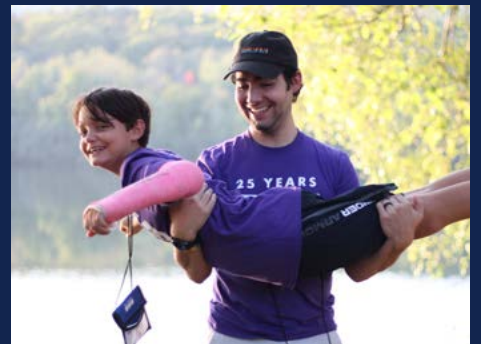


25 YEARS



# COMFORT ZONE CAMP

2024 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT



[WWW.COMFORTZONECAMP.ORG](http://WWW.COMFORTZONECAMP.ORG)

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER

---



25th anniversaries are supposed to be silver, but for us, it was GOLDEN!

As we look at 2024, it was a time of growth for CZC, which meant more camps, more community, and mostly more healing for grieving children.

Thanks to everyone who has supported us this past year and throughout the past 25 years—whether you were bravely “loaning” your child to us for camp, giving up a weekend to volunteer or lending us your financial support so we could offer our camps at no cost to over 1,400 children in 2024....and 25,000 children in our 25 years!

Thank you, CZC Community! We are proud of what we have accomplished since 1999. Our work is not done. The need is greater. With you at our side, we will continue to help even more grieving children in profound ways.

I wish you an amazing 2025 filled with joy, camp, and, of course—s’mores!

Lynne B. Hughes  
Founder & CEO



# A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

---

Twenty-five years!!! Let that sink in for a moment. For twenty-five years Comfort Zone has been helping guide children navigate their grief journeys. When Lynne and Kelly turned their dream into a reality in 1999, I'm not sure even they could have imagined that CZC would grow into the country's largest bereavement camp.

One of the best parts of having a long-standing history is that we have the privilege to watch children grow up to become incredible young adults, many of whom now volunteer as big buddies (or work at CZC). We have concrete proof that what we do at camp works!

A few highlights worth noting from 2024 - we hosted a record high 31 camps with kids attending from 33 different states. 1,428 children attended camp, and we also had 140 parents and guardians attend our family camps. We had 1,815 remarkable volunteers in 2024, many of whom have been volunteers for years. We expanded our footprint to South Carolina and Michigan (Lynne's home state, Go Spartan's) and increased our presence in Florida, California and Utah.

We continue to attract national attention through the media. This year, CZC was featured in the New York Times, Good Morning America, Fortune, Newsweek and Business Insider. Our social media presence has increased significantly and one of our posts (Trauma Salad) had over 24 million views, which increased the number of Instagram followers by over 12,000 people.

Most recently, we hosted galas in New York, Virginia and New Jersey, which led to record-breaking fundraising initiatives. All in all, our twenty-fifth year was our best one yet. On behalf of the CZC Board of Directors, THANK YOU to our hard-working staff, our dedicated volunteers, and all our friends who generously donate to ensure that we continue to meet our mission.

All my best,



Mitch Decter  
*Board of Directors Chair*



## 2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

---

Mitch Decter, Chair

Derek Mohar, Vice Chair

Craig Heah, Secretary & Treasurer

Lynne B. Hughes, Founder & CEO

Karen Bouchard

Carlisse Davis

Rob Fink

Elaine Haney

Joe Harrold

Patrick Nunn

Chris Pellegrino

Kelly Plageman

Matt Togna, Ph.D.

Marty Wilson

Daniel Wright

Sahmon Zoughi

# MISSION

---

Comfort Zone's mission is to empower children experiencing grief to fully realize their capacity to heal, grow, and lead more fulfilling lives.

# VISION

---

A society that is actively engaged in meeting the ongoing and complex needs of grieving children.

# HISTORY OF COMFORT ZONE CAMP

---

Comfort Zone Camp is the first nonprofit bereavement camp for children, with the first camp taking place in 1999. Founder and CEO Lynne Hughes lost both of her parents at a young age and created Comfort Zone as an adult to give grieving children a safe, fun place to connect and to know that they are not alone. From what started as a small camp in Virginia has evolved into a national organization that has served over 25,000 children at no cost to the families.



# 2024 SNAPSHOT

---

Thank you for impacting so many lives in 2024!

**31**

CAMPS FOR GRIEVING CHILDREN & FAMILY MEMBERS

**1,428**

GRIEVING CHILDREN ATTENDED CAMP

**140**

PARENTS/GUARDIANS ATTENDED CAMP

**12**

# OF STATES THAT HOSTED CAMPS



**33**

# OF STATES THAT CAMPER'S RESIDE IN

**1,815**

CAMP VOLUNTEERS HELPED GRIEVING CHILDREN

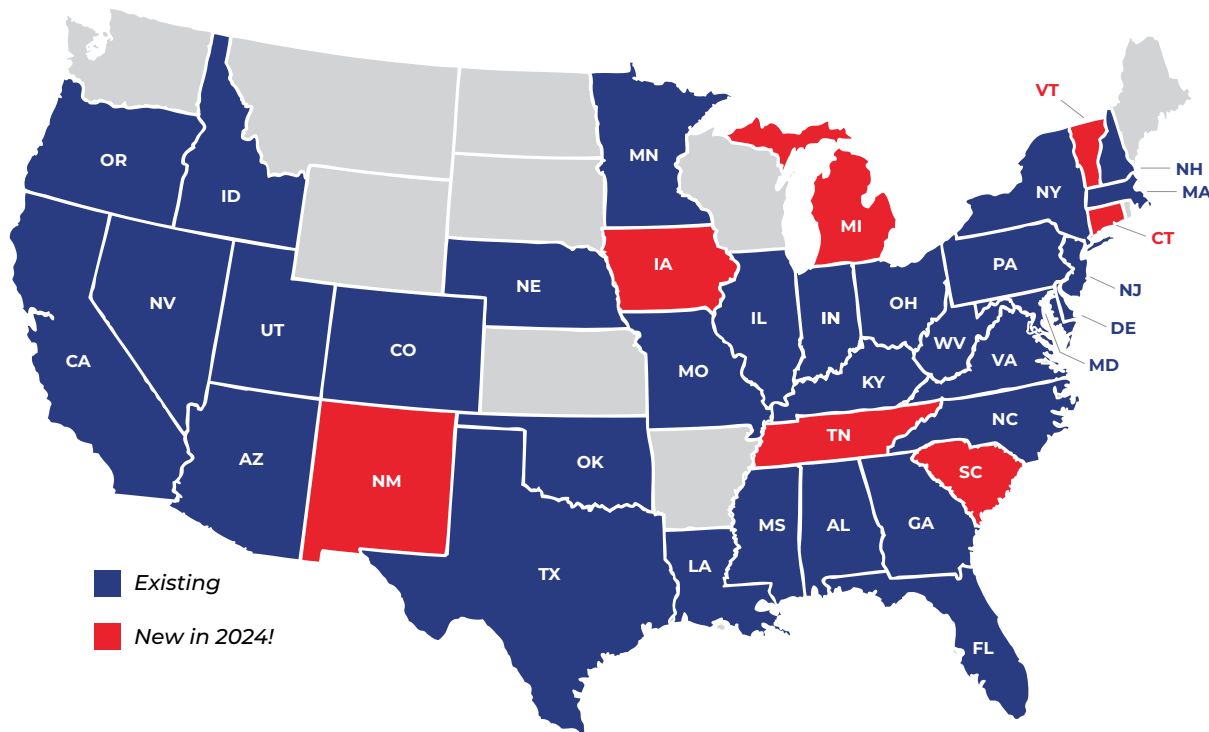
**616**

VOLUNTEERS TRAINED



# WHERE CZC SERVED IN 2024

Highlighted in **BLUE** are the states where our campers resided in 2024. We also had campers join us from Canada, the Netherlands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.



# 2024: A YEAR OF GROWTH

---

- Held first camp in Charlotte, North Carolina, near the South Carolina border
- Held first camp in Michigan, expanding support for those affected by loss by suicide
- Introduced a camp in Florida and welcomed a new Florida staff member: Kam Lamons
- Added a camp in Southern California
- Held a third camp in Utah
- Hosted a new 4-day camp featuring the return of Zone Games



**“Comfort Zone continues to remind me to smile on the tough days, because I know I'm not alone now.”**

*- Rudi Brown, 16*

# TRADITIONAL CAMPS

1,428 grieving children's lives were changed in 2024 thanks to our amazing supporters!



**“Because of CZC, I have learned to "dance in the rain" - discovering moments of joy even while grieving. I know now that every emotion is valid - and that it's okay to cry, to remember, to grieve, and yes, even to laugh and find happiness again.”**

*- Isabella Murphy, 13*





# PARTNERSHIP CAMPS

We held 13 camps with our amazing partners in 2024, allowing us to reach more grieving children across the country.

Partnership camps took us to **CA, FL, NJ, NY, UT, VA, IN, and NC!**



**“I went back year after year and not only was I actively healing, I was having fun.”**  
- Aidan Wild, 14



# SUICIDE LOSS CAMPS

Suicide Loss Camps were held in New Jersey and Michigan.

93

GRIEVING CHILDREN

20

PARENT/  
GUARDIANS

14

STATES CAMPERS  
TRAVELED FROM

3

COUNTRIES CAMPERS  
TRAVELED FROM



# OVERDOSE LOSS CAMP

CZC responds to the national need and epidemic by holding its second annual camp in New York state.

41

GRIEVING CHILDREN

13

PARENT/  
GUARDIANS

7

STATES CAMPERS  
TRAVELED FROM



# PARENT/GUARDIAN CAMPS

*“Each time I walk into camp, I know I am safe in the bubble, I am with people who understand and relate to my thoughts and emotions, and most of all I am going to make connections with other guardians.”*

**- Jennifer Palazzo**  
Camper Mom

# 124

GRIEVING PARENTS/GUARDIANS  
ATTENDED CAMP FREE OF  
CHARGE IN 2024

8 VIRTUAL SUPPORT GROUPS

# 8

PARENT/GUARDIAN  
PROGRAMS OFFERED  
THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY

3 VIRTUAL SUPPORT GROUPS



# YOUNG ADULT CAMPS

---

*"My experience taught me that my grief journey is more than losing my dad - it also involves grieving the residual losses and celebrating the silver linings, surrounded by people that just get it. This is the first time I've ever felt connected with telling my story and present enough to do the work for myself."*

- **Maria McMillan**, Young Adult Camper

**41**

**GRIEVING YOUNG ADULTS  
ATTENDED CAMP FREE OF  
CHARGE IN 2024**

**3**

**YOUNG ADULT PROGRAMS  
OFFERED THROUGHOUT  
THE COUNTRY**



# VIRTUAL CAMPS

---

In 2024, we held three Virtual Support Programs. We were able to serve 88 children and 27 adults. Virtual programs are a great way to "test drive" camp and also a great way for veteran campers to stay connected.



# YAC

---

In 2024, the YAC (Young Adult Council) helped raise awareness, recruit volunteers and be strong advocates for CZC!



# CAC

---

The CAC (Camper Advisory Council) is an amazing group of teen campers that help spread the word of CZC's mission.



# OUR REGIONAL RACS GET THINGS DONE

In 2024, our Regional Advisory Council (RAC) Members accomplished A LOT! Together, they raised over **\$566,000**, trained over **174 volunteers**, and organized **8 events!** Thank you to all of our **RAC MEMBERS** coast to coast.

CA	MA	NC	NY/NJ RAC & Engagement Committee	VA
Xavier Caceres Kendi Epley Mike Gaines Will Grewal Carly Oates Craig Peck Steve Pomerantz Maya Puterbaugh Dave Storch Sahmon Zoughi	Jenn Harris Joe Harrold Cyndi Holohan David Hull Isabella Grillo Steven Kunevich Molly Moran Isaac Nichols	Brooke Conn Jena Ellis Shantel French Adam Horsley Allison Hudson Annelyse Iglesias Izzy Larscheid Kim Lawrence Nick Margroff Tom Murray Patrick Nunn Jess Rigel Lydia Ross	Brenda Catalano Jamie Decter Caitlin Fabrocini Kara Fiegeles Stephanie Greenberg Amy Hayowyk David Weber Molly Lavoie Leslie Levitt Jaimie Mammolito Joe Mastrogiovanni Meagan Muller Wes Puryear Niki Russo Vonique Schmidt Katie Scotto Karina Smith	Jamie Garland Craig Heah Sara Heisler Tim Hoerrner Ryan Kuester Tom Love Kelly Merkel Julie Rosson Dawn South Michele Stehle
	UT			
	Alex Eversmeyer Sierra Jensen Jenny Nys Brandon Roper Kim Smart Bailey Smith			



# CZC IN THE COMMUNITY

---

Midlothian Rotary Club

Townsquare Media: In Touch  
Radio Interview

Somerset County ASAP  
(Association of Student Assistance  
Counselor) Meeting

HL Agency

LMR Interview (Mental Health)

Passaic & Morris County TLC Meeting

Williamsburg Community Leadership  
Health Fair

Sunrise Kiwanis Club

High Focus Centers

High Point University

TLC Atlantic City & Cape May County

Montgomery County PA Suicide  
Prevention Taskforce

Peninsula Youth Collaboration

Congdon Family Foundation

Rocky Point Rotary Club

Westover Hills Elementary

First Stakeholder's Breakfast for the  
Traumatic Loss Coalition's HOPES  
Program: A LOSS Team

Traumatic Loss Coalition's HOPES  
Program: Local Outreach to Suicide  
Loss Survivors Program

Teen Summit

Alter'd State Mission Mondays

Kinder Mourn Charlotte

Homicide Victim Support Group

Walk In the Light

Laguna Beach High School

NJ State School Nurses Association  
(NJSSNA) Spring 2024 Conference

Massachusetts School Nurse  
Organization Spring Conference 2024

Southhold Rotary

The Game of Life: Sussex Tech School

Riverhead Rotary

Montclair Spring Career and  
Internship Fair

TLC Gloucester County Presentation

Colonial Heights Positive Parenting

Victim/Witness Services

Ramsey School

Caroline Moose Lodge

Operations Helping Hands Somerset  
County Quarterly Meeting

TLC Monmouth County

Prudential Center Volunteer Expo

NASW-MA Virtual Symposium 2024

Suicide Loss Survivor Breakfast

KPMG Presentation

Goochland Wellness Night

Chesterfield County Resilience &  
Prevention Suicide - Community  
Resilience

Warren County Traumatic Loss  
Coalition

K-Cettes Banquet

Heartland Hospice

NJ Chapter, American Academy of  
Pediatrics Annual Conference

Impact100 Garden State Annual  
Awards Meeting

Jersey City Student Assistance  
Counselor

NAMI Charlotte

Goldsboro Rotary Club

Learn 2 Cope

Mitchells House/Fund

Heartland Hospice Social Workers

Richmond Flying Squirrels

Heartland Hospice (Gentiva)  
Bereavement Coordinators

Starr Hill Brewery Trivia Night

Kiwanis of Toano

APG Companies

Putnam County

Starr Hill Brewery Volunteer  
Appreciation Night

Assured Guaranty

Laura Teague Curry 5 K

Union Traumatic Loss Coalition

Williamsburg Community  
Foundation

Here for the Girls - Breast Cancer  
Event (Williamsburg)

NJ School Counselor Conference

VA School Counselors Conference

Grace Episcopal Church  
(Williamsburg)

William J. Leber Funeral Home

NJ Chapter, American Academy of  
Pediatrics School Health Conference

Shuck & Jive (The Blue Goose  
International)

Henrico CASA (Podcast)

Foundation for Kids of Veterans

Massachusetts School Psychology  
Association Conference

Massachusetts School Nurse  
Conference

Belk Charity Sales (Williamsburg)

Hope Floats

Children's Trust Massachusetts

Old Dominion Chapter-Society of  
Government Meeting Professionals

NC School Counselors Conference

Girls on the Run

The New York State School Counselor  
Association (NYSSCA) 2024 New York  
State School Counselor

Association Conference: The Drive  
Behind Thrive!

TLC Annual Conference

# FUN IN FUNDRAISING

Thank you to everyone who put the “fun” in fundraising in 2024 and helped us raise:

# \$1,450,000





# CZC MAKING AN IMPACT

Comfort Zone Camp made a significant impact in the media in 2024, including features in The New York Times and Good Morning America. Also, our 'Trauma Salad' reel has over 24 million views which contributed to gaining over 12,000 new Instagram followers!

## The New York Times

By Creating a Camp, She Turned a Loss Into a Support System for Others

Lynne Hughes, whose parents died when she was a child, founded Comfort Zone Camp as a way to help grieving children.



GMA 3 — April 30, 2024

Comfort Zone Camp helps those dealing with loss and grief



## FORTUNE

6 million kids in the U.S. will mourn the death of a parent or sibling by age 18. Here's how a grief camp can help them heal



## BUSINESS INSIDER

I became an orphan at age 12. Now, I run a summer camp for kids like me.



Are Teen Girls as Sad as We Think?



What Do the Teen Girls Think?

Jocelyn and Addison Aquilino, 18 and 16, respectively, can attest to these pressures. It's something they've talked about among their peers and fellow campers at Comfort Zone Camp, a grief camp for kids and teens they've attended since losing their father to suicide in 2014.



# 25TH ANNIVERSARY

Comfort Zone Camp celebrated its 25th anniversary of supporting grieving children in 2024. Since its first camp in May 1999, CZC has helped over 24,000 children. To mark this milestone, celebrations were held in VA, NY, CA, NC, and MA.

## BACK IN 1999



## 25 YEARS LATER



## 2024 BOOK THEME

As Comfort Zone Camp turned 25, we celebrated our past chapter - all of the amazing events and amazing lives who've shaped and impacted us! As we turn the page now to 2025, we celebrate the beginning of our new chapter.

# 2025 CAMP DATES & LOCATIONS

---

**JANUARY 3-5**  
Harrisonburg, VA

**FEBRUARY 3, 10, 17, 24**  
Virtual Support Groups

**FEBRUARY 28-MARCH 2**  
Brandeis, CA

**MARCH 7-9**  
Greensboro, NC

**MARCH 28-30**  
Hardwick, NJ

**APRIL 4-6**  
Williamsburg, VA

**APRIL 25-27**  
Fruitland Park, FL

**MAY 2-4**  
Palmyra, VA

**MAY 16-18**  
Simi Valley, CA

**MAY 16-18**  
Johnsonburg, NJ

**MAY 30-JUNE 1**  
Sandwich, MA

**JUNE 5-8**  
Williamsburg, VA  
(4 Day Camp)

**JUNE 27-29**  
Goochland, VA

**JULY 7, 14, 21, 28**  
Virtual Support  
Groups

**AUGUST 1-3**  
Wading River, NY

**AUGUST 8-10**  
Salt Lake City, UT

**AUGUST 8-10**  
Occidental, CA

**AUGUST 15-17**  
Wanship, UT

**SEPTEMBER 5-6**  
Lake Wylie, SC  
(Charlotte)

**SEPTEMBER 12-14**  
Overdose ALH TBD

**SEPTEMBER 12-14**  
Palmyra, VA

**SEPTEMBER 19-21**  
Ortonville, MI

**SEPTEMBER 26-28**  
Salt Lake City, UT

**SEPTEMBER 26-28**  
Palmer, MA

**OCTOBER 3-5**  
Hardwick, NJ

**OCTOBER 3-5**  
Wake Forest, NC

**OCTOBER 10-12**  
Simi Valley, CA

**OCTOBER 24-26**  
Hardwick, NJ

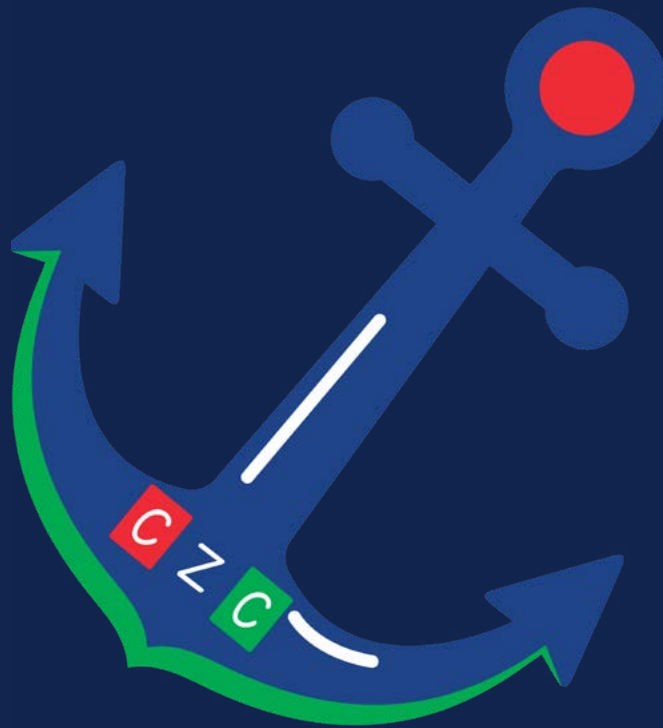
**NOVEMBER 3, 10, 17, 24**  
Virtual Support Groups

**NOVEMBER 7-9**  
Mechanicsville, VA

**NOVEMBER (TBD)**  
Fruitland Park, FL



# 2025 CAMP THEME: ANCHOR



**25 YEARS**



COMFORT



ZONE



CAMP

6606 West Broad Street, Suite 401  
Richmond, VA 23230

Email: [info@comfortzonecamp.org](mailto:info@comfortzonecamp.org)  
Phone: (804) 377-3430 | Fax: (804) 362-3856

**[WWW.COMFORTZONECAMP.ORG](http://WWW.COMFORTZONECAMP.ORG)**