Background

Each year the American Camp Association (ACA) collects enrollment data and trends from camps who respond voluntarily to an online survey. Because this survey was voluntary, it represents the experiences of those who responded to the survey. However, it does provide insight into enrollment trends that might affect the camp industry as a whole. Additional resources can be found on the ACA website under the “Research” tab. Articles on enrollment appear each March/April in the Camping Magazine.
Camp Demographics

295 Camps Responded

Type of Program

- Day (24.38%)
- Overnight (43.82%)
- Rental (0.71%)
- Combination (31.10%)

Clientele

- Boys Only (4.95%)
- Girls Only (8.48%)
- Coed (77.38%)
- Combo (single gender sessions) (9.19%)

Camp Affiliation

- Agency
- Religiously Affiliated
- Independent for Profit
- Independent Not For Profit
- Government/Municipal
- University/College

Respondents by Region
- West (21%)
- Mid-America (23%)
- South (21%)
- Mid-Atlantic (19%)
- New England (16%)
- Other (4%)

2017

50
40
30
20
10
0

Percent
Nearly 40% of overnight camps report their most popular sessions are between 2-4 weeks long!

Independent for profit camps saw the most even distribution across most popular sessions, with 2 weeks being the most popular session reported.
Camp Demographics: Takeaway Points

- A total of 295 camp professionals responded to the survey
- 75 of respondents offered overnight camp sessions
- 77% of respondents offered co-ed sessions
- Respondents were fairly evenly distributed across all 5 ACA regions
- 63% of respondents were from independent camps (both for profit and not for profit)
- Nearly half (47%) of camps offer 1 week sessions and 1/4 offer sessions between 1-4 days in length
- One and two week sessions were most popular
### Staff Hired

#### Number of Staff Hired

- **<9 (4.59%)**
- **10-19 (9.89%)**
- **20-29 (12.01%)**
- **30-39 (10.25%)**
- **40-49 (10.60%)**
- **50-59 (7.77%)**
- **60-69 (5.65%)**
- **70-79 (9.19%)**
- **80-89 (5.65%)**
- **90-99 (3.18%)**
- **100+ (21.20%)**

#### Recruiting Seasonal Staff vs. 2016

- **Significantly easier**
- **Somewhat easier**
- **About the same**
- **Somewhat more difficult**
- **Significantly more difficult**

#### Specialized Seasonal Staff vs. 2016

- **Significantly lower (>10%)**
- **Somewhat lower (<10%)**
- **About the same**
- **Somewhat higher (<10%)**
- **Significantly higher (>10%)**
- **Don't hire specialized staff**
Staff Hired: Type of Program, Camp Affiliation, and Local Office

- A similar number of day (24.6%) and overnight camps (28.6%) hire over 100 staff each summer
- A higher percentage of day camps (44.8%) found it more difficult to hire staff this year as compared to overnight camps (36.3%)
- A higher percentage of overnight camps felt hiring was about the same difficulty as last year (48.4%) as compared to day camps (35.8%)
- 40% of Agency camps and 37.5% of Government/Municipal camps felt that hiring was somewhat harder than in 2016
- In most local offices the majority of camps said hiring was the same difficulty as last year except: NY/NJ (40%), Virginias (50%), Wisconsin (54.5%), Illinois (55.6%), and Evergreen (50%), who reported it was somewhat harder

Returning Staff

More overnight camps (22.8%) have at least ¾ returning staff as compared to day camps (12.1%)

A higher proportion of overnight camps (19.7%) had somewhat more returners this summer as compared to summer 2016 versus day camps (13.4%)

The majority of camps in all affiliations, regions, and local offices reported 50-74% returning staff members!

All regions reported the percent of returning staff was about the same as 2016
Staff Demographics: Ethnicity

Day camps report more staff who are Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino(a), Asian, Multi-Racial, or other non-white races/ethnicities

64% of Day Camps Report...
- Staff who are white (64%)
- Staff who are not white (36%)

78% of Overnight Camps Report...
- Staff who are white (86.67%)
- Staff who are not white (13.33%)
Staff Demographics: Age

Younger than 18

19-20 Years Old

21-22 Years Old

23-24 Years Old
Staff Demographics: Age

- **29 and Older**
  - < 9%: 20-29%
  - 10-19%
  - 20-29%
  - 30-39%
  - 40-49%
  - 50-59%
  - 60-69%
  - 70-79%
  - 80-89%
  - 90-100%

- **27-28 Years Old**
  - < 9%: 20-29%
  - 10-19%
  - 20-29%
  - 30-39%
  - 40-49%
  - 50-59%
  - 60-69%
  - 70-79%
  - 80-89%
  - 90-100%

- **25-26 Years Old**
  - < 9%: 20-29%
  - 10-19%
  - 20-29%
  - 30-39%
  - 40-49%
  - 50-59%
  - 60-69%
  - 70-79%
  - 80-89%
  - 90-100%

- **Staff in College This Year or Next**
  - 0-24%
  - 25-49%
  - 50-74%
  - 75-100%
Staff Demographics:
Takeaway Points

- In terms of number of staff hired, there is a wide range, however 21% of camps hire over 100 staff members each summer.
- Recruiting staff was harder this summer vs. 2016: 37% of camps thought so.
- 75% of camps said the number of specialized seasonal staff was about the same as last year.
- 60% of camps report at least half their camp staff returned from summer 2016.
- 1/4 of camps feel that the number of returning staff is lower than in 2016.
- Majority of camp staff are Caucasian, however 22% of camps report 1 in 5 Hispanic staff members and 20% of camps report 1 in 5 African American staff members.
- Although age of camp staff varies, over half (51%) of camps report at least 3/4 of their staff attending college this year or next year.
International Staff

Number of International Staff vs. 2016

![Bar chart showing the percentage of camps hiring international staff compared to 2016.](chart)

- > 10% lower
- < 10% lower
- About the same
- < 10% higher
- > 10% higher
- Do not hire internationals

Number of Staff Hired on Camp Counselor Program

Number of Staff Hired on Summer Work Travel Program

International Staff: Hiring by Region

- Interestingly the majority of camps in three of the five regions reported not hiring international staff: South (53.4%), Mid-America (34.5%), and the West (49.1%)
- The largest proportion of camps in both Mid-Atlantic (46.7%) and New England (43.4%) said they hired about the same number of international staff as in summer 2016
- In no region did the majority of camps hire more than 10-14 international staff members
International Staff: Takeaway Points

- 59% of camps hire international staff
- Of the camps that do hire international staff, 92% reported hiring the same or more international staff vs. 2016
- Of camps that hire internationals, nearly half (46%) hire between 1-9 staff through the Camp Counselor visa program, while 3% of camps hire over 50 through this visa program
- Of camps that hire internationals, 36% hire between 1-9 staff through the Summer Work Travel visa program, while only 1% of camps hire over 50 through this visa program
Thank you from the ACA Research Team

Contact: Victoria Povilaitis | victoria.povilaitis@utah.edu