

Festa Free Summer Lunch Camp 2023

Camp Experience & Impact

Summer Lunch Camp by the Numbers

668 children registered, representing
49 nationalities and **20** Central Ohio zip codes

35% increase in the number of children served this year

7,015 lunch meals served

163,411 meals served since 2007

303 total volunteers (139 adults, 120 teens, 44 children)

2,838 total volunteer hours

54 special guests

Family Budget — On average, parents reported a savings of \$36.96 per week on their grocery budget.

Children's Responses — 100% of children could identify at least one new friend they made at camp. 82% of children could identify three or more new friends.

100% of children could identify at least one adult at camp who cares about them. 85% of children could identify three or more adults who care about them.

Parent Feedback

At the end of the summer camp season, we distributed surveys to the parents of our campers to gain insight into the impact of our Summer Lunch Camp. The data in this report has been pulled from 80 parent responses. We asked parents why they chose to send their children to Summer Lunch Camp:

Parents selecting response:

- So my children can learn and play in a fun/safe place
- To feel more a part of the community
- To help my family's budget
- So my children receive a healthy lunch

As a parent, did you feel welcomed by Festa staff and good about attending?

"The staff was always very attentive to questions and very friendly."

"All staff and everything including all communications were outstanding. Thank you, thank you, thank you!"

"Staff is too good to explain in words. We loved it so much. My children had lots of fun. Thank you for all your help."

"Thank you for the wonderful Festa team! You are very kind, friendly and professional. Keep up the good work."



Success Stories

What was the best story your children shared with you about this camp this summer?

“My children made friends with children from different countries, it was very cool for them to experience that.”

“My children told me every day about the fun activities. They most liked the COSI experience and of course the water fun!!! Thank you for the wonderful summer camp!!”

“My child is not only enjoying playing at the camp, she is learning new and useful things.”

“My daughter loved Festa camp - the loving environment, healthy food. She always learns something new.”

Festa Summer Lunch Camp Stories

From a staff member: “I went to get a child from their group because she was going home early. When I called her name, she collected her things and began to walk toward me, but then turned and ran back to her green shirt leader, saying, “I’ll miss you for the rest of today, but don’t worry, I’ll be back tomorrow!” It was such a sweet reminder of how special the relationships are that we build at camp!”

From a volunteer: “A mom who went through the volunteer process to be able to come volunteer with her 7 year old son with Down Syndrome; they volunteered at RELC since it was a smaller group of campers. She and her son had a great time! After camp, Mom had the biggest smile on her face and was teary-eyed, saying how much her son enjoyed playing with the other children, and how she was able to even stand back and watch because he was fine without her. She said it warmed her heart to be able to watch him thrive socially. She followed up with an email later in the day: ‘God bless you all. You are just wonderful, and I mean it from the bottom of my heart. I pray every day for you and all the kind volunteers affiliated with Festa. Thank you for all you do!’”

What impact did camp have on your family?

“This was SO helpful to me. I was unable to find affordable childcare for the summer. I was able to continue working limited hours while they came to Festa. Thank you so much!!!”

“Camp is good. The children get to know the rest of the community, it strengthens their personality, helps them cooperate with others, and helps the parents by saving money. Thank you.”

From a staff member: “During the first week of the children’s entrepreneurial restaurant, the decor team, who works hard in the days leading up to the restaurant opening create an atmosphere that matches the theme, felt disappointed that they weren’t getting to participate as much on the day of. Together, we brainstormed ideas of what to do. One of the children talked about making a dragon costume that the children could walk around in during the Chinese New Year-themed restaurant, and I was so impressed by this idea and decided it needed to happen!”

“I was able to get boxes from Aldi to turn into sections of the dragon body, and the decor team plus some of the serving team got to work decorating the boxes. They worked for two days decorating and assembling. They worked together to decide the order the boxes should go in - alternating red and yellow to match the main colors of the decor - and how to secure them together.”

“On the day of the restaurant, we got to walk around the restaurant with our dragon. I was so excited to see this vision from the children become a real thing that they got to share with everyone. It turned out even better than I was expecting, and it was such a cool moment to parade through the restaurant with the children!”

“It helped to relieve the grocery bill and ensure they had healthy food choices”

“My child is able to attend another season of soccer because of savings on our grocery budget due to him attending camp!”

“Camp helps so much for parents so they can work.”

“Helps us a lot with our limited income.”

Thank you to our 2023 Festa Summer Lunch Camp Partners!

For a complete list of our partners, visit wearefesta.org/partners