



# S'more Sibling News

## FOUNDER'S WELCOME

*Lynn Price, Founder and President Emeritus*



In 1995, 32 campers came to our inaugural camp in Las Vegas. This summer, "almost 1,000" came to our camps in Nevada, California, Massachusetts, Georgia, Oregon, Washington State, Maine, New York and Australia. Had Mother Nature not turned our Power of the Ripple into a powerful hurricane off the east coast to keep some campers from arriving at our newest member camp, Camp To Belong-New York, we just might have made it. Next year!

Speaking of our early years, siblings continue to keep in touch with our CTB volunteers. Some of them have even become counselors themselves. What started as a family back then continues as family now—we attend graduations, weddings and even baby showers. Truly, Camp To Belong not only creates immediate family but endures as one's family footprints grow.

Since 1995, I've seen new member camps launch, our international board membership flourish, our volunteer base grow, newcomers make a first-time donation, and long-time contributors sign on for year-round support. All as we continue to host camps, develop new sibling programming, raise awareness of sibling rights, enact sibling legislation and spur recruitment of more foster and adoptive families. The Power of the Ripple that touched a small base of campers, counselors, board members and contributors in 1995 continues to grow. And YOU help us create new waves as our champions and contributors, willingly and unselfishly. Never think you are 'just' sending a brother, sister or sibling group to one week of camp—you are gifting to them a lifetime of memories that will be their light during their darkest days of sibling separation.

On behalf of the Camp To Belong International family, thank you for all you do to help us reunite siblings. You can visit us online at [www.camptobelong.org](http://www.camptobelong.org) donate or share your favorite sibling memory. **Thank you for being a Power Of The Ripple!**



Check out our website! Visit [www.camptobelong.org](http://www.camptobelong.org)

## CTB – GEORGIA

Camp 2011 was a wonderfully successful and moving experience for all. Forty campers and twenty five counselors and staff had a great week together. We had a wonderful visit from Lynn Price, who really inspired our campers to value and nurture their sibling connections during and after camp. It was most rewarding to see Ally, the 8-year-old sister of veteran campers Josh and Jordan, finally get to attend her first Camp To Belong after meeting the camp's age requirement. Her brothers are charter campers here in Georgia—this was their 4th year.

I was first introduced to the CTB-GA in 2010 as a day volunteer for the scrapbooking activity. I knew after just a few short hours that this camp was a cause I could get behind. The following year, I participated as a camp counselor. After camp, I jumped at the opportunity to become a board member of this wonderful Georgia affiliate.

My story is a very blessed one. I grew up with a supportive family and a brother whom I adore. At fourteen, my parents divorced. Two years later, I was blessed with the addition of a third supportive parent and two more sibling sisters. I bonded instantly with my youngest sister—we are still very close to this day. I had to work really hard to have the relationship I have today with my older sister, but hard work on sibling relationships is worth every second. Today, I am so excited to lend my support to bringing separated siblings together and allow them to have the connection that I was lucky enough to make three times.

—Lindsay Newman, Volunteer – Counselor & Board Member



## CTB – NEW YORK

This summer I was able to experience my first ever Camp to Belong and I have to say it was the most inspirational week of my life. As an AmeriCorps member, I have experienced a lot during my term. The dedication and hard work that I saw from everyone throughout the week really demonstrated why it is worth serving others. I learned that just one week of dedication really can change a sibling's relationship. Through bursts of laughter, smiles upon faces and screams of joy, I was able to watch a group of children experience one of the most rewarding weeks of their lives.

—Claudia Congemi, Bonner Service Leader



## CTB – NORTHWEST

The emotion I experienced at your camp is something I could never forget. The compassion that Big Daddy, Mama K and all the volunteers gave us kids is a feeling I carry with me everywhere. Every camper walks off the bus at the beginning of the week, feeling unsure or not wanting to be there. I know that because that's how I started camp! I soon realized I wasn't so alone and I never would be again. The impact you have on children's lives' amazes me. Thanks for making my time at camp amazing and thanks for showing kids who are separated that they are not alone. I am healing through connection with my siblings. You made that happen for us!

—Myia C, Camper



## CTB – MAINE

As a social worker, we often become emotionally separated from the families we work with as a way to protect ourselves from daily trauma. Six years ago, I first volunteered to be a counselor with CTB-Maine. Six years later, the week I spend with children continues to be all about creating memories, strengthening bonds and helping these young people learn to love and share time with one another. I know the memories they share help pave the way to a better relationship that will last them a lifetime together. I look back on hard days at work to a letter I keep on my desk from a camper that was written to me my 5th year. It states; "You helped me understand my brother better. You have inspired me to be a better, more understanding person. I appreciate everything that you do. I'm glad to call you a friend."



Most of us have siblings, but not all of us have brothers or sisters. The difference is the bond, one which we as Camp To Belong volunteers look to strengthen and improve through time, caring and joy. I found a Maya Angelou quote that spoke to me about the bonds we are trying to create—and what CTB is all about: *"I don't believe an accident of birth makes people sisters or brothers. It makes them siblings, gives them mutuality of parentage. Sisterhood and brotherhood is a condition people have to work at."*

—Charles A Creteau, LSW – Facilitated Family Team Meeting Specialist District #1 Sanford and Biddeford

## CTB – NEVADA

"I love going to CTB-Nevada, because it's full of positive energy coming from all of the volunteers. Sometimes us kids can be grumpy but the adults are always happy and want us to be happy. There are so many things at camp that bond us with our siblings, and there's also time for us to be with our friends."

—Mariah, camper

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"I love camp, because I get to sleep in the same room with my brother. I laugh a lot when I'm with him. He's really funny. I eat with my siblings every day. Camp gives us so many choices of fun things to do together."

—Isaiah, camper

"Camp is where we can leave our troubles behind for the week. The real world doesn't matter when we're at camp. I love being with my brothers and sister."

—Eli, camper

*Truly amazing and sincerely profound!*



## CTB – WASHINGTON

I feel truly blessed and enriched having been a part of this week-long camp. While at camp, the kiddos had the opportunity to go horseback riding, swimming and boating, as well as celebrate each others' birthdays (just to name a few skillfully planned activities). But most importantly, the campers had the chance to spend quality time as children with their siblings. It was amazing to be a part of the connections that took place at this very special event. Throughout all of the laughter, crying, sibling conflict and even the rivalry, it all worked in the end.

Being a counselor with Camp to Belong has driven my practice as a social worker to ensure that all of the siblings in state care stay connected with one another. These kids are truly my heroes.

–Samuel Capetillo, Adolescent Social Worker II – Department of Social and Health Services



## CTB – MASSACHUSETTES

As brothers and sisters join a group of volunteers at the start of each season of CTB-MA, I experience a wave of emotions. When the first sibling gets off of the bus, I know for the next five days I will be a part of something greater than myself. When I see the first sibling group give their hugs to one another, I know that I will be inspired with each moment that passes. When I see the last campfire of the season come to a close, I know that I have been privileged to be a member of the Camp To Belong family.

–Katie Flynn, Counselor

## CTB – ORANGE COUNTY

The opportunity to be a part of sibling reunification was the promise. What was delivered at CTB-Orange County, however, was so beyond this that words cannot truly describe it. Pictures, though worth a thousand words, do not even begin to define. I recall so many faces, each full of courage despite having faced countless tragedies and heartache. Faces like Eddie's and Cindy's, possessing hearts capable of limitless love, regardless of the difficult circumstances of their lives. My role continuously shifted between counselor, mentor and amazed observer. What I learned can only be experienced and cannot simply be described. CTB-Orange County was a life-changing experience.

–Claudio Andreas Cassinelli, Counselor



## CTB – AUSTRALIA

CTB-Australia held its third year of CTB at Thunderbird Park, Tamborine Mountain, Queensland. During the week, campers participated in a huge variety of outdoor adventures, sporting pursuits, life planning exercises and social activities all designed to promote positive family contact. A highlight of the week was a visit from Lifestyle Solutions ambassador and Melbourne Tigers recruit, Patrick 'Patty' Mills. Patty was the guest of honor at the CTB Birthday Party, where siblings exchanged birthday presents and celebrated a lifetime of missed birthdays. Patty was kept busy helping the kids unwrap presents, posing for plenty of photographs and signing autographs.

–David Hogg, Director/Lifestyle Solutions

## Camp To Belong 2012 Camp Dates:

### CTB-Nevada

Camp Site: Pathfinder Ranch, Mountain Center, CA.  
June 23-29, 2012

### CTB-Oregon

Camp Site: Camp Silver Creek, Salem, OR.  
June 24-29, 2012

### CTB-Georgia

Camp Site: Camp Twin Lakes in GA.  
July 8-13, 2012

### CTB-Orange County

Camp Site: Outdoor Education Center-Irvine, CA.  
July 23-28, 2012

### CTB-Northwest/Washington

Camp Site: Miracle Ranch Camp-Port Orchard, WA.  
August 13- 18, 2012

### CTB-Maine

Camp Site: Camp Wigwam, Waterford, ME.  
August 14-19, 2012

### CTB-Massachusetts

Camp Site: Camp Taconic, Hinsdale, MA.  
August 20-25, 2012

### CTB-New York

Camp Site: Camp Chingachook, Lake George, NY  
August 25-30, 2012



## Make a Difference at Camp This Summer!

Your tax deductible gift of any amount will make a significant difference for siblings this summer.

My/our check is enclosed for \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

Credit Card Type: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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Verification Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please make check payable to **Camp To Belong** and mail to: P.O. Box 1146, Marana, AZ 85653.

Contributions are tax deductible according to IRS guidelines. For more information, please call 1-888-7-BELONG.