

## Camp Connect

(Revised 06/17/22)

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### Forms

The following forms are referenced in this file:

- 04-48 Camp Connect Summer Camp Waiver And Release of Liability form

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### Purpose

Camp Connect is a partnership between the Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) and Promises2Kids that provides opportunities for siblings who are separated by their placement in the foster care system to spend quality time together.

Camp Connect offers several activities, including a fun-filled 4-day, 3-night summer camp in the mountains of Julian, where siblings can connect through activities such as horseback riding, swimming, music therapy, and zip lining, among others, in an environment of fun and safety, allowing them for a short time to set aside their trauma and to experience the joy of being a child. Camp Connect also coordinates monthly activities such as ice skating, trips to museums, learning how to surf, attending ball games and theme parks, etc. Although these are ordinary activities for many children and youth in the foster care system, they are also opportunities to create special memories and lasting relationships with their sibling(s) to relax and have fun. Annually, there are approximately 10-12 events for youth.

Many community members and County staff volunteer for Camp Connect to support children in the foster care system. Although the goal is to encourage/maintain siblings bonds, the connection made with a volunteer can be equally important to a child or sibling group.

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### Eligibility

Eligible children/youth are siblings between the ages of 5 and 20 who reside in foster care and are currently separated from one or more siblings. Extended Foster Care (EFC) youth are also eligible, as well as groups where one or more siblings have exited the foster care system, such as siblings with closed cases, and siblings in adoption or guardianship, as long as one child is currently a dependent of the juvenile court.

**NOTE:** A parent/guardian will need to sign the 04-48 for children without an open dependency case.

Children who have reunified are **NOT** eligible to participate.

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## Procedure for Events

Event announcements are emailed to Child Welfare staff throughout the year. Social workers are encouraged to discuss upcoming activities with eligible children and their caregivers.

**NOTE:** To avoid disappointing the child if there's a conflict, it is best practice to talk to the **child's caregiver first**, as well as to the SW(s) of the sibling(s) to make sure the siblings are also willing and available to attend, and ensure that any transportation issues have been identified and can be resolved.

This table describes the procedures for referring a child to a Camp Connect event:

STEP	WHO	WHEN	WHAT
1	SW	One month prior to event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Register eligible youth via the link below: <b>Camp Connect Event Registration*</b></li></ul> <p><b>*NOTE: Chrome (Google) is the preferred web browser for the online registration system.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>If the sibling(s) have different SW(s), ensure that the other SW(s) also register the sibling(s).</li></ul>
2	Promises2Kids staff	Two weeks prior to event	Notify the SW when the child is signed up for the event.
3	Promises2Kids staff	One week prior to event	Call caregiver to remind them of the event.

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## Volunteer Steps

Camp Connect would not be possible without Volunteers. People outside CWS (including the public) may also volunteer for Camp Connect events, but they must first successfully complete a background check. Volunteers will be trained and briefed by Promises2Kids prior to the event(s).

CWS staff who volunteer for monthly events are not compensated after hours or on weekends. Staff who volunteer for the summer camp are compensated during the week for their regular work hours. Staff who attend Saturday evening may also be compensated for a specific evening shift as needed. Staff should seek supervisory approval before registering to attend any events that occur during work hours.

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**Volunteer Steps  
(cont.)**

This table describes the procedures for volunteering for a Camp Connect event:

STEP	WHO	WHAT
1	Prospective Volunteer	<p>If the volunteer is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A current CWS employee, then go to Step 2.</li> <li>• Not a current CWS employee, then go to Step 4.</li> </ul>
2	Prospective CWS volunteer	<p>Register for the event. Current CWS employees have already passed background checks and child abuse clearances.</p> <p>CWS staff that are first time volunteers will complete a volunteer interest form.</p> <p><b>STOP.</b> Process is complete.</p>
3	Camp Connect Staff	Contact CWS volunteer with details about the event.
4	Prospective non CWS Volunteer	Complete the <a href="#">volunteer interest</a> form.
5	Promises2Kids Volunteer Manager	Email the volunteer the background packet to the prospective non-CWS volunteer.
6	Prospective non-CWS volunteer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete the packet and return to Promises2Kids volunteer manager.</li> <li>• Attend Volunteer Orientation and a Camp Connect 101. This way the volunteer can sign up for events once cleared.</li> </ul>
7	Promises2Kids Volunteer Manager	Forward completed volunteer packet to CWS Departmental Human Resources Officer (DHRO)
8	CWS DHRO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review packet.</li> <li>• Coordinate Live Scan appointment date and time with prospective volunteer.</li> <li>• Enter prospective volunteer's information in the Camp Connect log (which also tracks clearances).</li> <li>• Notify prospective volunteer of the results when the clearance is complete*.</li> <li>• Notify Promises2Kids volunteer manager once the prospective volunteer clears background.</li> </ul>

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**Volunteer Steps  
(cont.)**

This table describes the procedures for volunteering for a Camp Connect event:

STEP	WHO	WHAT
8	CWS DHRO (cont.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="751 310 1430 415">• Keep the Camp Connect manager advised of any Live Scan and/or rap back issues related to any prospective/current volunteers.</li></ul> <p data-bbox="751 453 1455 558"><b>*NOTE:</b> This process can take several weeks and should be started well in advance of summer camp to ensure clearance.</p>

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**Alignment with  
SET**

This policy supports SET [Value 3](#): Helping Children and Youth Achieve Their Full Potential and Develop Lifelong Relationships by providing activities that support permanency and life-long connections with their siblings.

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