

COVID-19: Region 1 Town Hall Meeting Notes

Thursday, March 26, 2020

10:00am

28 Participants: Led by President-Matt Ruttler, COCAI Admin Staff-Jennifer Amundsen and Don Golden, Alicia Sommer-Camp Good Days, Shannon Rummage-Smile-A-Mile, Ryan Campbell-Happiness Is Camping, Maureen McAllister- Camp Sunshine @ Sebago Lake, Rich Brundidge, Melissa Firmes-Camp No Worries, Dan Osman-TKT, Dina Dittalo-TKT, Patrick Gallivan-TKT, Morgan Vasseur, Dennis DePaul-TKT, Caitlyn Bailey, Cassy Shea-Camp Kemo, Karen McAndrew-Care Camps, Jennifer Mercer-Care Camps, Hartmouth-TKT, Gail, Hattie Johnson-TKT, Alice Rohrman

1. Camp and Other Programs

a. Camps That Have Cancelled Programs

i. Rising Sun

1. Cancelled a camp session last weekend (March 20-22)
2. Replaced it with Zoom sessions and karaoke

ii. Ta-Kum-Ta

1. Cancelled weekend programs in March and April as well as their Mother's Retreat
2. Have sent "camp in a box" to campers in lieu of cancelled programs

iii. Kids Need More

1. Cancelled programs in May and June
2. Have been doing regular Zoom sessions instead

iv. Happiness Is Camping

1. Cancelled family camp in May and first session of summer camp in June
2. Still plan to host four sessions of summer camp in July and a family camp in August

v. Smile-A-Mile

1. Cancelled programs through June
2. Have been sending packets of activities to campers

b. Reasons for Postponing or Cancelling Programs

i. Medical Council Recommendations

1. Smile-A-Mile's Medical Council recommended that immunocompromised kids will need longer isolation period
2. Ta-Kum-Ta has been in contact with an infectious disease professional
 - a. This professional recommended cancelling all programs through the Spring and going virtual (including programs serving families and children in remission)
 - b. Camp is waiting for more information before deciding on summer programs

- ii. State Mandates
 - 1. Cited by Smile-A-Mile (Alabama), Ta-Kum-Ta (Vermont), and Happiness Is Camping (New Jersey)
 - c. Deadlines for Decisions
 - i. Camp Happy Times
 - 1. July 1-5 for summer camp in August (about 1 month prior)
 - ii. Dennis DePaul's Camp
 - 1. Would cancel camp 2-4 weeks prior to their camp in July
- 2. Staffing Challenges**
- a. Volunteer Counselors
 - i. Volunteer Availability
 - 1. Camp Happy Times and Happiness Is Camping has not experienced challenges recruiting volunteer counselors
 - ii. Virtual Interviews
 - 1. Multiple camps including Ta-Kum-Ta, Smile-A-Mile, and Good Days have used virtual interviews with great success
 - b. Medical Staff
 - i. Medical Staff Availability
 - 1. Camp Happy Times stated a concern that medical staff may not have PTO available this summer
 - 2. Happiness Is Camping is considering only serving children in remission so they will need fewer medical staff. They normally have one oncologist and two pediatric oncology nurses each session but would downsize their staff
 - c. Paid Staff
 - i. Paid Staff Availability
 - 1. One camp said their recruitment of paid staff has been affected because they can no longer recruit at career fairs
 - a. Considering attending virtual career fairs
 - 2. Happiness Is Camping uses many international staff who won't be able to attend unless travel restrictions are lifted
 - d. Impact on Training
 - i. Happiness Is Camping is providing two weeks of on-site training as a way to provide a 14-day quarantine period
 - ii. Camp Happy Times still plans on hosting staff training a day before summer camp
- 3. Fundraising**
- a. Impact on Different Camps
 - i. Smile-A-Mile
 - 1. Already hosted largest gala but have rescheduled the rest of their fundraisers to late summer
 - 2. Said foundations have remained supportive because they are adjusting their program and not outright cancelling it
 - ii. Ta-Kum-Ta

1. Have already cancelled two events that would have totaled about \$100,000
2. Being cautious about cancelling events in June, July, and August and are considering the possibility of virtual camps
3. Said foundations have continued to be very supportive
- iii. Happiness Is Camping
 1. Cancelled largest gala that would have totaled \$100,000
 2. One foundation has pledged support, one called to check in, and another raised concerns about funding if camp is cancelled
- b. Fundraising Recommendations
 - i. Hattie Johnson
 1. Consider postponing events rather than cancelling them
 2. If you host events externally, remain in constant contact with host sites
 3. Use this time to be good stewards
 - a. Call donors, reach out to them and see how they are doing (it will deepen your relationship)
 - b. Be transparent!
 4. Consider peer-to-peer fundraising and engage your Board to raise money
 - ii. Smile-A-Mile
 1. Have found that many corporations and foundations are offering emergency grants

4. Contingency Plans

- a. Alternate Plans by Camps
 - i. Kids Need More
 1. Have offered regular Zoom sessions including meetings with Disney characters , guest speakers, and yoga
 - ii. Happiness Is Camping
 1. Offered Zoom arts and crafts with common household supplies with great success, will be offering Zoom sessions including virtual bingo and a game show night
 - iii. Smile-A-Mile
 1. Camp In A Box
 - a. Send crafts in a box to children in hospitals with typed instructions and links to prerecorded tutorials
 - b. Crafts included:
 - i. Tie Dye Kit- shirts, dye, puppy pads to control mess, gloves, rubber bands, Ziploc bags
 - ii. Sun catchers- Supplies, materials to decorate them, string and suction cups to hang in hospital windows
 - c. Used extensive sanitization policies:
 - i. Staff wore masks and gloves when packing boxes, each item in the package was wiped with a Lysol wipe, the box was also wiped with Lysol wipes, they let the boxes

sit for a day before being sent out, contacts within the hospitals picked up the boxes and distributed them (camp staff was not allowed in)

b. Barriers to Alternate Plans

i. Kids Need More

1. Protecting Zoom sessions with passcodes led to some confusion by participants
2. Multiple hosts were needed to help facilitate and keep the kids under control/mute their microphones
3. Need to do crafts with common supplies
4. Purchased Zoom package for \$15-20 a month per host because the free option limits the length of the sessions

5. Other Notes

a. General Zoom Sessions For All Campers

- i. Multiple camps expressed interest in hosting Zoom sessions that would allow campers from any COCA-I camp to join

b. ACA

- i. Happiness Is Camping attended the ACA Tri-State Convention two weeks ago and ACA's general sentiment for the camping industry as a whole was that they are optimistic that summer camps will operate as normal

COCAI Region 1 Town Hall Chat Log

Jennifer Amundsen (to Everyone): 8:45 AM: Thank you for joining the COCA-I Town Hall meeting today! Please sign in so we know who is joining us.

Matthew Ruttler (to Everyone): 8:51 AM: Matthew Ruttler, President, COCAI, Camp Director-Camp Happy Times

Maureen (to Everyone): 8:56 AM: Maureen - Camp Sunshine at Sebago Lake, Maine

Ryan Campbell, Happiness Is Camping (to Everyone): 8:56 AM: Ryan Campbell, Happiness Is Camping

Jason Atkins (to Everyone): 9:01 AM: Jason Atkins -- Camp Rising Sun (CT) -- I do need to hop off at 10:30 for a work call, so apologies if I disappear!

Hattie (to Everyone): 9:02 AM: Hattie Johnson, COCAI region 1 director

Rich Brundige (to Everyone): 9:02 AM: Rich - Camp H-Town. Camp Kids Are Kids Chicago mainly

Melissa Firmes (to Everyone): 9:02 AM: Melissa Firmes - KiDS NEED MoRE, NY

Dan Osman (to Everyone): 9:03 AM: Dan Osman, Camp Ta-Kum-Ta, Dir. of Development. Hi All!

Alicia Sommer- Camp Good Days (to Everyone): 9:03 AM: Alicia Sommer, Camp Good Days & Special Times... Hi everyone!

Dina Dattilio (to Everyone): 9:04 AM: Dina Dattilio, Camp Ta-Kum-Ta, Program Manager. Hi Friends!!

Alice Rohrman (to Everyone): 9:04 AM: Alice Rohrman - Camp Periwinkle - TX Development Director

Dennis P DePaul (to Everyone): 9:04 AM: Dennis DePaul, Camp Ta-Kum-Ta, Executive Director

Shannon Rumage - Smile-A-Mile (to Everyone): 9:05 AM: Shannon Rumage - Smile-A-Mile - Birmingham, AL - Development Director - Good morning, everyone!

Hartmuth (to Everyone): 9:05 AM: Hartmuth Sommer, Camp Ta-Kum-Ta, VT, Facilities Manager

Morgan Vasseur (to Everyone): 9:05 AM: Morgan Vasseur, Camp Ta-Kum-Ta, Events Coordinator and Program Assistant, Hi Everyone!

Don Golden (to Everyone): 9:05 AM: To ensure you get copies of this presentation and survey results, please send an email to don.golden@cocai.org

Dennis P DePaul (to Everyone): 9:17 AM: Hi Don - not yet. I asked the question but the feeling is that it's too early to tell. If available - most-likely. We already require the flu vaccination - they said we would have needed that at a minimum

Jennifer Amundsen (to Everyone): 9:22 AM: From the survey, we saw cancellation decisions to be made anywhere from April 1-June 1. For camps in August, they are waiting a little longer.

Jason Atkins (to Everyone): 9:30 AM: Need to hop off for my "real" job -- this was really helpful, thanks everyone!

Don Golden (to Everyone): 9:49 AM: If you have held an online event and would like to share it, send info about your event to me we can make it available. don.golden@cocai.org

Dennis P DePaul (to Everyone): 10:01 AM: Just spit-balling - but maybe a COCAI sponsored Zoom session so kids from all COCAI camps could connect?

Jennifer Amundsen (to Everyone): 10:02 AM: Cool idea Dennis!

Jennifer Amundsen (to Everyone): 10:02 AM: Thank you everyone for joining! Please let us know going forward how we can help you. Complete the survey. We love you guys!

Dennis P DePaul (to Everyone): 10:03 AM: Thank you for doing this!!

Dan Osman (to Everyone): 10:03 AM: Thanks everyone! HAVE A GREAT DAY!!!

Shannon Rumage - Smile-A-Mile (to Everyone): 10:03 AM: Thank you!

Alicia Sommer- Camp Good Days (to Everyone): 10:03 AM: Thank you!!

Melissa Firmes (to Everyone): 10:04 AM: Thank you so much for this webinar. It is so helpful.