



OKIZU

Supporting Families with
Childhood Cancer

The Spirit of Okizu

Okizu (oak-eye-zoo) comes from the Sioux language and means unity, to come together, to heal from a hurt, to make whole.

The mission of Okizu is to provide peer support, respite, mentoring, and recreational programs to meet the needs of all members of families affected by childhood cancer.

For more than thirty years, Okizu has been committed to the continuing support of the Oncology, Siblings, Family, Bereavement, and Teens-N-Twenties programs. These programs are the result of a collaborative effort of Okizu and the pediatric oncology treatment centers in Northern California. The specific purpose of this corporation is to operate peer support programs for children and families affected by childhood cancer, many of which are based on the community-forming nature of a residential camp experience.

"He came home happy, confident, and energized. Camp gives him a boost in self-esteem and compassion. He's found a strong community of peers and that's what treatment took away. Camp brings joy into both my children's lives. It's a very healing place. Thank you!"

– Parent of Oncology and SIBS Campers



Important Things to Know

- Okizu is the only camp that serves families affected by childhood cancer in Northern California
- Our programs offer important, specialized support for each member of the family
- Families never pay a fee to participate in our programs
- It costs \$1,000 to send one child to one week of camp
- It costs \$500 to send one family to one weekend of family camp
- Okizu was founded in 1982 by John Bell and Dr. Mike Amylon
- The first week of camp served 28 childhood cancer patients
- Okizu rented camp facilities from YMCA and Camp Fire Girls' in the Grass Valley Area for the first 20 years of camp
- In 1998 our current 500 acre facility in Berry Creek, California, was purchased
- In 2014 we expect to serve about 3,000 participants and log over 100,000 volunteer hours



Learn more at okizu.org and join us online!





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How Our Programs Help

Oncology Camp

- Patients and survivors get to focus on fun while surrounded by others who can truly understand their experiences
- Campers are able to receive their treatments from our professional medical staff at the on site infirmary
- Campers gain self confidence, independence, lifelong friendships, and a more positive outlook about their experiences and future

SIBS Camp

- Sibling campers get the important individual support they need while surrounded by others who can truly understand their experiences
- Campers can focus on fun and making lifelong friendships while gaining independence and self confidence
- Campers who have lost a sibling to cancer are able to get the unique support and understanding that they need

Family Camp

- The entire family can spend a weekend of fun and bonding together
- Parents are able to get support and advice from others who can truly understand their experiences

Bereaved Family Camp

- Families who have lost a child to cancer can spend a weekend of fun, bonding, and support from other families who can truly understand their experiences

Teens-N-Twenties

- Childhood cancer patients and siblings who are over 18 go on organized trips with others who can truly understand their experiences



From Our Families

"This camp really inspires me to be a better person and be more positive in every aspect of life. This place has really showed me that everyone has a purpose and everyone has a story, and the only way to understand that is to be yourself and let others be themselves as well."

– 17-year-old female Oncology Camper

"Camp Okizu is always an amazing experience for me. Every year I am delighted to see how one week can turn complete strangers into best friends."

– 14-year-old female Siblings camper

"This was the first time since our son passed away that we felt understood and free to share. It was incredible to see the way our daughter blossomed in a weekend... It has changed all of our lives."

– Bereaved Family Camp Parent

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