household income (Average = \$84,963, *SD* = \$58,849, range = \$12,500 to \$275,000).A majority of respondents (31.1%) never attended camp as a child, those that did attend camp generally attended for 5 years or less (38.7%;Average number of years = 2.81 years, *SD* = 2.70 years). Parents indicated the majority of campers had been diagnosed with their disability for life (37.2%; range of other groups = 1-14 years). Parents reported the majority of children attending TLC were enrolled in traditional public schools (85.9%).

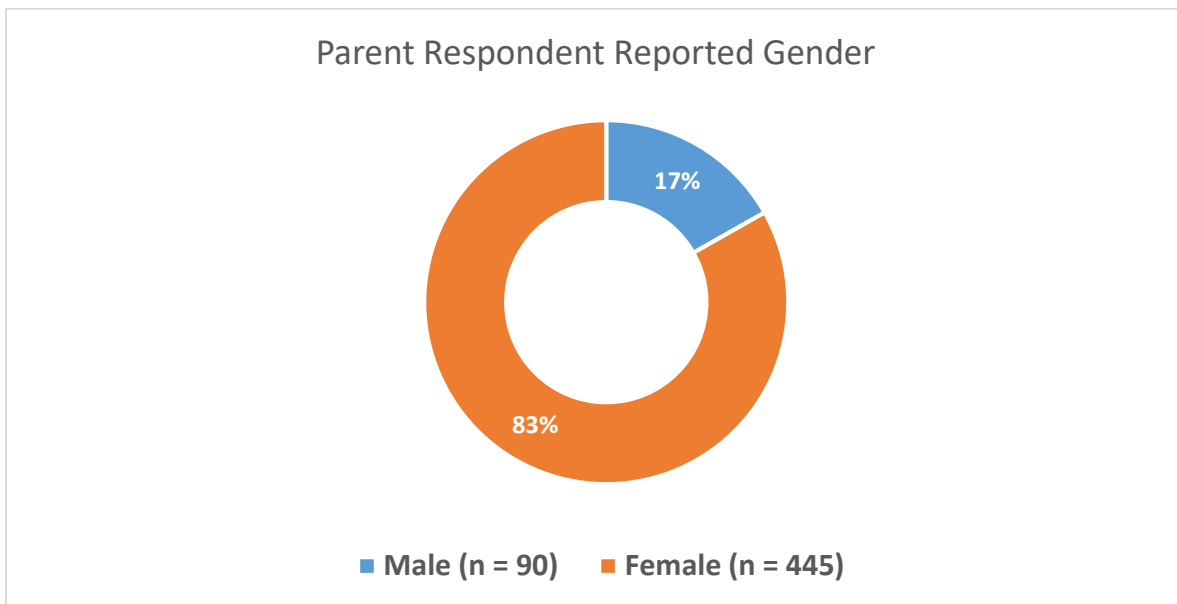


Figure 2. Parent respondent reported gender (N = 535)



Table 1-2. TLC Parent Descriptives and Demographics: Summer 2018

Parent Gender	Female = 83.2% (445)	
	Male = 16.8% (90)	
Parent Race	African American = 5.7% (30)	White = 74.7% (396)
	Hispanic or Latino = 16.6% (88)	Asian Origin = 1.1% (6)
	American Indian = .2% (1)	Multiple Race = 1.5% (8)
Parent Income	0-\$12,500 = 4.5% (22)	\$75,001-\$100,000= 16.1% (78)
	\$12,501-25,000 = 8.1% (39)	\$100,001-150,000 = 19.2% (93)
	\$25,001-35,000 = 7.2% (35)	\$150,001-\$200,000 = 8.1% (39)
	\$35,001-\$50,000 = 14.7% (71)	\$200,201-250,000 = 2.1% (10)
	\$50,001-\$75,000 = 17.6% (85)	\$250,001 and up = 2.5% (12)
Parent Education	Less than High School Diploma = 1.5% (8)	Associates = 11.7% (62)
	High School Diploma/Equivalent = 11.5% (61)	Bachelors = 31% (164)
	Some College = 20% (106)	Master's = 16.3% (86)
	Technical Degree/Certification = 5.7% (30)	Doctorate/Ph.D. = 2.3% (12)
Parent Relationship Status	Single = 7.3% (39)	Re-Married = 4.5% (24)
	Divorced = 9.2% (49)	Separated = 2.1% (11)
	Widowed = 2.2% (12)	Long-Term Relationship = 4.3% (23)
	Married = 70.4% (376)	
Parent Prior Camp Experience	Did not attend = 31.1% (163)	6 years = 8% (42)
	1 year = 8.4% (44)	7 years = 2.5% (13)
	2 years = 12% (63)	8 years = 1.5% (8)
	3 years = 7.3% (38)	9 years = .4% (2)
	4 years = 11.1% (58)	10+ years = 2.4% (12)
	5 years = 15.8% (83)	
Camper School Type	Traditional Public = 85.9% (464)	Traditional Private = 4.8% (26)
	Charter = 3.3% (18)	Home School = 5.9% (32)



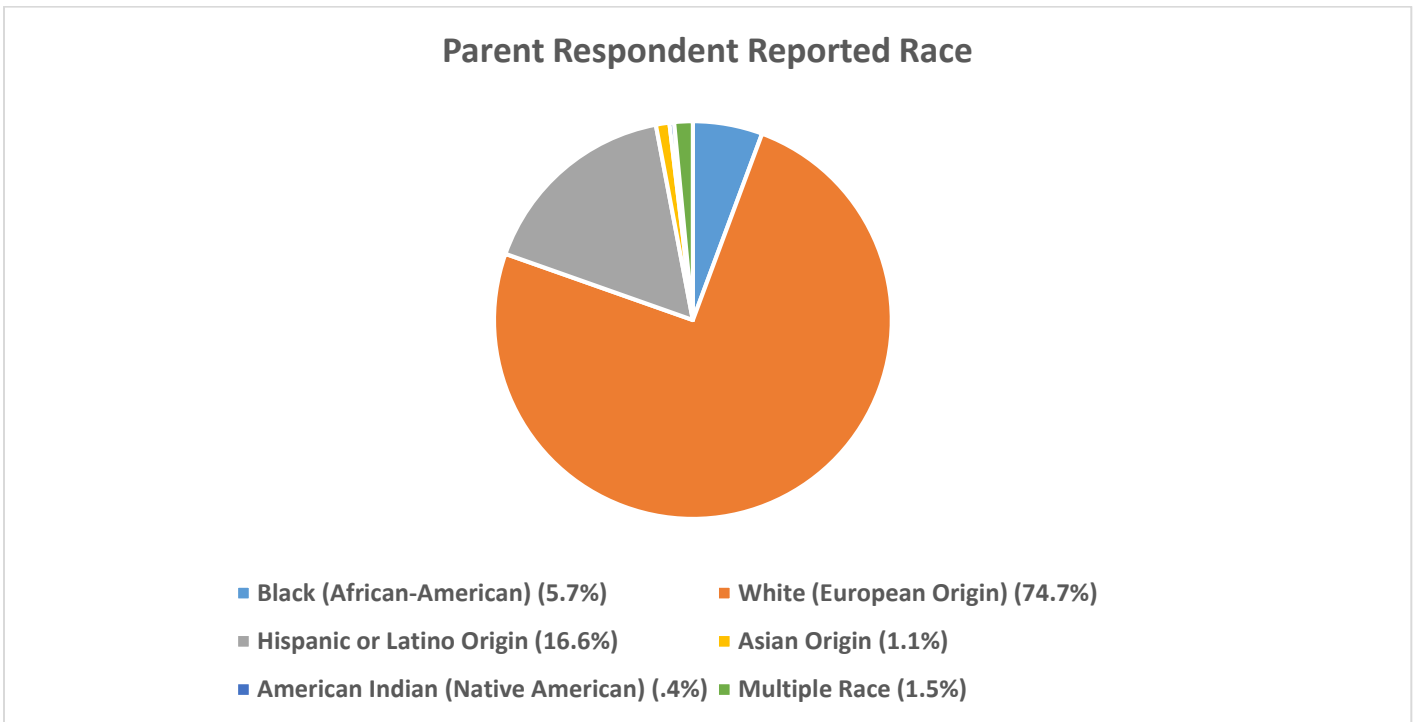


Figure 3. Parent respondent reported race (N = 530)

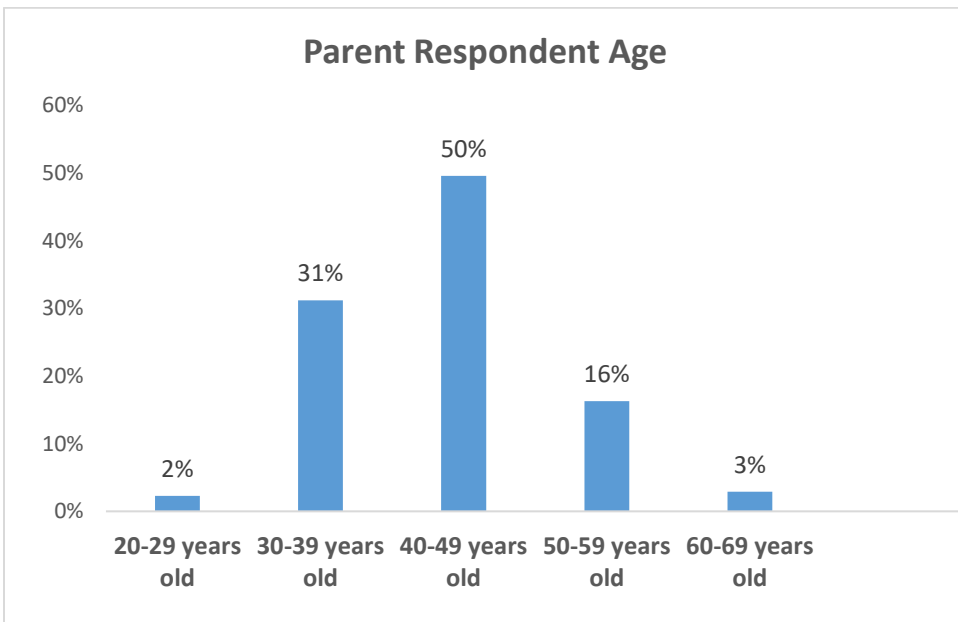


Figure 4. Parent respondent reported age (N = 526)

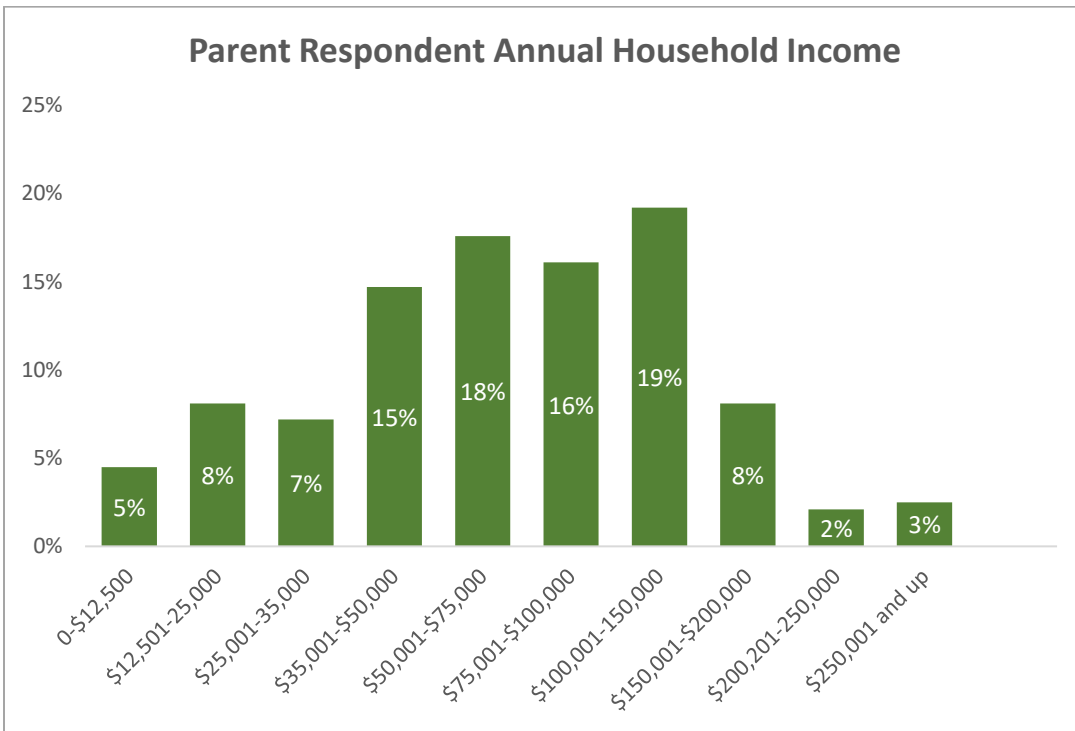


Figure 5. Parent respondent reported income (N = 484)

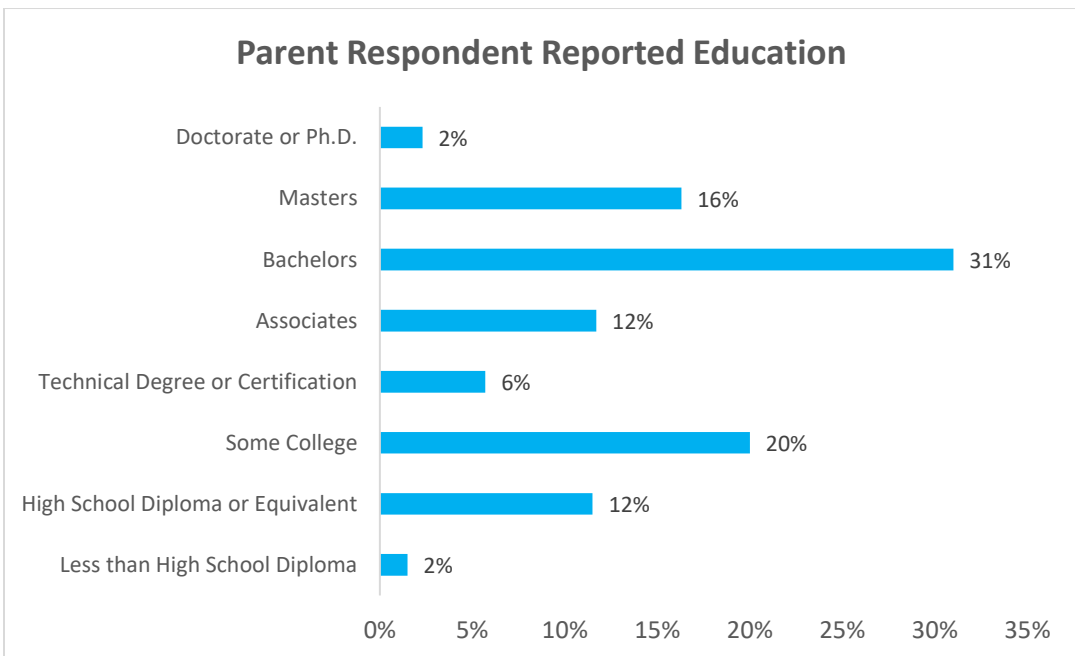


Figure 6. Parent respondent reported education (N = 529)

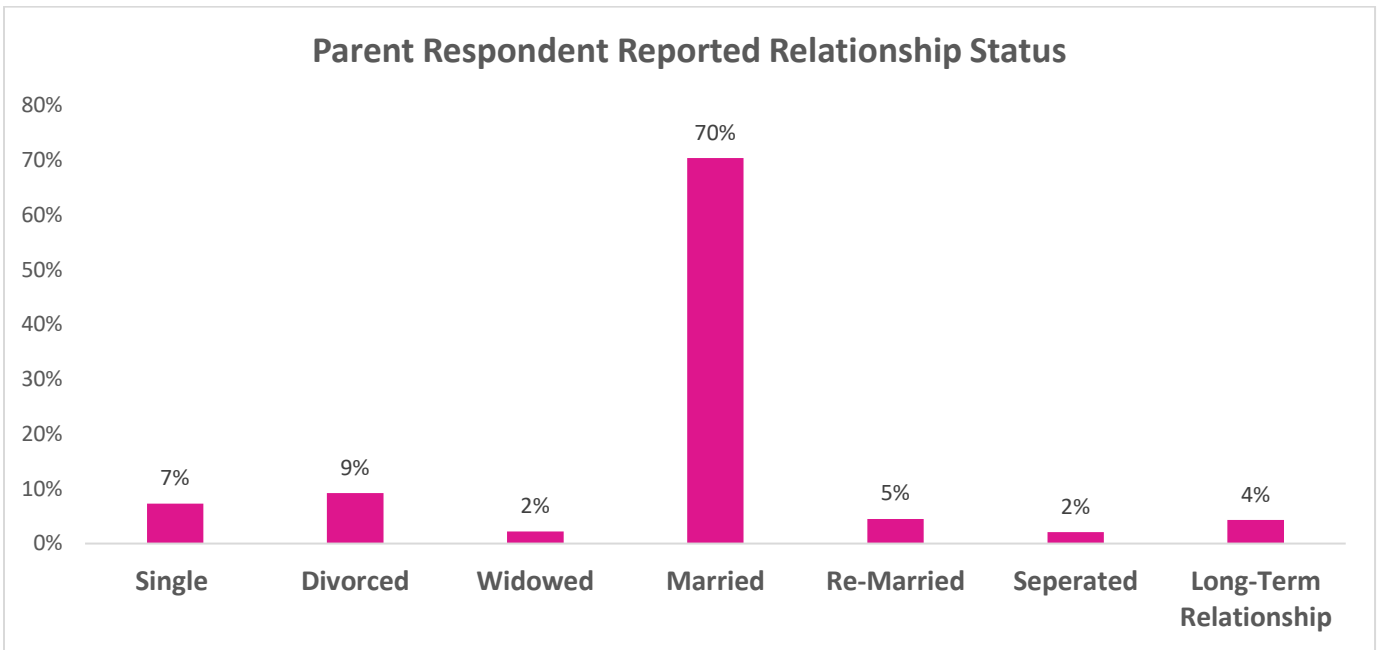


Figure 7. Parent respondent reported relationship status (N = 534)

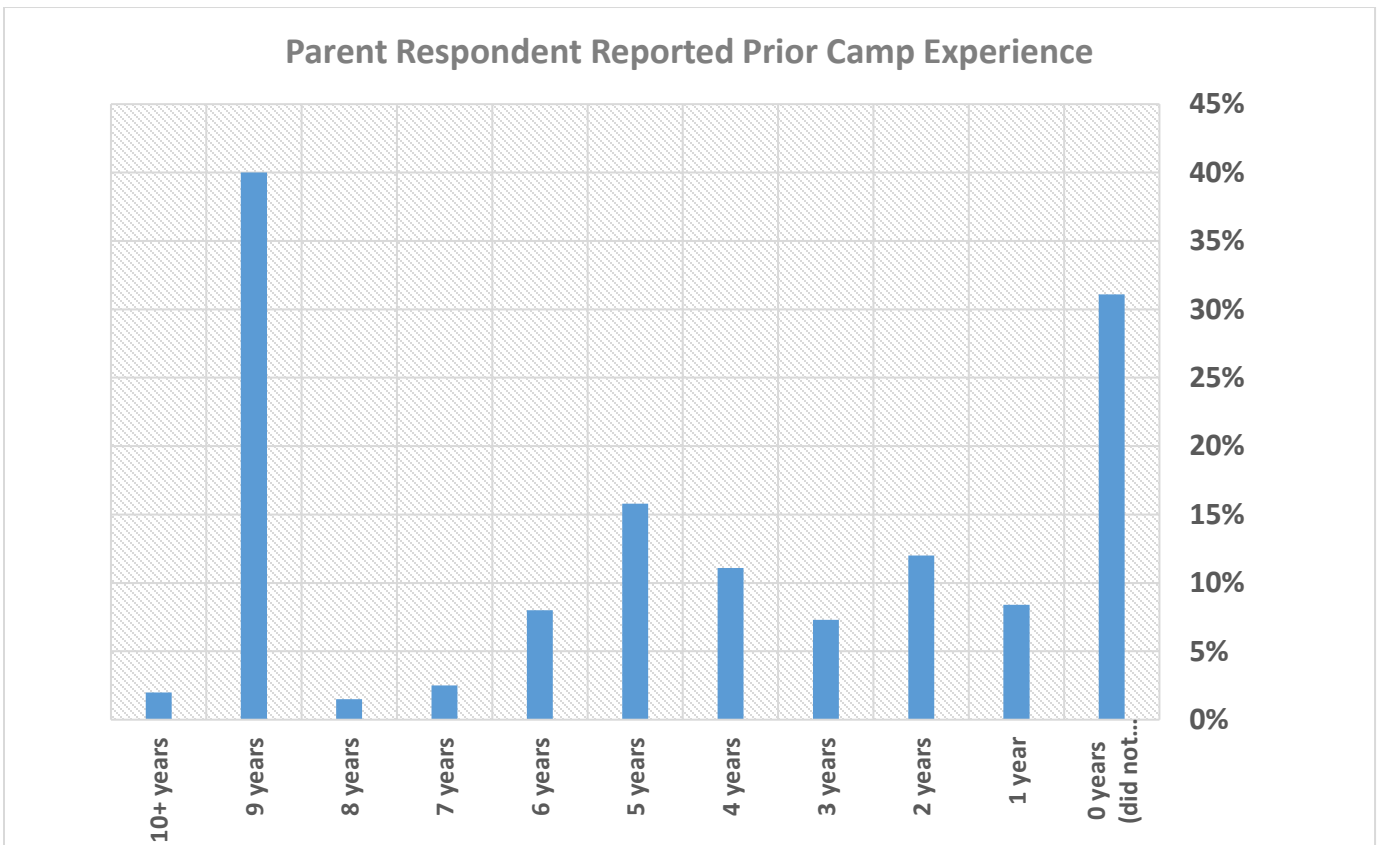


Figure 8. Parent respondent reported prior camp experience (N = 524)



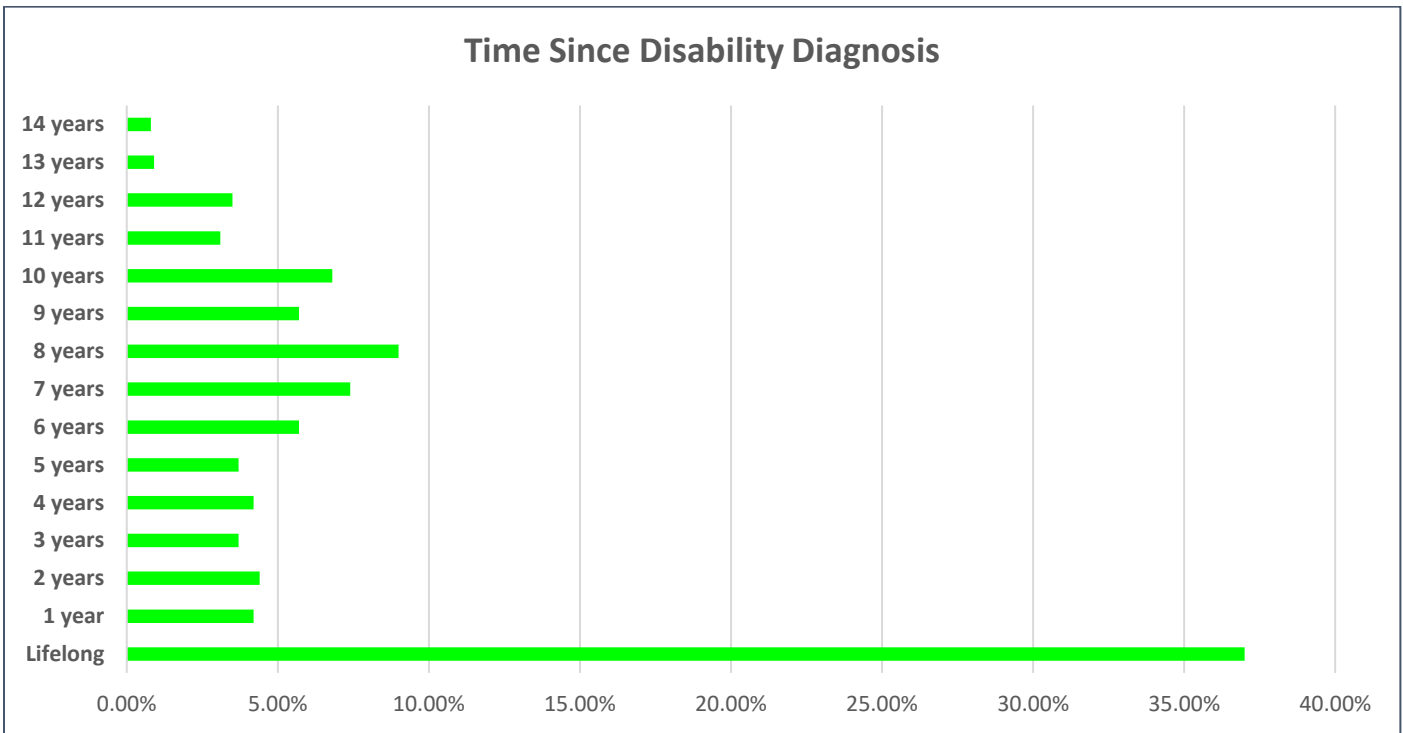


Figure 9. Time Since Disability Diagnosis (N = 546)

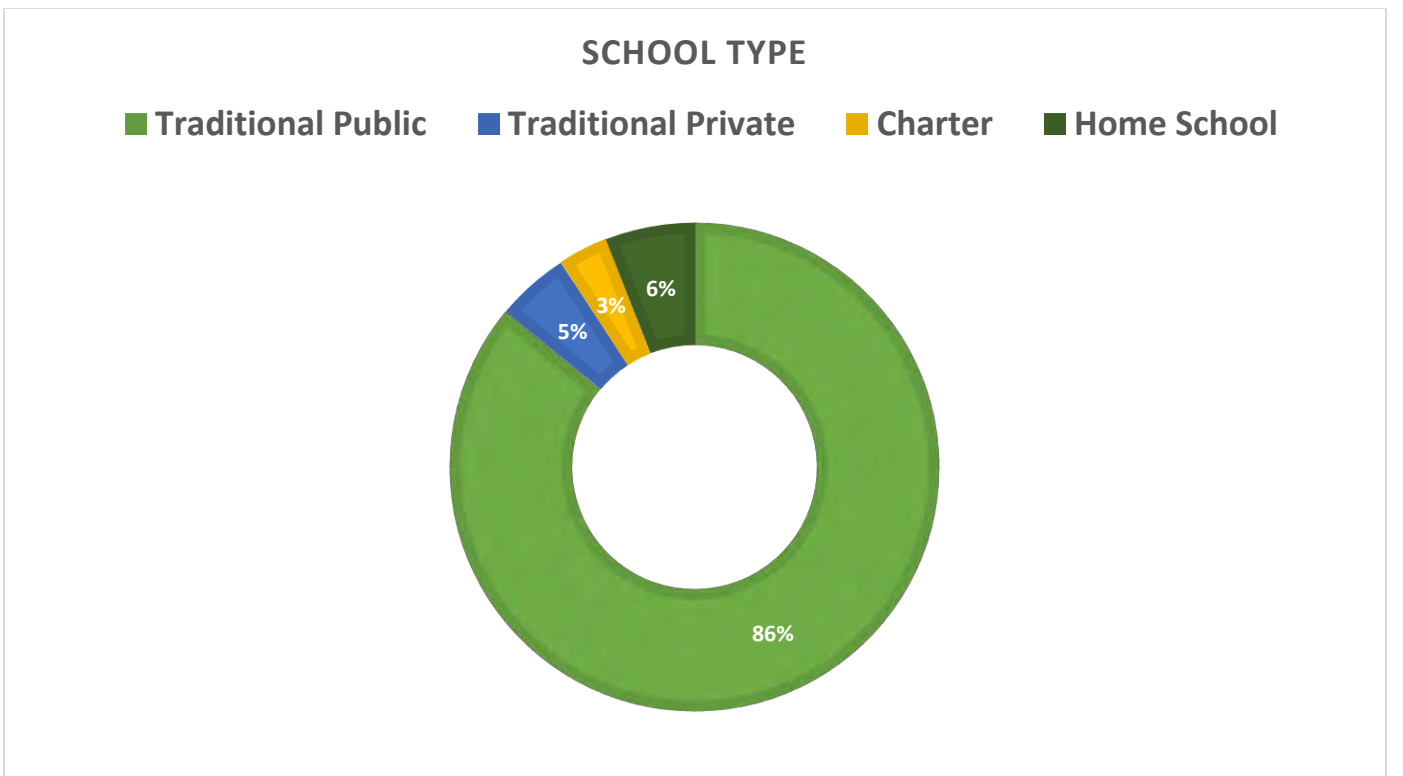


Figure 10. Type of School Camper Attends (N = 540)

**HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT US? HOW PARENTS LEARNED ABOUT TLC**

Parents were asked to identify how they learned about TLC (Figure 11; Table 3). Similar to 2017, most parents reported learning about TLC through a Lions Club member (30%) or information provided through a doctor’s office (22%). Other likely ways of learning about TLC included word of mouth (19%), through a school nurse (10%), and because a friend of a parent’s child attended TLC (10%). Less than one percent of parents learned about TLC through a camp fair or the American Camp Association.

Table 3. Ways parents learned about TLC 2017 to 2018

Mechanism	Number of parents (2017)	Number of parents (2018)
Lions Club member	192 (15%)	172 (30%)
Doctor’s office	153 (12%)	129 (22%)
Word of mouth	141 (11%)	107 (19%)
School nurse	97 (8%)	79 (14%)
My child’s friend attended TLC	78 (6%)	56 (10%)
Support group	66 (5%)	42 (7%)
Camp flyer/brochure	31 (2%)	32 (6%)
Web search	22 (2%)	23 (4%)
Facebook	25 (2%)	18 (3%)
I attended TLC	14 (1%)	11 (2%)
Camp Fair	3 (<1%)	2 (<1%)
American Camp Association	2 (<1%)	3 (<1%)



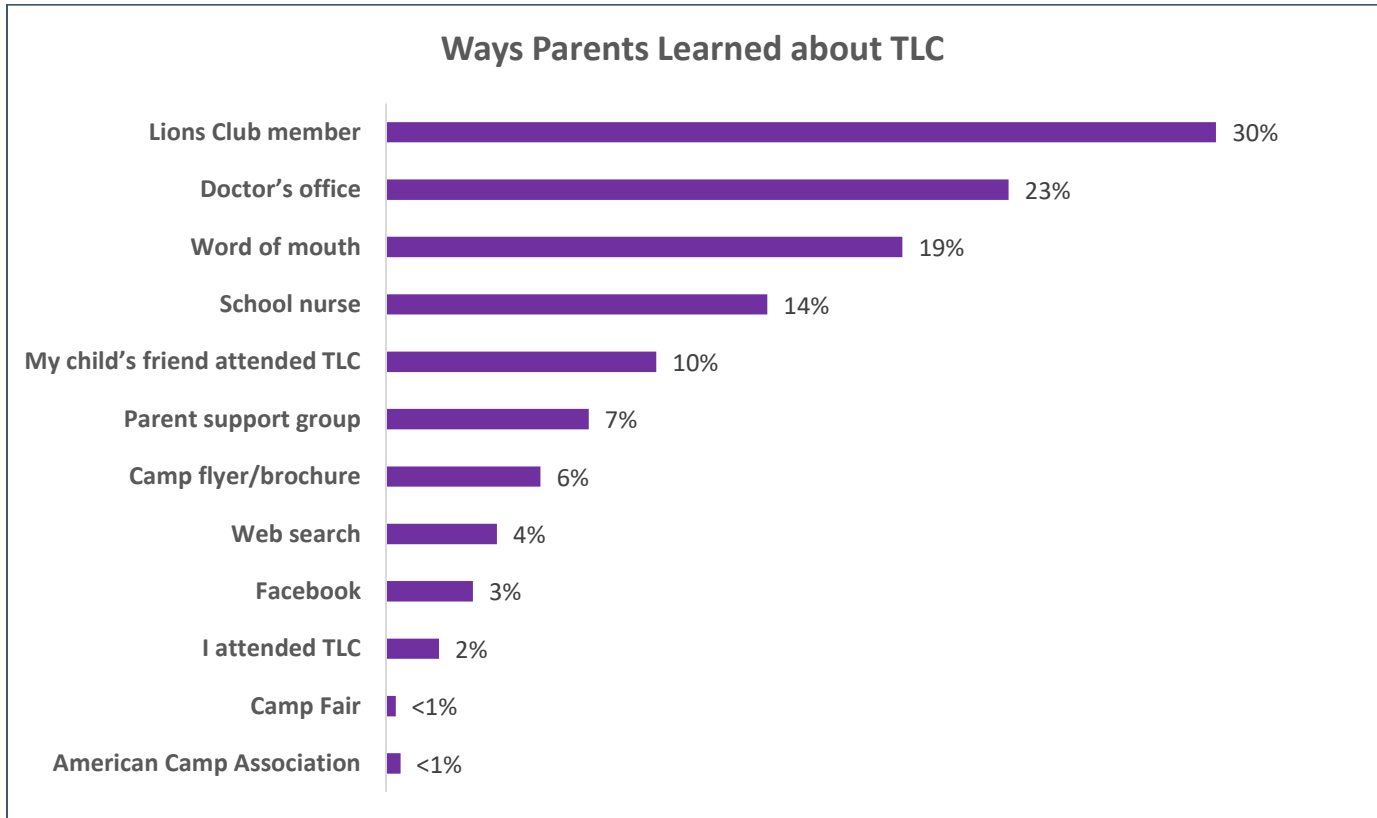


Figure 11. How parents learned about TLC

**PREFERRED FORMS OF TLC COMMUNICATION**

Parents were asked to identify how they preferred to receive information about TLC by selecting all that apply when given a number of response choices (Figure 12). Reflecting a clear similarity to the findings of 2017, the forms of communication preferred by most parents included e-newsletters (296 parents) and Facebook (288 parents), followed by the TLC website (154 parents) and paper mailings from TLC (121 parents). Marketing through Local Lions Clubs (32 parents) and Instagram (46 parents) were less preferred forms of communication.

Table 4. Parent preferred forms of TLC communication

Form of Communication	Number of Parents (2017)	Number of Parents (2018)
E-newsletters	365 (32%)	296 (52%)
Facebook	321 (28%)	288 (50%)
TLC website	222 (19%)	154 (27%)
Paper mailings	142 (12.4%)	121 (21%)
Local Lions Clubs	51 (4%)	32 (6%)
Instagram	43 (%)	46 (8%)

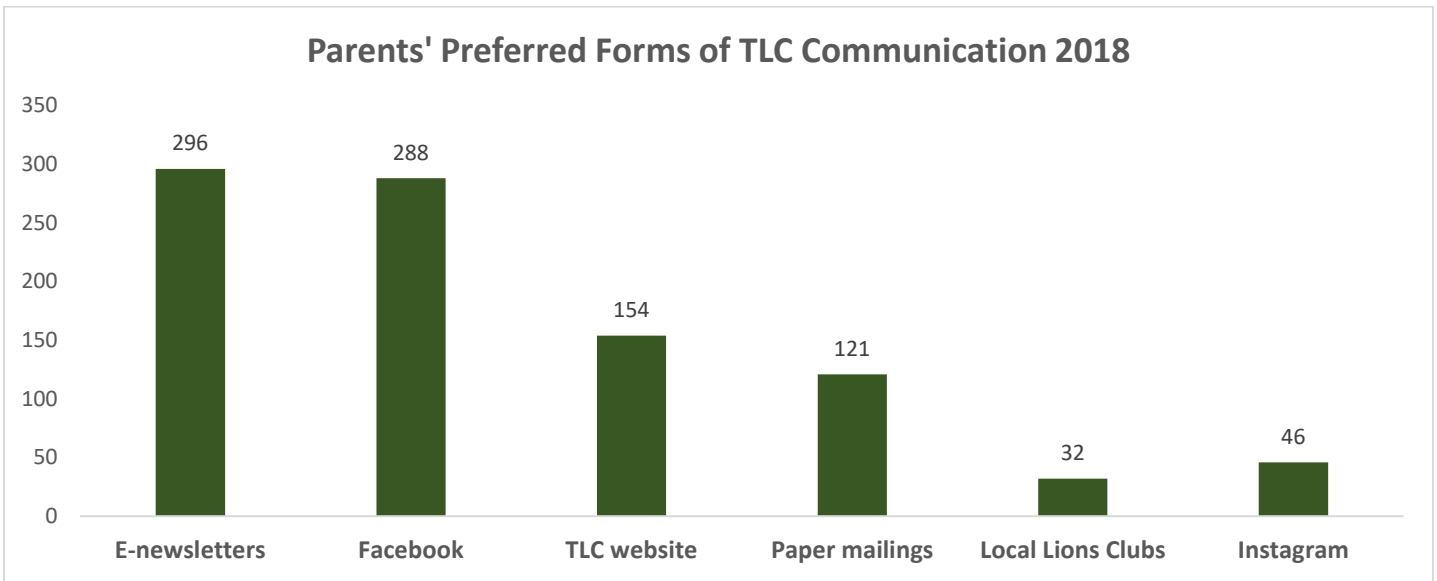


Figure 12. Parent preferred forms of TLC communication

**REASONS PARENTS SENT THEIR CHILD TO TLC**

Parents were asked to identify the primary reason they sent their child to TLC in both the summer of 2017 and 2018. As indicated in Table 5 and Figure 13, the most commonly selected reasons parents sent their child to TLC was to give their child the ability develop independence (i.e., autonomy) (23%) and the opportunity to increase their child’s ability for self-care of their disability (18%). Other important reasons included their child chose to attend TLC (16%) and to help their child make friends (14%).

Table 5. Reasons parents sent their child to TLC 2017 and 2018

Primary Reason Parent Sent Child to TLC	Number of Parents (2017)	Number of Parents (2018)
Autonomy: To give my child an independent experience away from home	160 (25%)	123 (23%)
Learn Self-Care: To give my child the opportunity to increase self-care	113 (17%)	95 (18%)
Child’s Choice: My child chose to attend TLC	89 (14%)	87 (16%)
Socialization: To help my child make friends	83 (13%)	73 (14%)
Mental Health: Camp increases my child’s happiness factor	73 (11%)	51 (10%)
Novelty: Opportunity for my child to participate in new/unique activities	52 (8%)	43 (8%)
Reputation: The camp is known to be one of the best	31 (5%)	24 (5%)
No Cost: Because there is no cost	22 (3%)	18 (3%)
Health: To encourage my child to be physically active	17 (3%)	12 (2%)
Respite: I wanted a break from child care	8 (1%)	4 (1%)

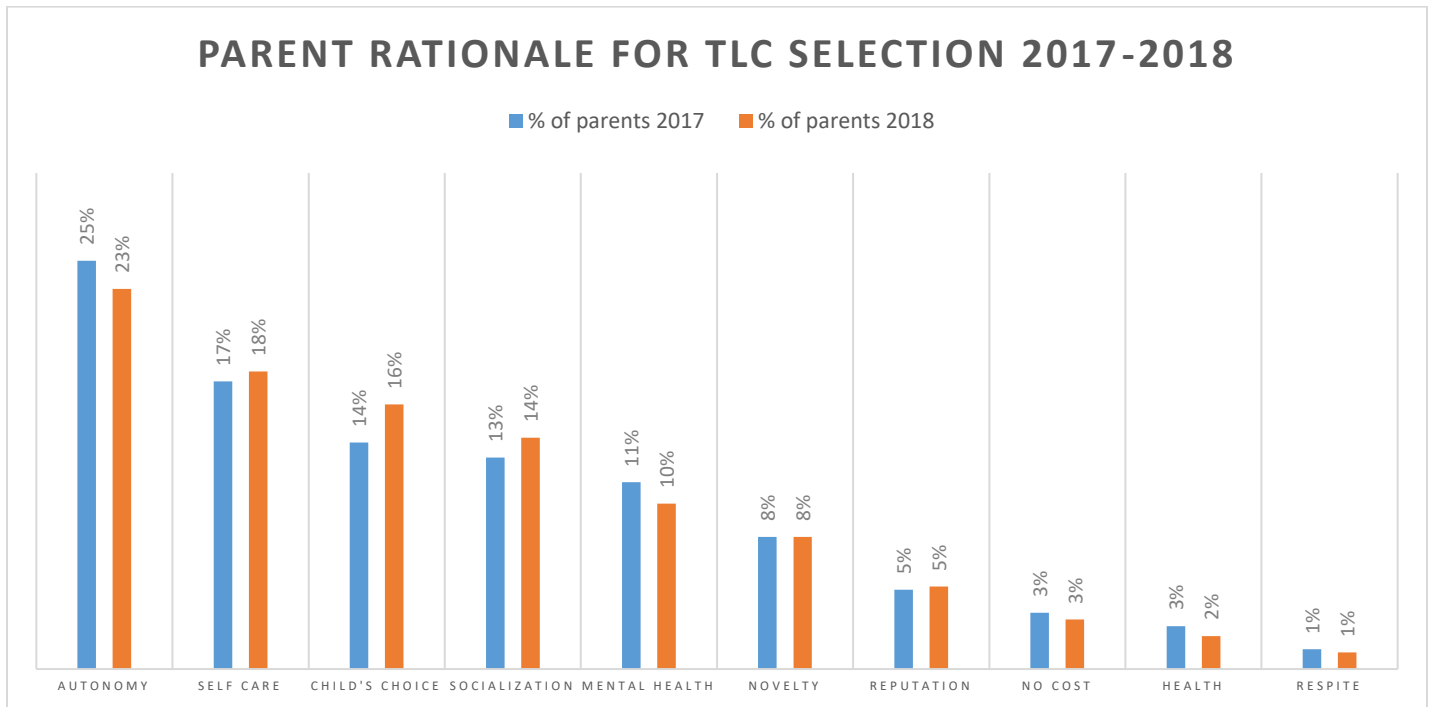


Figure 13. Parent rationale for TLC Selection, shifts from 2017 to 2018

**PARENT PERCEPTION OF CAMP FEE VALUE**

Parents were asked, “If TLC were to begin charging for camp (\$1,850 per week), how likely would it be that you could send your child to camp?” As indicated in Table 6 and Figure 14, most parents (45.8%) indicated that they would be “not at all likely” to send their child to camp in this situation and 19.5% indicated they would be “somewhat unlikely” to send their child to camp in this situation. Only 17.4% of parents indicated that they would be “likely” or “very likely” (combined) to send their child to camp if TLC began charging, demonstrating the value of the scholarship TLC provides to ensure all children, regardless of disability or ability to pay, are able to experience camp.

Table 6. Likelihood parents would send their child to TLC if charged a camp fee

Rating	Number of Parents (2017)	Number of Parents (2018)
Not at all likely	321 (63%)	87 (45.8%)
Somewhat Unlikely	64 (13%)	37 (19.5%)
Unsure	81 (16%)	33 (17.4%)
Likely	35 (7%)	23 (12.1%)
Very likely	12 (2%)	10 (5.3%)



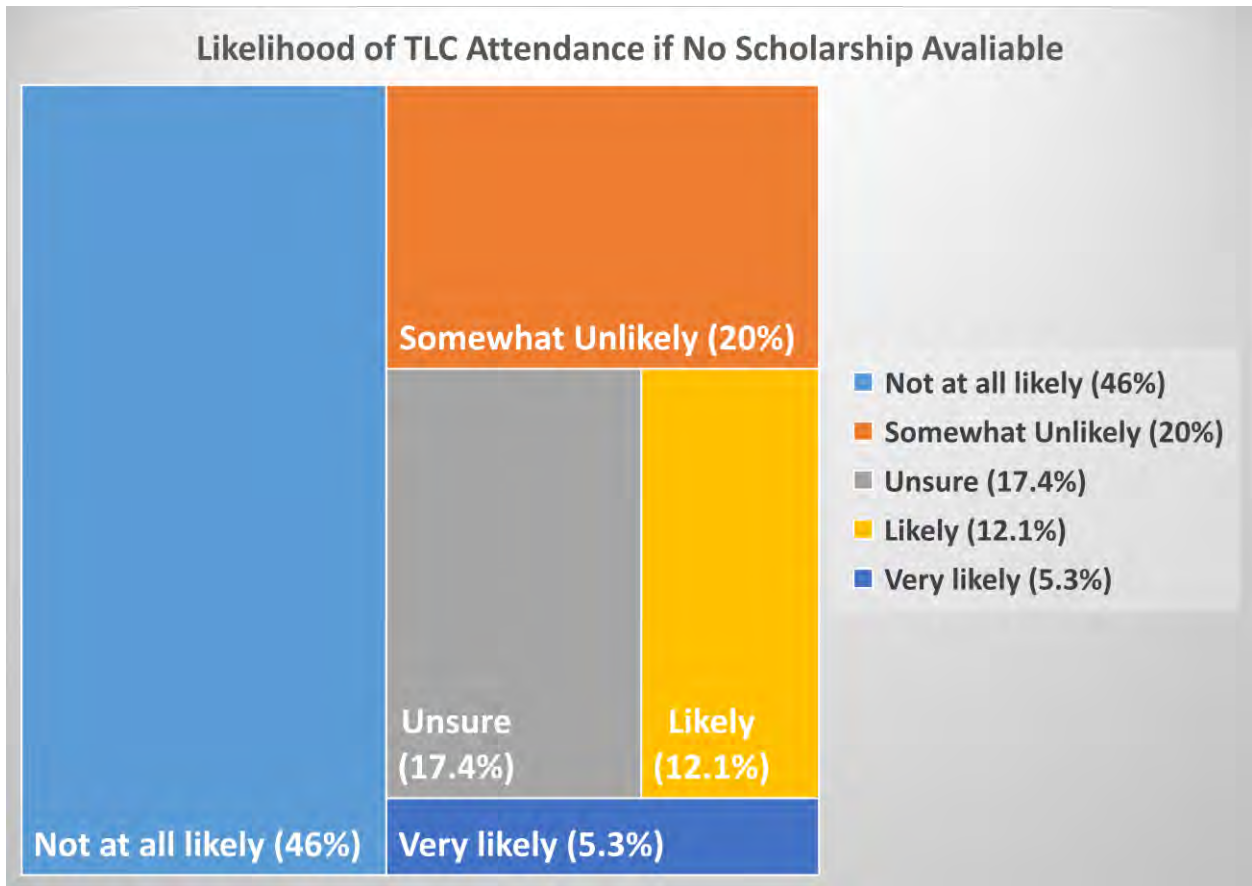


Figure 14. Likelihood parents would send their child to TLC if charged a camp fee



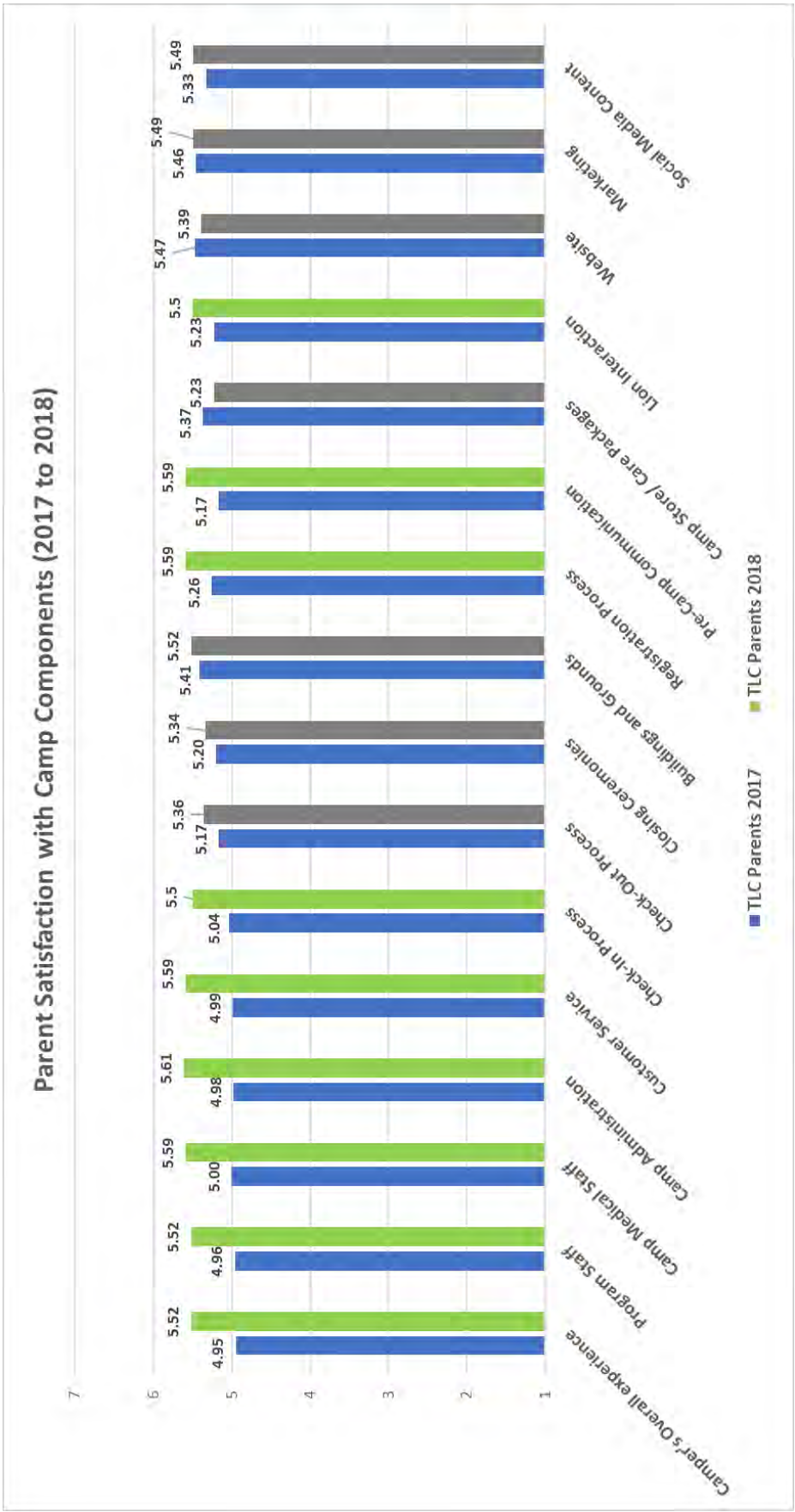
**PARENT SATISFACTION WITH TLC CAMP COMPONENTS**

Parents were asked to report on their satisfaction with TLC services following their child's camp experience in both the summer of 2017 and 2018, rating components on a 1 to 7 scale, where 1 = poor and 7 = excellent. **As indicated in Table 7 and Figure 15 in both the summer of 2017 and 2018 parents generally reported high levels of satisfaction with TLC services and their child's experience.** Notably, from 2017 to 2018 there were no significant reductions in satisfaction score, and across the 16 measured dimensions of satisfaction, parents reported statistically significant increases across 9 dimensions. **The improvement in scores from 2017 (which already demonstrated high satisfaction scores) to 2018 reflects quality-focused organizational and operational practices that parents recognize in TLC.**

Table 7. Comparison of TLC Parent Satisfaction 2017 and 2018

(Scale = 1-7, where 1= very unsatisfied and 7= very satisfied) (Green indicates Growth)

Camp Components	TLC Parents (2017)			TLC Parents (2018)			t	Statistical Significance
	n	Mean	Standard Deviation	n	Mean	Standard Deviation		
Camper's Overall experience	507	4.95	1.366	189	5.52	1.307	4.953	$p \leq .001$
Program Staff	502	4.96	1.399	186	5.52	1.300	4.831	$p \leq .001$
Camp Medical Staff	507	5	1.312	178	5.59	1.214	5.34	$p \leq .001$
Camp Administration	504	4.98	1.344	186	5.61	1.222	5.59	$p \leq .001$
Customer Service	505	4.99	1.344	187	5.59	1.229	5.33	$p \leq .001$
Check-In Process	499	5.04	1.415	187	5.50	1.263	3.90	$p \leq .001$
Check-Out Process	503	5.17	1.530	188	5.36	1.355	1.49	$p = .134$
Closing Ceremonies	500	5.20	1.560	160	5.34	1.397	1.01	$p = .311$
Buildings and Grounds	507	5.41	1.623	187	5.52	1.152	.85	$p = .395$
Registration Process	505	5.26	1.516	187	5.59	1.172	2.69	$p = .007$
Pre-Camp Communication	504	5.17	1.446	189	5.59	1.176	3.57	$p \leq .001$
Camp Store/ Care Packages	503	5.37	1.623	172	5.23	1.355	1.02	$p = .309$
Lion Interaction	504	5.23	1.507	181	5.50	1.250	2.15	$p = .030$
Website	501	5.47	1.620	185	5.39	1.256	.61	$p = .543$
Marketing	505	5.46	1.548	168	5.49	1.168	.23	$p = .817$
Social Media Content	503	5.33	1.528	181	5.49	1.172	1.27	$p = .201$



**Figure 15. Parent satisfaction with camp components 2017 to 2018 (Scale of 1-7, where 1 = very satisfied and 7 = very unsatisfied) (NOTE: Gray bar indicates no significant change from 2017 to 2018. No statistically significant decreases from 2017 to 2018.)**



**PARENT REPORTED CHANGE IN SOCIOEMOTIONAL SKILLS**

Parents responded to questions about their observed change in camper levels of autonomy, relatedness, AND competence, before and after their TLC experience. As indicated in Table 8 and Figure 16, parent reports of change in camper autonomy, competence, and relatedness pre- to post-TLC were statistically significant ( $p \leq .05$ ). More simply, parents reported positive growth in their child’s self-esteem, self-control (*autonomy*), motivation to participate and engage in activities (*competence*), and relationships with peers (*relatedness*) following their child’s TLC experience.

Table 8. Parental Reported Change in Child Behavior Pre- to Post-TLC 2018

Outcome	Pre-TLC Parent Observed Score	Post-TLC Parent Observed Score	Difference Score	t	Significance
Autonomy	5.2763	5.4326	+0.15635	5.302	.001
Competence	5.6456	5.7567	+0.11106	3.919	.001
Relatedness	6.293	6.3414	+0.04839	2.06	.040
Responsibility	5.3175	5.4505	+0.13293	4.697	.001
Attitude	5.2197	5.3345	+0.11476	3.876	.001
Self-Regulation	4.6006	4.8926	+0.29196	9.469	.001
Exploration	5.5601	5.6849	+0.12485	3.747	.001

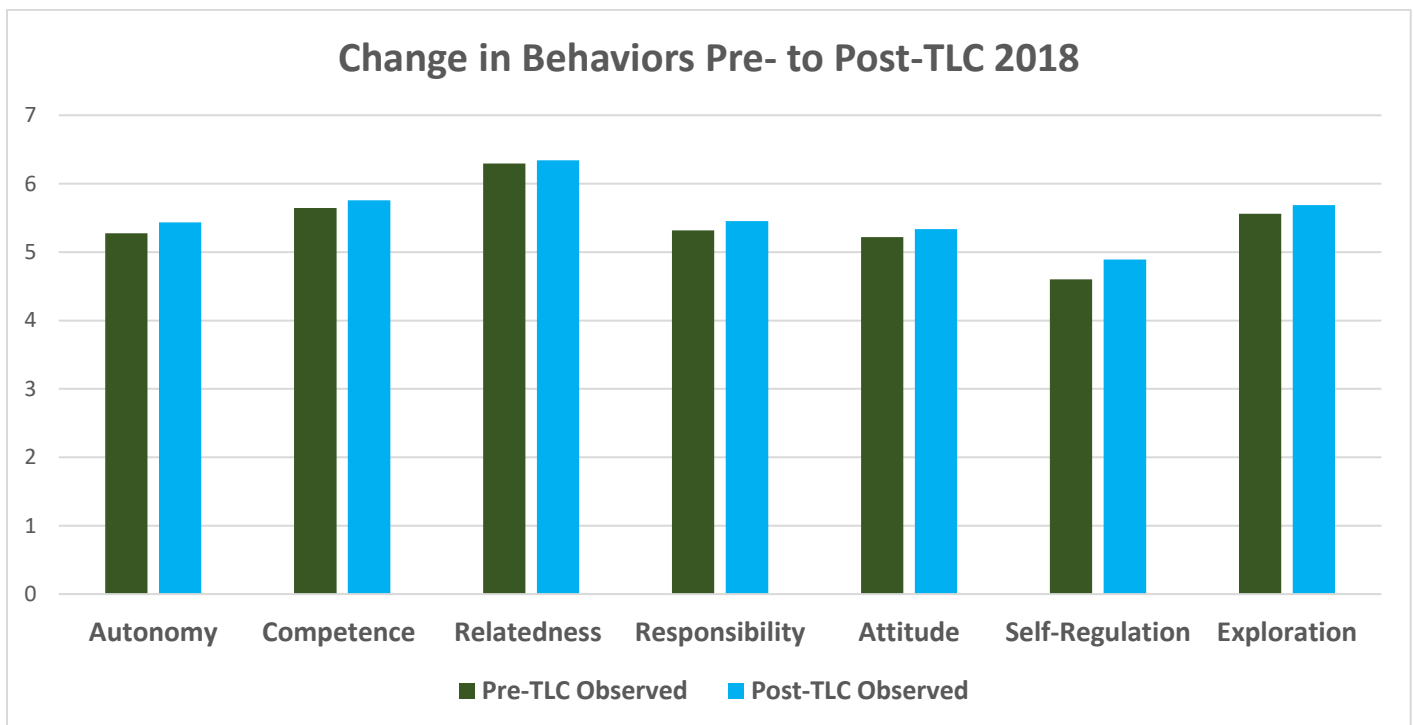


Figure 16. Change in Parent Reported Behaviors Pre- to Post-TLC 2018.

## **REASONS PARENTS WOULD NOT SEND THEIR CHILD TO A MEDICAL SPECIALITY CAMP**

Following reporting in 2017 at the TLC Winter Lions meeting, TLC stakeholders identified an area of interest relating to recruiting challenges, were Lions frequently reported difficulty in recruiting children to participate in TLC. As such, in the TLC 2018 parental questionnaire, parents were asked, **“Based on families you know that include a child with a disability, what are reasons why parents wouldn’t choose camp for their child?”** The following categories were identified through the coding process: trust (49%), control (14%), separation (14%), denial (7%), social-emotional well-being, (7%), distance (4%), and cost (3%) (see Table 9). These categories are described below.

Parents lack of general trust in camp and healthcare staff (Not to be confused with TLC). A common concern associated with this category reflects the level of **personal care** a child would receive at camp by individuals described as “strangers” or “others.” As one parent reflected, *“some parents just are not trusting that others can take appropriate care of their children with special needs or they believe their children's needs are too complex.”* Similarly, other parents shared a concern that *“staff weren’t trained properly to work with a child with her anxiety”* or worried that their child *“will not be cared for in the way that it happens at home.”* Lack of trust was also influenced by parents’ **unfamiliarity** with camp. Common responses described this concern as *“fear of the unknown”* and *“not knowing what is going on with their child.”*

Parents are concerned about giving up control over their child’s life. Parents who responded to this question suggested that “parents not being in control or not knowing is not something [parents] are comfortable with.” This *“fear and loss of control”* and *“inability to turn over control”* creates a potential feeling of **powerlessness** in parents if they allow their child attend camp. Some parents described the expression of this control as parents making a **“personal decision”** or “personal choice” to not send their child to camp.

Parents worry about separation from their child. This category was described as *“separation-anxiety”* or *“being too scared to be away from their child.”* One parent shared, *“I’ve spoken to parents with a child with [a disability] that was considering but decided to not send their child to camp this year and instead wait an additional year, the parent admitted it was because of their own inability to be away from the child and attachment...”* This separation category also included the caregiver dimension of **identity loss** that might accompany separating from a child because of camp. For example, a parent shared how *“parents’ identity evolves around their child’s disability--it can be hard to let that go, even for a week.”*

Parents experience feelings of denial about their child’s medical need or disability. As suggested by a parent, parents have a **lack of acceptance** of their child’s abilities are *“in denial that a camp with special needs can help their child.”* In some cases, *“parents may still be adjusting their selves as a family”* because of a child’s recent diagnosis. Because of this denial or need for **family adjustment**, parents may fail to *“give their child credit for what they are capable of and hold them back”* from attending camp.

Parents are concerned about their child’s social-emotional well-being. Recognizing the importance of social support in an away-from-home program such as camp, parents suggested that some parents worry that their child might experience **bullying** or *“be harassed by other children.”* Other responses reflected parental concerns about a child’s **coping** with being away from home or their ability to develop friendships with other campers. Another dimension of this category involved parents’ shielding their child from possible **stigma** associated with attending a medical specialty camp. For example, a parent reflected that *“families fear a stigma would be associated with sending their child to camp, like it would be calling undue attention to the child's disability.”*

Finally, distance and cost can be barriers to parents sending a child to camp. Although these responses were uncommon (i.e., 3% of the parents sampled), parents suggested that “distance from home is a big factor for some” and others noted that the cost of camp could be factor limiting parents’ willingness to send their child to camp.



Table 9. Categories developed from parent responses\* to the question, “Based on families you know that include a child with a disability, what are reasons why parents wouldn’t choose camp for their child?”

Category	Code	Description	Count	Percent
Trust	Personal care	Parental concern/fear that their child will not receive the right level of care	24	49%
	Unfamiliarity	Lack of knowledge or understanding of what their child will experience at camp	3	
	Trust	Lack of parent familiarity with camp administration or camp staff; Difficulty in allowing strangers to provide for their child’s well-being	7	
Control	Powerlessness	Inability for parents to control or influence what will happen to their child at camp	7	14%
	Personal decision	Parents make personal choices/personal decisions about what's best for their child	3	
Separation	Separation	Concern/fear related to a parent separating from their child (or a child separating from their parent); Loss of communication between parent/child	6	14%
	Identity Loss	Parental fear of losing their identity as their child's primary caregiver	1	
Denial	Lack of acceptance	Parents have not accepted their child's disability; Parents don't recognize their child's potential	4	7%
	Family adjustment	Parents haven't adjusted to their child's disability (particularly for children with a new diagnosis)	1	
Social-emotional well-being	Coping	Concern about child’s ability to cope with being away from home	1	7%
	Bullying	Concern/fear that child will be harassed by other children	1	
	Stigma	Concern about their child being labelled with a disability	3	
Distance	Distance	Concern about the distance from home to camp and being far away from their child	3	4%
Cost	Cost	Concern about the camp fee	2	3%

\* N = 85 coded responses (70 responses excluding drops, not applicable, and alternative perspectives)

## DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS: PARENT REPORT

The purpose of this project was to shift from the framework of evaluation capacity building established in 2017 to an ongoing process improvement model where year-to-year comparisons are possible. Specifically, the parent dimension of the current project explored potential shifts in parental satisfaction with TLC, developmental outcomes associated with a camper attending TLC, and potential barriers to recruiting of campers from the parent's perspective.

### ***REFLECTION ON KEY FINDINGS***

At a logistical level, TLC sustained the high-bar of excellence it established in 2017. Specifically, the implementation quality of the survey could not have been done better. Indeed, the 49% overall response rate to the survey indicates excellence in communication from the TLC team and from the respondent perspective, a deep level of trust with the TLC administration team.

As illustrated in the survey results, parents continued to be highly satisfied with their experience as "customers" of TLC. As compared to the already high "scores" in 2017, TLC exceeded these scores in 2018 across 9 dimensions of satisfaction and saw no decreases in scores across all 16 dimensions measured from 2017 to 2018. Put differently, already good scores got even better. This presents an opportunity for TLC to identify if/where it would like to dig deeper and potentially tease out specific subdimensions of satisfaction it would like to improve.

As with 2017, parents reported significant gains in their child's self-esteem, self-control (autonomy), motivation to participate and engage in activities (competence), and relationships with peers (relatedness) following their child's TLC experience in the summer of 2018. Indeed, parents reported slightly higher outcome scores across all measured dimensions in 2018 as compared to 2017. Importantly, "skill-based" measures were added in 2018, (e.g., my child completes things they start) and the evidence suggests in the first year these items were utilized, parents also reported meaningful gains in these skills as well. Given the clear evidence of TLC as an environment to promote socioemotional development in youth and adolescents, these gains present an additional opportunity for TLC. Specifically, future evaluation should also explore how skills specifically related to managing a child's disability change as a result of their TLC experience (e.g., diabetes pump maintenance).

Parents were asked why they believed a parent of a child with a disability would not allow their child to attend a place like TLC. While the findings are perhaps unsurprising, (e.g., fear their child will not receive the appropriate level of care), they do point to useful information for those tasked with recruiting children to attend TLC to mitigate common parental concerns and the change in "worry" after their first TLC experience. Importantly, this information could also be used by TLC parental alumni, to also assuage common concerns associated with the TLC experience. The efficacy of this approach should be investigated in future evaluations.

As noted by the research team, and by their colleagues in the broader camp industry, TLC serves as an exemplar of a youth-centered organization that is wholly committed to providing the very best experience and outcomes for the youth it serves. The ease and benefits of this partnership cannot be overstated by the evaluation team; TLC represents a case study in what a medical specialty camp can be and what others should aspire to. A TLC camper is better because of the people and programs TLC provides.