



CHARM Impact 2021-2022

Overall Summary



Two families embrace, Camp Druzy 2022

Thanks to support from wonderful community donors and volunteers last year, CHARM provided **resiliency-building experiences and support to 135 children and family members** from December 2021- December 2022! During that time, Tapestry and Camp Druzy have supported 90 different children and family members who were grieving a death or extended separation from a close family member through both programs. Camp Druzy participants ranged from two years of age to grandparents. Eligible youth (ages 5+) completed surveys before and after camp that included age-appropriate, validated questions on resiliency, as well as on their experiences and satisfaction. Adults also reported on dimensions of resiliency and overall wellbeing (overall biopsychosocialemotional-spiritual) wellness. On average, **all dimensions of resiliency and wellbeing scores significantly increased and all reported top-notch satisfaction with camp!**

Camp Druzy 2022

In July 2022, we reached out to all Tapestry families as well as newly grieving families referred by community partners such as Circles of Peace, Mariposa Community Health Center, the Santa Cruz County Superintendent's Office, and members of the community, to participate in camp. A total of 40 children and parents/guardians, representing 10 families, joined us for Camp Druzy 2022, our 3rd annual gathering. Camp included four days of experiences for families to learn evidence-based, resiliency-building skills and tools; strengthen confidence, nurture a sense of connection, practice creativity, and so much more in culturally appropriate and trauma-informed ways.



Jackie Sainz and daughter Sophia (13) work on a creative expression activity together

Families members connected with other grieving children and adults from the community and together transformed grief in comfortable, fun settings! Volunteers included previous campers (such as Brenda Graams, who was featured in our application, who served as a camp counselor this year) along with other campers from prior years. Volunteers



Campers Julian (13) and Isaiah (17) enjoying a daily morning yoga session

also included local teachers, medical providers, therapists, practitioners, and other members of the community with relevant personal and professional experience. On August 4th, the Nogales International published a great article about Camp Druzy entitled "[Camp Druzy helps families grieve and heal](#)".

Reported outcomes for Camp Druzy 2022 were very positive! Children and youth ages 5+ were asked to complete evaluation surveys before and after camp. Notably, **for children and youth there was an average overall increase in self-reported resiliency scores for all measures** - especially for questions related to academic achievement,

positive coping skills, having role models, and feeling a greater sense of connection/fitting in with other kids. Older youth ages 10+ were asked additional self-reported measures of resiliency – average increases were also seen across these, especially for the following: **“Now I know I can handle hard times”, “I can change important things in my life”, “I discovered I am stronger than I thought I was”, “I feel a sense of well-being from a connection with nature”**. On average, all youth reported top-notch scores how happy they were with their experiences (average of 9.5/10). For adults, scores also increased for all questions above – even with the small sample size, statistically significant increases were reported for the following four resiliency measures: **“I can change important things in my life”, “I have a greater sense of closeness with others”, “Now I know that I can handle hard times”, “I discovered that I am stronger than I thought I was”**. In addition, using a validated, reliable measure to assess adult (18+) self-rated global/overall wellbeing (which includes their overall sense of spiritual, social, mental, emotional, and physical well-being), **adult participants reported an average increase of 31.3% greater global/overall wellbeing after camp with increases ranging from 13.5-50%!¹**

Camp Druzy 2022 Story of Success – The Ruiz Family



Mother Cony and her son Enrique (8) embrace during the opening ceremony

The Ruiz family was referred to CHARM by our partners at Circles of Peace as they were grieving two family members (the mother’s parents) who had passed away within weeks of one another. Surviving family members include Hugo Enrique (Dad), Cony (Mom), Camila (10), and Enrique (8). During camp, we learned they had been living in their car as the family had lost their home, no longer able to afford their rent as a result of their losses.

On day 1 of the overnight experience, it was evident that Dad had a healthy skepticism. However, his heart was open. While Mom was more optimistic, the entire family was deeply grieving the death of her two parents. She shared honestly during a circle about their story, their challenges as parents, and how she was always asking her husband to be more affectionate. On day 2, during our morning check-ins we ask campers to volunteer to share something they are grateful for over the past 24 hours or a take-away from the prior day. Hugo Enrique stood up first. He explained he was agnostic and went into detail about what

that meant for those who might not know. He shared in Spanish that as a result of the experiences he’d had during camp on the first day, he now *“without a doubt believes in a higher power”* saying *“I felt it for myself”* during one of our group sessions. It completely changed the way he interacted with his family – he became openly affectionate with them and started communicating with his children in strengths-based ways. Hugo Enrique urged everyone to lean in during camp and even support CHARM in any way they could after it was over. He embraced the rest of the activities whole-heartedly and is a different person with a positive mindset, even now when we communicate.

Cony and the children also thrived during camp. With a little positive reinforcement, using the Nurtured Heart Approach, Enrique became highly engaged and took an active role in ensuring others were cared for. Noting the impact, his parents began using the positive parenting approach. Camila also shined in her creativity, leadership skills, and ability to connect with the animals. On day 4 (the final day) she volunteered to co-lead the group in a positive coping technique learned the weekend prior. She empowered everyone to shake fears and feel more calm, confident, and connected before the equine sessions. The Ruiz family was chosen by counselors as one of our *“Druzy Award”* recipients. Plus, both parents received gainful employment after camp from one of our volunteers, continuing to work there today. Their lives transformed during camp and Mom even wrote the following [testimonial](#) (translated from Spanish), ***“(Camp Druzy) is an excellent experience for people going through periods of mourning at different levels. In the case of our family, it went beyond our pain and helped us both in a spiritual, mental and physical way to know our interior, to be able to relieve pain, to be resilient and realistic in real-time thanks to CHARM and all the volunteers and donors. May God continue to bless you”***.



The Ruiz Family, Camp Druzy 2022

2023, we have received 49 referrals for grieving children from Santa Cruz County.

Your support will make this transformative, community-led, strengths-based opportunity possible for grieving families with children – empowering them to strengthen resilience and wellbeing as a community and making a meaningful difference in their lives! Thank you so much for your consideration.

¹Evaluation results were analyzed and reported to CHARM by Koren Hanson, Senior Research Analyst at ASU’s Office for Community Health, Engagement, & Resiliency (OCHER) in the School of Social Work (Tucson campus).

New members of our Board of Directors (BODs) & Advisory Board

We wish to highlight CHARM's newest leadership/board and advisory board members

CHARM's New Board Members



Debbie Gonzales, RN, Board of Directors, Vice Chair. Debbie, CHARM's new Vice Chair, is a long-time Santa Cruz County (SCC) resident with extensive experience working in community schools across Nogales, Patagonia, and Rio Rico and in service to the community through her capacity as a nurse, parent, elected leader for the Patagonia Parent Teacher Club, and as a substitute teacher. A former frontline nurse during the early HIV-AIDS pandemic, she has hard-earned experience caring for patients and their grieving families. Mrs. Gonzales has over 45 years of community service experience working to forward the work of organizations like the SCC 4-H Youth Development Program, the SCC Juvenile Court, Community Youth Corps, Team Anonymous, and more. She is trained in Character Counts, domestic violence

community response training, infant adoption, learning disabilities and social skills, healthy workplace environments, and more. She looks forward to serving the community in her new role with CHARM's BOD and as a volunteer. She and her husband previously volunteered for Camp Druzy 2022.



Laszlo Kantor, Board of Directors. Since 2019, Laszlo has served as a volunteer for CHARM and Camp Druzy. Mr. Kantor is a native resident of Nogales, Arizona and, an artist himself, he is very involved in art and youth-focused, community-led efforts in the U.S.-MX border region. He is also the Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors for La Línea, a cooperative art and event space that aims to enrich the cultural environment of Ambos Nogales by connecting artists with their community. He has volunteered for several CHARM events since our founding, including our projects with Eagle Scouts and Camp Druzy 2022.



Megan Wingfield, Board of Directors, Secretary. A native of Nogales, Arizona, Megan has a degree in Communications from the University of Arizona. She is a Founding Co-Director of Camp Druzy with extensive experience in event planning. From 2018-2022 she served as an advisory board member for CHARM and is a former Board Secretary for the Tucson Association of Realtors. She has volunteered for several CHARM events since our founding, including Tapestry, Camp Druzy, and projects with Eagle Scouts. Megan replaced Elisa Yi as our Board Secretary, with Elisa continuing to serve as a non-executive member of the BODs.

CHARM's New Advisory Board Members

Ayla Cunningham, MEd. A native of Sonoita, Ayla is a highly experienced educator with a Master of Education degree focused on behavioral science. She is also a certified Kids Life Coach® and founder of Strive to Thrive.

Dr. Evan Kory, DMA, MM. A native resident of Nogales, Evan is the Director of the Santa Cruz County Arts for Learning Program at the Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office and a board member for La Línea.

Tiffany Mihelish, MS, LPC. A native resident of Nogales, Tiffany is a board certified licensed professional counselor at Real Talk Therapy in Nogales, Arizona and a volunteer for Camp Druzy (2021-present).

Special Note: Numerous photos, testimonials, stories, and additional details are available, upon request.