

## YMCA Camp Research—*Cutting Through the Noise*



Camps are noisy places. On one hand, it's a great thing. Kids are having a great time exploring, socializing, and playing. But on the other hand, the noise can create confusion—confusion about what is making campers happy, what's making parents angry, and about what improvements can be made. Camp directors and staff hear things, but how do they know what's important and what's noise? We help YMCA camps cut through the noise and deliver quality, specific feedback that will enable YMCAs to focus on what's important to campers and where the camp is coming up short.

### How we do it:

**Customizable surveys:** All camps are supposed to be fun, but not all camps go about it the same way. Ask about your staff, ask about unique activities, or even ask about those brand new camp bathrooms—it's your camp, find out what you need to know.

**Conversation center:** We have a team of friendly, professional interviewers who don't prod, they converse. In addition to the specific questions from the survey, our callers ask open-ended questions in order to delve deep into the camping experience.

**NPS (Net Promoter Score):** "On a scale of 0-10, how likely would it be for you to recommend this camp to a friend or family member?" That's the ultimate question, and it's the focal point of our camp studies. Years of empirical research has made NPS the new standard measurement in customer (camper) satisfaction and loyalty. Is your camp breeding happy campers or bleeding detractors?

"Net Promoter gave us specific, actionable information from the parents of campers. Our surveys went out Thursday evening the first week of camp, we had reports Saturday night, action plans were developed by Monday morning, and changes were made. Camp site specific data, highly useable, and extremely affordable—the trifecta for improving program quality in a challenging economy." —Paul McEntire, YMCA of Florida's First Coast, President and CEO

## How we deliver:

Camps last for about three months, but that doesn't mean you have to twiddle your thumbs for nine before being able to make changes. At the end of a camp session, we will begin to collect information through phone and e-mail surveys. Before the next session of camp begins, the camp will receive the NPS scores, respondent contacts (those who volunteer that information) and the NPS explanation comment. This allows camp staff to quickly identify and correct problem areas and accentuate areas of excellence.

At the end of camp, YMCAs get a full report with results from every question.



“With day camp and childcare, we train on the specifics we’re hoping to see- eye contact, greetings, etc., and we reinforce this during our site visits. NPS ratings tell us how our staff is doing when we, the leadership, are not on site. I love establishing a baseline early in the summer and seeing if we can get it to move up by the end of the summer. We’ll challenge individual day camp sites to create the greatest movement in their scores and reward them at summer’s end.” –Geoff Ball, Senior Executive Director, YMCA of Tacoma-Pierce County.

While important, summer camp is not just about retention rates or the bottom-line. When kids go to summer camp, they are creating memories that will be with them forever, and therein lies the importance of having the best camp possible. And we can help you with that.

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