

HONORING, UNITING, AND CELEBRATING FAMILIES

MARYLAND REUNIFIES SIBLINGS

Camp Connect

Camp Connect, an overnight camp lasting almost 1 week, was founded in 2001 to sustain relationships between brothers and sisters living apart in foster care. Each summer, 60 children in foster care in Maryland are reunified with brothers and sisters. Camp is an anchor for some, a place they return to year after year to renew and deepen relationships with siblings and friends, and to soak up the attention of adults they've grown to rely on. A week filled with new experiences building memories to share for a lifetime while horseback riding, tubing, biking, making sibling-themed crafts, go-karting, and more- for just a moment in time, camp is a place where these children are just like everyone else.



Among our volunteer counselors—social workers, administrators, and others committed to the care of children—are former campers and other foster care alumni adults. Whatever our role outside of camp, we work together like a well-oiled machine, an exemplar for how child welfare services are best delivered. The food is lousy, our accommodations politely described as rustic, the hours are terrible, but the company is great. Working nonstop 15 hours or more a day, Camp Connect is a labor of love, and we get far more than we give. We are grateful for the opportunity to work together at camp, and deeply appreciative of our colleagues back home for covering the work during our week away.

A camper said it best on the message he wrote on the sibling pillow he made for his sister:

Camp Connect is so cool
It's the reason I can't wait to get out of school
Hangin' with my siblings all day long
Makes me feel ain't nothing wrong
After all the tough times we've been through
Ain't nothing going to stop me from loving you
So until next year, when we meet at this camp
Continue to be the best you can be, and shine bright like a lamp.

To learn more about the services offered through Baltimore County Department of Social Services, visit <http://www.dhr.state.md.us/blog/?p=198>.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Children's Bureau

