Zajac Ranch for Children

An Overview with Highlights from Our 2014 Summer Medical Camp Season



















Zajac Ranch for Children Suite 300 - 2006 West 10th Avenue Vancouver, BC V6J 2B3

Tel: 604-739-0444 Fax: 604-739-0441 E-mail: info@zajac.com Online: ZajacRanch.com

"Out here we raise spirits"

Organizational Background

Located in Mission, BC, on 44 acres of pristine forested land on Stave Lake, Zajac Ranch for Children is the only camp in BC that welcomes children with a variety of medical diagnoses from across BC and Canada. It is the goal of Zajac Ranch for Children that no child with a disability or medical condition be turned away from a life-affirming camp experience due to their medical or financial situation. Camp programming is designed to be innovative and supportive, while promoting the development of independence, life-skills, and healthy, active living for children with significant medical conditions, allowing them to become contributing members of their communities.



Since welcoming our first campers in 2004, thousands of children have benefitted from a camp experience that recognizes and appreciates the unique challenges they

face. These camp experiences give participants the opportunity to explore the outdoors while developing greater social and environmental awareness, increased self-confidence, and positive growth in attitudes towards physical activity.

Health and Wellness

At our onsite medical centre, the OK Corral, volunteer doctors and nurses ensure that even children with the most complex medical conditions are able to participate in camp activities while receiving expert medical care. This standalone building hosts two exam rooms, a dispensary, a Snoezelen room that helps calm individuals with autism spectrum disorder, three accessible restrooms, as well as two sleeping rooms. Zajac Ranch for Children is equipped to handle over 30 medical conditions that include: autism spectrum disorder, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, Down syndrome, spina bifida, and gastrointestinal, blood and kidney disorders.

A well-trained, dedicated, and compassionate staff and volunteer core is one reason why Zajac Ranch is a favourite among families. We have worked hard to provide an inviting and accessible physical environment, combined with unique and specialized programming to create an unforgettable experience. We are passionate about supporting children with special medical needs and the countless testimonials from parents, campers, doctors, nurses, staff, and volunteers attest to our success.

To ensure the safest, most successful and supportive experience for our campers, we employ a high staff to camper ratio. For general medical sessions, that ratio is 3:1, however, for those campers that require additional care, we also provide 1:1 support.

Social Impact

Our philosophy is: empower, embrace and experience. Through our camp programs, children and youth with special medical needs develop strengths and skills that enable them to not only lead fulfilling lives, but also to contribute to their own communities. Children become more confident, form long-lasting friendships and engage with the outdoors to live more active and independent lives.

Programs Offered

Zajac Ranch offers specialized programming that includes therapeutic horseback riding, kayaking and swimming, sports, high and low ropes courses, crafts, music, and theatre. These activities help children develop physical and social skills, while at the same time teaching them about cooperation, teamwork, and problem solving.

Programming at Zajac Ranch for Children is designed to both promote and increase self-esteem and self-confidence. By participating in a camp experience, children also benefit from significant improvements in fitness levels as they are enabled to undertake new activities and embrace new challenges.

Benefit to the Community

When children living with serious medical conditions are given the opportunity to benefit from a camp experience there is an immediate and positive impact on not only the lives of these children and their families, but within the community as well. In British Columbia, the need exists for a camp that offers innovative community programming and services for children and youth with special medical needs. There are over 21,000 children between the ages of 5 - 14 in BC with special needs and thousands more with disabilities and illnesses. Zajac Ranch offers an amazing summer experience for these children who would otherwise not have the opportunity to attend camp by providing opportunities for children to not only have fun but to also heal and rejuvenate.

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In a study from the University of Waterloo, researchers confirmed the benefits of participating in camp programs, identifying the following five positive outcomes that showed improvements in:

- 1. social integration and citizenship
- 2. environmental awareness
- 3. attitudes towards physical activity
- 4. emotional intelligence
- 5. personal development and self-confidence

Community Awareness

Zajac Ranch for Children shares information through updates in our newsletters and on our website, and in press materials throughout the community. We are also active with community outreach, raising awareness with medical groups and families about Zajac Ranch. We also promote our innovative services and the positive impact they have on children during presentations to community and corporate groups by highlighting the testimonials and feedback we receive from campers and their families.

Project Description - Zajac Camper Allowance

To ensure that all children with special medical needs in British Columbia and across Canada have the opportunity to participate in a camp experience we created the Zajac Camper Allowance. Funding for this allowance comes from a variety of sources including private ranch rentals, day groups, and proceeds from our Outdoor Environmental Education Program. This Allowance is available to every camper and offsets the typical registration fee of \$1,500 for a week of medical camp by a minimum of 50%. Our goal is to ensure that no child is turned away due to their medical or financial situation.

Experience in the Field

On average, over 30 different diagnoses are represented at Zajac Ranch for Children, including spina bifida, Turner syndrome, gastrointestinal disorders, blood disorders, autism, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, Down syndrome, kidney disorders, and visual impairments. We also offer a Leadership in Training program for teens of mixed abilities, and a Young Adult Camp for youth aged 18 - 30 with special medical needs.

Zajac Ranch for Children works collaboratively with a number of organizations to ensure camp programs are inclusive and considerate of the unique characteristics of each child's medical condition. We are pleased to be partnered with the following agencies and service providers:

- BC Children's Hospital: Craniofacial, Hematology and Oncology Departments
- · Children's Heart Network
- BC Blind Sports
- The Center for Epilepsy and Seizure Education in BC
- Canadian National Institute for the Blind
- BC Children's Hospital: Gastroenterology Department

Ensuring Long-Term Viability

To ensure the long-term viability of our summer medical camps, Zajac Ranch for Children fundraises year-round in order to raise the needed funds to send as many children to camp as possible through grants and donations. We have the support of corporate organizations that support a week of camp each, including Mr. Lube Foundation, Boston Pizza Foundation Future Prospects, White Spot, and Black Dog Limited. Revenue is also generated through outdoor education programs and retreats. Approximately 40% of revenue is through off-season ranch rentals by corporate, church and school groups. Funds from these programs go directly towards providing enriching camp experiences to children living with chronic, life-threatening and/or debilitating medical conditions.





WHERE ZAJAC CAMPERS CAME FROM IN 2014



Abbotsford Langley Agassiz Lantzville Aldergrove Lillooet Armstrong Lower Nicola Burnaby Maple Ridge Campbell River Mayne Island Chase Mission Chilliwack Nanaimo Cloverdale New Westminster Coquitlam North Delta Courtenay North Vancouver Cranbrook Penticton Dawson Creek Pitt Meadows Delta Port Coquitlam Enderby Port Moody Gibsons **Powell River** Hope Prince George Kamloops Qualicum Beach Kelowna Quesnel

Richmond
Salmo
Sidney
Sparwood
Surrey
Vancouver
Vernon
Victoria
West Kelowna
West Vancouver
Westbank
White Rock



Brampton, ON Calgary, AB Devon, AB Edmonton, AB Fredericton, NB Listowel, ON Milton, ON Mississauga, ON North York, ON Oak Bluff, MB Paris, ON Peguis, MB Sherwood Park, AB Signhampton, ON St. George, ON Toronto, ON White River, ON Whitehorse, YK Winnipeg, MB Yellowknife, NWT



Meet Some of our Campers



Hannah

Having only one ear hasn't stopped Hannah from being a very outgoing girl. She attended Zajac Ranch for Children for the first time this summer and was enthusiastic about all the programs at camp and participated in every activity.

Hannah's mother says that, "Being born with only one ear has affected Hannah's self-esteem, something that as a mother I try to help her overcome." However, after Hannah's experiences at camp this summer she now realizes there are a lot more kids like her with disabilities than she previously thought. In Hannah's words, "I wanted to come to camp and meet other kids like me, but while I was there I forgot the other kids had disabilities, everyone was just a normal kid!"

Some of Hannah's favourite activities at camp include archery and kayaking; and she tells everyone she meets about the time, "the canoe tipped over!" According to the camp counsellors, Hannah made "loads" of new friends and had a great time interacting with all the camp staff. The Camp Director even stated that, "This was Hannah's first year at camp and she excelled at it!" After attending Zajac Ranch, Hannah's mother says that Hannah is now more independent, patient and proud of herself.



Chase

Chase lives with epilepsy and has been attending Zajac Ranch for Children for the past 7 years. Growing up with epilepsy has been challenging for Chase, his first seizures started with eye fluttering and progressed to the point where he would collapse and start biting his tongue. As a result of the severity of his seizures Chase was unable to attend regular school. The isolation from his peers and the inability to participate in regular school activities only helped to further diminish his sense of self-confidence and self-esteem.

Things started to turn around for Chase though when he started attending Zajac Ranch and experienced acceptance from his peers for the first time in his life. Zajac Ranch gave him hope for the future and enabled him to see past his troubles.

Chase's mother has seen firsthand the positive impact her son's time at Zajac Ranch has had on his life. He tells her that at camp he feels worthwhile as a valued and intelligent person.

Now a teenager, Chase is confident and selfassured but his mother will never forget the years of attending Zajac Ranch that helped him become the young adult he is today.



Facilities - Zajac Ranch

With a lush forest backdrop and easy waterfront access, Zajac Ranch is the perfect camp setting. The natural beauty of our site is complemented by a variety of buildings and features that are all fully accessible and include:

- Indoor pool and therapeutic spa
- Exercise and physiotherapy room
- Equestrian Centre which includes indoor and outdoor riding arenas, and petting zoo
- Waterfront recreation area with adaptive sports equipment
- Adventure Zone featuring high and low ropes course, archery, a climbing wall, obstacle course, and a gym
- Organic greenhouse
- OK Corral medical centre
- Dorm accommodations for 120 campers and staff
- Outdoor Amphitheatre and Tee Pee Village
- Dining hall and outdoor BBQ kitchen





Evaluation - Predicted Outcome and Measuring Success

The primary goal of Zajac Ranch for Children is to have a positive impact on the well-being of all our medical campers. With this in mind we strive for results that show children have benefited from a summer camp experience at Zajac Ranch. These outcomes involve children taking part in activities that encourage them to try new things, helping them to push past their perceived limits and overcome their fears. We also look for increased social connections that lead to more confident, capable and resilient children, children that are better equipped to deal with life's challenges.



Programs, activities and camp features (including accessibility) are evaluated each year, to determine the value and effectiveness in meeting the needs our camper community. All camper families are asked to complete a questionnaire and provide feedback for evaluation purposes. In addition, testimonials are gathered from campers, family members and/or primary caregivers about their experiences.

Camp program success is also evaluated by reports and feedback from the nursing director and external medical group representatives. Ranch management analyzes and reports on the effectiveness of program execution and delivery along with levels of enjoyment and satisfaction amongst camper groups. All qualitative data and surveys are reviewed and analyzed to identify improvements to ensure the Zajac Ranch for Children experience is safe and enriching for all participants. Camp staff and volunteers are also asked to complete surveys at the end of the camp season.

Board of Directors - Zajac Ranch for Children

Board Member	Member Since
Linda Annis , Chairperson Executive Director, Metro Vancouver Crime Stoppers	2004
Elizabeth Johnston Interim Director of Marketing, Perkins+Will	2012
Gary Steeves Senior Account Manager, Parissa Labs	2010
Pamela O'Sullivan Health Care Consultant	2014
Carmen Zajac President, The Mel Jr. & Marty Zajac Foundation	2004



Board of Directors - The Mel Jr. & Marty Zajac Foundation

*Zajac Ranch for Children (Zajac Ranch Society) is a project of The Mel Jr. & Marty Zajac Foundation.

Board Member	Member Since
Mel Zajac	1997
Chairman The Mel Jr. & Marty Zajac Foundation	
David Aisenstat President &CEO, Keg Restaurants Ltd.	2003
Dr. Mel Bruchet Family Physician	2013
Christian Codrington Director, Regulatory Affairs and Member Value BC Human Resources Management Association	2014
John Devita President, CT Control Temp Ltd.	2007
Carl Joosse President, Black Dog Limited	2010
Berris Karden CEO, ecovideo	2013
Jim Kennedy Program Manager Western Canada Computer Room Services Corporation	2014
Jennifer McKeachie Clinical Nurse Leader Mount Saint Joseph's Hospital	2014
Sean O'Connor CFO, Centurion Contracting	2013
Deborah Overholt Partner, Borden Ladner Gervais LLP	2012
The Honourable John Reynolds, P.C. Retired MP – Government of Canada Senior Strategic Advisor, McMillan LLP	2006
David Rutledge Investment Advisor TD Waterhouse Private Investment Advice	2012
Joel Sherlock Founder, Sherlock & Associates Ltd.	2012
Brett Stenner Regional Account Manager - Bell - West Region Enterprise Business Division, Samsung Electronics Canada	2010
Jeffrey Uppal President & Founder, Velox Partnerships	2014
Byron Wilson VP, Braun Developments Inc.	2010
Tom Wong TC Associates Ltd.	2012

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Testimonials from Parents and Campers

"There is so much I want to say about Zajac Ranch. For our son Liam, and for our whole family, camp at Zajac Ranch has been nothing but the most exceptional experience. The fun, friends and confidence that Liam has gained while at camp is immeasurable! Every time we drop him off at camp he is overwhelmed with excitement and when we pick him up a feeling of "family" resonates throughout the camp.

At Zajac Ranch Liam can participate in activities that just would not be possible for him outside of camp, for this we are eternally grateful. If there is anything further we can do to help Zajac Ranch in your efforts please do not hesitate to ask us. Thank you from our whole family!"

- Beverly, mother of Liam, age 16, Down Syndrome Camper

"Our daughter Haley always has an amazing time at Zajac Ranch. She loves getting to spend time with all her friends and looks forward to camp every year. Haley once told us that in her world of being "different", Zajac Ranch gives her a chance to feel not only at ease but more importantly "normal". This is a big deal for us as parents and we want to take this opportunity to thank everyone at Zajac Ranch for providing our daughter with such a wonderful "home away from home" every year."

- Dale and Diana, parents of Haley, age 14, CNIB Camp

"Raising an autistic child is very demanding and we feel extremely fortunate to have found Zajac Ranch, a place that makes our son Kenneth feel happy and welcome. Kenneth has attended Zajac Ranch for the past two summers and we have already marked our calendars for next year! Zajac Ranch provides our son with opportunities to participate in activities he normally wouldn't be able to. Camp is something he now looks forward to every year. We can't wait to see you all again in 2015!"

- Michiru and Chris, parents of Kenneth, age 10, Autism Spectrum Disorder Camp

"I want to thank Zajac Ranch and all of the wonderful staff for giving our child and our family the invaluable gift of a week at camp. Just one week at camp has made an indelible impact on our daughter Madison.

Madison has had the privilege of attending camp at Zajac Ranch for 3 summers now. Each camp experience has been incredible and Madison always has the time of her life, it has become the highlight of her year. I expected the same this summer but never could have imagined it could get even better! This summer's trip was perhaps the most life changing week so far, bringing a remarkable transformation in our daughter. We dropped her off at camp a nervous, shy and self-conscious girl and when we picked her up she was a confident, proud, and outgoing lady. We have never heard her talk so much, this is the girl we always knew she could be. We are giddy with pride and joy.

As a parent of a child with special medical needs it is sometimes hard to imagine your child will ever reach the milestones others take for granted. The time spent at Zajac Ranch has definitely been the catapult for our daughter's incredible progress. The support and programming is amazing and the whole experience empowers campers to become all they can be.

The hardest thing for a parent to do is let their child go off on their own, especially a child that is significantly more vulnerable than most. I can say with all confidence and no reservations that we welcome the opportunity to send our daughter to Zajac Ranch again. You have our gratitude and appreciation."

- Elaine, mother of Madison, age 17, Mixed Medical Camp

Revenue Canada Registration Information

ZAJAC RANCH SOCIETY

86039287/RR0001
Registered
October 14, 2004
N/A
English
Charitable Organization
Benefits to the Community and Other
Recreation, Playgrounds and Vacation Camps
Suite 300 - 2006 West 10th Avenue
Vancouver
British Columbia
Canada
V6J 3B3
Info@zajacranch.com
www.zajacranch.com
T3010 Return