

# HEART *of the* JOURNEY

— Bringing you closer to the lives you help change —

## Serving Adoptive Families AT CAMP

**“WE THOUGHT  
LOVE WOULD  
BE ENOUGH!”**

*What happens  
when it isn't?*



These families who adopted from foreign countries were often unprepared for the effects of their son's previous experiences. Many boys came from orphanages where they experienced neglect. This can cause negative behaviors later in life. Other boys experienced abandonment and loss from their biological families. They frequently struggle to build relationships and trust with their adoptive families.

The result is sometimes disarray and turmoil in the family.

For years they did everything possible for their son. But their options were running out. They had no place to turn. They didn't know what to do next. They were desperate.

**Because of your support, these families had a place to get the help they needed!**



Problem solving is a priority at camp.

### Front Cover Image:

Evan & Christine at Mother and Son Banquet

### EVAN

Evan had experienced a lot of severe neglect in a Ukrainian orphanage. “He was severely underweight when we got him,” his mother Christine remembers. “I thought that we would just love on him, and that would be all he needed.”

“Because he has no memory of that trauma and wasn’t verbal, he was not able to process it,” she goes on. “He was not able to talk about it in therapy. He can’t recall it, but it’s there.”

Things really got bad when puberty hit. He was bullying other kids and getting behind academically.

Once, after a violent incident, Christine told him that they knew he didn’t want to be this way. They were going to pray for an answer. He responded, “there’s nothing to pray about. God can’t fix me. He had given up on himself.”

### BRADLEY

Many children adopted from foreign countries suffer from reactive attachment disorder (RAD). “RAD is a condition in which a child doesn’t establish healthy attachments with parents or caregiver,” explained Bradley’s mother Sharon. “It may develop if the child’s basic needs for comfort, affection and nurturing aren’t met.”

Children with RAD thrive on chaos and upheaval.

“Our family life was out of control,” she recalls. The more we showed him affection, the more he would push us away. He was tearing our family apart!”

“Unless you live with a child with RAD, you have no idea what it’s like,” his father Scott relates. “Our closest friends and family members would comment on our supposed lack of parenting skills. We felt very alone!”

### HUDSON

“In the orphanages, there aren’t enough caretakers for all the children,” Hudson’s mother Tamela explains. “So they don’t get a lot of one-on-one attention. They don’t get held and rocked. They do the best they can with the allocated resources.”

Like many children from these orphanages, Hudson had developmental delays in many areas. He responded well to much of the therapy, but there were still behavior issues. He was finally diagnosed with RAD. “That rocked our world,” Tamela remembers. “We knew that it was going to be a sustained effort for the rest of our lives.”

“As time passed, it continued to get worse,” she continues. “When he tried to hurt another child at basketball camp, we knew that we had to do something.”

### JOSH

Josh suffered early loss when his mother and twin brother died soon after he was born. In that culture, having twins was a curse. Since Josh was alone, he would have been treated as an outcast. He was rescued by missionaries and eventually adopted by Rodney and Gina.

When Josh turned seven, the hurts and feelings started to surface. He would keep all his feelings inside and refuse to talk about them. Then something would happen and he would erupt in fits of rage.



He would take out his anger on Gina – hitting and throwing things at her. But they could not get him to talk about what was bothering him. Then he started hitting and disrespecting other people.

## YOU GAVE THEM A PLACE TO GO

Their situations felt hopeless. These families tried many therapies and various methods to get help. Nothing seemed to work. They didn't know what else to do. "Our son had every test known to man done on him," one father said. "We were told that there was nothing they could do for him."

"One of the things about RAD is that the number of people you can rely on to help gets smaller and smaller and smaller and smaller," another father said.

"Since he was adopted from another country, we had no help from the Department of Social Services," a father explains. "We were on our own. We didn't know where to turn."

In their desperation, these families searched far and wide for a solution. They often learned about camp from other families, or a professional recommended it. Many families were surprised that camp felt they could help their son. "Our family worker said they could help us with our son," one mother said. "But, I didn't believe him."

## CHANGE BEGINS

"Camp provided the time and attention for our son that we couldn't," a father observes. "They could take the time to stop everything and deal with his issues.

Your support gave Josh and his family hope.



As they do life together, boys learn to trust their chiefs and group.

If he acted out, the whole group would circle up and deal with the problem at hand. You just can't do that in a family environment."

"Camp provides a space for a boy to deal with his problems," explains Gary Barnhart, program director. "We have the time at camp for him to share when he is struggling. His chiefs and group will stop everything to focus on the present distress. As he begins to open up, the others speak into his life in a caring and understanding way. Over time, his brain will start to reframe relationships as he learns to express what he is feeling and begins to trust others."

"Everything we do at camp, we do together," Daniel Hochstetler, executive director, said. "The constant interaction with his chief and the other campers fosters trust. As they solve problems, they are able to get below the surface of his acting out to see what is really bothering him. As they care and help each other, the boy becomes part of the solution – not just a problem. He begins to believe that he can be different."

Families often notice change within a few months at camp. For many boys, it's learning to react to problems in a more productive manner. "On one home visit, Josh was having a bad attitude," his father explained. "When asked what was going on, instead of getting angry like before, he admitted it, explained why and changed his attitude."

"His first home visit was amazing," another mother remarked. "He was different, especially with me. To have him look at me and say 'yes ma'am' – that was

priceless. Six weeks at camp accomplished more than all the other things we have done throughout the years.”

## **LIFE GOES ON**

“The past few years have been a whole lot easier,” Warren explains. “It’s not been a cake walk, but we now have the tools to work through our problems. I don’t where he would be without camp.”

“Camp helped his decision making,” Christine said. “He now has the wherewithal to make a good decision. Now it is up to him.”

Josh has been home a few months. He still has things to work through and it has not always been easy. “He still gets angry, but it’s what he does with it that has changed,” Rodney said.

“Camp takes something from unmanageable chaos to manageable chaos,” a father explains. “It’s still hard, but he doesn’t end up with the same outbursts. We thought we could bring these boys into our home and change them with a lot of love. But the hurts and scars were so deep that we realized that we needed help.”

“When a boy graduates and goes home, the family is given a renewed hope that things can be better,” Daniel said. “With all that they have been through, many families quit believing that they can be a healthy family. The camp experience renews their passion. It gives them the energy, courage and hope to move on. Camp doesn’t fix the boy. We help them understand what the problems are which gives them the confidence and tools to work through them.”

## **YOUR SUPPORT PROVIDES A SAFE SPACE FOR HEALING**

“I want to say thank you to Fair Play’s supporters for making it possible for our family to get help,” Sharon adds. “It’s been life-changing for our family as well as many others. You are sowing into these young men and changing generations. This experience will give these boys tools to work with for the rest of their lives.”



“Babies in orphanages often spend entire days lying in a crib, cold and wet. They are cared for on a schedule determined by the availability of orphanage staff. If bottles are propped, they will not associate being fed with human contact and warmth. Cries of distress can go unheeded for hours. After a while, children fail to recognize their own body signals. Their feelings of need become so painful they shut them off. Even if their physical needs are met, they do not learn the joy that comes simply from engaging with another human being or the comfort that comes from having their upsets soothed by loving hands. They lack physical contact in a loving embrace. Infants who are not touched can develop a condition known as “failure to thrive.”

*Why Internationally Adopted Children Are at Risk for RAD* by Laura Beck, MSW, Nancy D’Antonio, Lynne Lyon, LCSW  
<http://www.attach-china.org/whyinternational.html>



This simple development of faith in a boy is one of the greatest achievements a counselor attains in his work. It makes all the difference in the world whether he sees a boy as a hell-raiser who is trying to disrupt everything the group undertakes, or whether he sees him as a frustrated, insecure boy who is trying with all his might to find a satisfactory way of living with others. As this faith develops and becomes an entrenched habit with a counselor, his job becomes easier and his work becomes more effective.

*Wilderness Road* by Campbell Loughmiller



# THANKS TO YOU MONEY IS NO OBJECT!



Often one of the first questions that parents will ask is “how much will this cost?”

Your generosity makes all the difference. Their lack of funds does not determine whether their son comes to camp. First we will determine if camp is a good fit for their son. Once we agree that camp can help him and his family, we will look at their financial situation and come up with a plan. While there are a few who can afford the complete cost, most can't, and some single moms can only pay \$30 per month.

This is such a relief for them. Finally, one of the major barriers that have kept them from getting help for their son is removed. At last, they can see a ray of hope for their family. You make all of that possible!

As you can see, your support is crucial for these families. Less than 25% of the placement costs are paid by the families. The rest is covered by your generous gifts and the local community's support of the thrift stores.

You can help fill that gap. Would you consider sending a gift in the enclosed envelope.

Maybe a smaller monthly gift works better for you. \$25.00 per month makes a big difference for a boy and his family. Just indicate it on the enclosed form or donate online at [www.fairplaycamp.org](http://www.fairplaycamp.org).

---

## Make Sure Families Like These Get Help for Years to Come!

---

Because of the generosity of people like you, camp has been instrumental in giving hope to boys and their families for the past 38 years. Many people like to leave money to a cause they care about in their will. Would you considering helping make sure that boys and their families are getting the help they need for years to come by including Fair Play Camp School in your will? When speaking to your attorney, here are the three key pieces of information that you will need:

**Legal Name:** Fair Play Camp School, Inc.

**Address:** 347 Wilderness Trail, Westminster, SC 29693

**EIN#:** 57-0705796

You can also contact the Anabaptist Foundation. If you wish to anonymously support Fair Play Camp School with gifts of stocks, mutual fund shares, real estate, or with a gift from your estate, you may do so through the Anabaptist Foundation. You may contact them at:

**Anabaptist Foundation**, 1245 Old Route 15, New Columbia, PA 17856, (800) 653-9817, [giftfund@afweb.org](mailto:giftfund@afweb.org)



### EQUIPPING BOYS - STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

347 Wilderness Trail, Westminster, SC 29693

Phone: 864.647.4311 • Fax: 864.647.4314

E-mail: [camp@fairplaycamp.org](mailto:camp@fairplaycamp.org)

[www.fairplaycamp.org](http://www.fairplaycamp.org)

To make a donation online, please visit our website and click on the “**Donate Now**” button.



**Like Us  
on Facebook**