

After months of learning and listening, we have confidence in our plan to safely offer camp experiences for children with heart disease. This decision was made in partnership with the Camp Odayin Board of Directors, Medical Team, and Staff – with guidance from the American Camp Association (ACA).

As you know, the safety and well-being of our campers has always been our top priority. Due to current guidance from the ACA, CDC, and Department of Health – overnight camp experiences need to limit the number of campers to reduce risk and exposure to COVID 19. As a result, we would need to hold a lottery for interested campers to attend camp. That just doesn't feel right. After considering the COVID 19 risks and the knowledge that all campers would not have an equal opportunity to attend, we will not be hosting Residential Camp this summer.

For the success of summer programming, we need to plan programs we know we can safely execute, not programs that might be canceled and change. Ample amount of time is needed for our team to schedule program locations and dates, launch and receive applications, secure and train staff, and then plan all of the campy fun! Our plan for summer 2021 is to host the following programs. Campers will have the option to participate in an in-person day camp AND virtual camp.

- Odayin on the Road! The Mortimer Mobile is traveling to hold multiple outdoor day camps throughout the Midwest (locations and dates TBD) – current grades 1-11
- Hearts@Home virtual camp (date TBD) – current grades 1-11
- Something super special and unique for graduating seniors (both this year AND last year – current grades 11 and 12)

We will hold a parent webinar on May 5<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm CT to share additional details and COVID-19 precautions we'll be implementing. If you are a parent of a heart child, contact [info@campodayin.org](mailto:info@campodayin.org) to be added to our Heart Family Email List. We will be emailing the Heart Family List upcoming webinar information, camp dates, and registration details this spring.



*“Faced with the continued unknown and putting the health and safety of our campers and staff first, we are confident in our decision. We all are starving for the joy and camaraderie that comes with camp and social interaction. Our current plan will allow us to create a safe environment based on established techniques that have been implemented at other camps and schools throughout the country.”*

– Dr. Mike Earing, WI Odayin Medical Director, Chief and Medical Director of Pediatric Cardiology – University of Chicago-Medicine/Advocate Healthcare/Northshore University

*“Though Residential Camp will not be held this year, we are excited to still bring the love, the joy, and excitement of Camp Odayin to our campers. We can assure you and your family that we will offer the same degree of medical support, guidance, and professional expertise of staff nurses and physicians. We can't wait to see you all this summer!”*

– Dr. Jon Johnson, MN Odayin Medical Director, Chair and Division of Pediatric Cardiology – Mayo Clinic Children's Center



Although we are grieving the loss of another summer without our traditional Residential Camp program, we know this is the best decision. Our plans for today are setting us up for successful camp sessions in the future.

Big Camp Love,

Sara Meslow  
Executive Director  
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