



April 28, 2020

Parents, Educators and Colleagues

Every day, in every country, the impact of CoVID-19 can be seen. Challenges to our global health and wealth are being felt down to the level of community, family and individual. Business, education, services and personal choice have been curtailed and uncertainty on the duration, and resolution, of this crisis continues to keep us all off balance.

The secondary, spill-out effects of this viral outbreak upon children are equally profound. A hyper-anxious generation of children is now even more uncertain about the future. On-line, screen time has become a substitute for active play outdoors. Direct social contact with friends is limited. Education opportunities are virtual in nature rather than experiential - - - and in nature.

The **International Camping Fellowship** is a global organization of camps and camp professionals who believe in the power of camp. The **Mexican Camping Association** and many directors of MCA camps are members of that association. They are making a profound difference to the world of youth development within Mexico and in the wider world. For them, the value and values of camp are well understood.

Organized children's camps have been partners in youth development and education for hundreds of years. Based upon an experiential model in which a guided activity allows children to integrate their experiences into their body of life skills through reflection and relevance, camps demonstrate the ability to blend both education and recreation into a series of profound, life altering encounters stored in both the conscious and the unconscious memory. True wisdom is a combination of knowledge and experience. The transfer of camp experience into life beyond camp is the greatest gift of all.

Camps all across Mexico are struggling with their operations as well but more importantly, they are preparing. As the current crisis begins to pass, children and families will begin to emerge from their homes into community. Children will need to know that they are safe, they are loved, they have a place where they belong. They will need to experience joy and laughter but they will also need to rebuild confidence, resilience and a

sense of well-being. They will need to re-establish skills like making friends, recognizing their feelings, negotiating with others and resolving `conflict in a healthy way.

- **Camps care about all of these things.**
- **Camps address all of these things.**
- **Camps know that you care about all of these things as well**
- **Camps are ready to help**

More than ever before, children need camp. Whether through school camp experiences or direct camp experiences arranged by families, camps are ready when you are ready. Like us, consider camps as an essential service in the lives of our children. They, and we, will be better for it, if we do.

Every part of society is a precious element of a country's culture. We will all come through this, if we can stand together and remind ourselves of our humanity. As we rebuild the best version of ourselves, let us remember our children and reset them on their life journey by showing them the path to camp

The words to a song sung in many camps are timely today...

***Build the Road of Peace before us
Build it wide and build it strong
Speed the slow, remind the eager
Help the weak and guide the strong
None shall push aside another
None shall let another fall
Stand together sister, brother
All for one and one for all***

Let us stand together for the children. Now and always.

Yours in camping



John Jorgenson

ICF President – Canada

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MCA President - Mexico