



## Listen CI Camp 2023 Family Survey Summary

Camper feedback over the years has made camp what it is today. We are so thankful for your participation in Listen CI Camp 2023 and the many comments and suggestions you shared on the survey! We have carefully reviewed the surveys and wanted to share the common themes and recommendations for making camp the best possible experience for all.

- Your favorite thing about camp is coming together as a community with other CI families. *We are so happy to hear this as it speaks to the Listen CI Camp mission of continuing to improve the lives of pediatric cochlear implant recipients and their families by “Sharing Success” through recreation, education, and connection. The goal is to not only bolster confidence and share best practices with a variety of CI users, but also to inspire a sense of belonging to a community since many of our children are out in the mainstream in small numbers.*
- The Mentor Panel, Parent Connection Breakout Discussions, and CI Representative Meetings were also tremendously popular. *We are delighted to hear that you enjoyed having the teens join you for the Mentor Panel (June session); we will continue to include them! Based on feedback from 2022 campers, we added a few minutes to the Mentor Panel and we reduced Parent Connections from two short breakout sessions to one slightly longer breakout time. Unfortunately, due to time constraints of the YMCA childcare license we are not able to extend this time any further.*
- There is a fairly even split in responses within both sessions between those desiring more (whole) family activities and those wanting more activities where kids are grouped by individual age. *Hopefully we’re hitting middle ground on this one. Due to recommendations from July, 2022, parents, we opted to maintain family groups for a few more of the July activities this year, rather than breaking into age-based kid groups in the afternoons.*
- More Parent Time with Mentors and Experienced Parents. *We are thrilled to let you know that we are launching a Listen CI Camp Parents Facebook Group (see instructions in “Post Camp Letter”)! This is a wonderful way for you to stay in touch throughout the year, ask questions, and mentor each other. We also plan to offer a couple of virtual panel discussions for you later in the year. Based on feedback from 2022, we are now breaking into smaller groups during the Parent Social to allow for more intimate conversations between more and less experienced parents and we have parent mentors available during the Educational Expo to visit with you.*
- Desire to Communicate with Others Prior to Camp. *Nothing would make us happier! We know it can be a little scary to email or call a parent you haven’t met. Just remember, we’re all in this together and the person you’re considering reaching out to is probably wishing someone would. The new Listen CI Camp Parents Facebook Group (see instructions in “Post Camp Letter”) and directory you receive prior to camp should help with this. We hope you will seize the opportunity!*

*The leader in listening and spoken language therapy for children who are deaf and hard of hearing*

- A Cochlear Implant Parts Exchange. *We love the idea, but are not able host this due to the medical equipment status of cochlear implants. We encourage you to exchange privately between yourselves or donate parts to: Cochlear Implant Awareness Foundation, Attn: Donations, 830 South Grand Rapids Avenue West, Springfield, IL 62704.*
- Move Swim Parties from Saturday Night to Another Time. *A little-known secret is that we are the only group the YMCA allows to have private pool parties. We will request a schedule change, but please be aware the YMCA may not be able to accommodate our private party at another time.*
- Rain Plan Transitions. *Moving to the rain plan is always an unfortunate circumstance which is made worse by very poor Wi-Fi and cell coverage throughout the property. We even tried the YMCA's radios to facilitate the process, although they did not have the necessary range. We will continue to work with the YMCA to have rain plans in place for all activities and communicate those as expeditiously as possible. Unfortunately, it does take the YMCA some time to pivot activities for us.*
- Fine Tuning of Activities and the Schedule. *We will continue to seek engaging and age-appropriate YMCA programming within the purview of their offerings and build in short rest times between meals and activities. Please be aware that several of the YMCA activities are restricted by age (regardless of the child's ability), held at prescheduled times (hence the changes in our schedule from day-to-day), and limited by the number of sessions we can reserve.*
- Keys at Check In and Coffee in the Lodge. *While we request keys before 3:00pm, we typically don't receive them until evening. As this is simply out of our control, you are encouraged to leave your belongings in your car until keys become available. Note, restrooms are available in the lodge lobby should you like to change clothes. The good news – coffee makers were installed in all Ram's Horn rooms in mid-July!*
- The Food. *Agreed! While it was a bit better than last year, please continue to bring plenty of snacks. Know that I am requesting options per the dietary restrictions you list during camp registration. Unfortunately, the YMCA does not allow us to specify particular dishes or cater from outside. The YMCA is cooking for approximately 4,000 people per meal so we may need to adjust our expectations to "camp food"- plenty of it, does the job, but not yet Michelin rated. My discussions with the YMCA about food service will continue!*

Again, thank you for your insightful suggestions aimed at making camp an amazing experience for all. We look forward to seeing you next summer. In the meantime, I invite you to reach out if I may serve as a resource to you throughout the year.

Take care and enjoy the rest of the summer!

*Janette Cantwell*

Listen CI Camp Director