



CAMP FIRE USA
CENTRAL PUGET
SOUND COUNCIL
SEATTLE, WASH.

CHILDREN DO WELL WHEN THEIR FAMILIES
DO WELL, AND FAMILIES DO BETTER WHEN
THEY LIVE IN SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES

2007 FAMILY STRENGTHENING AWARDS

FAMILY CENTRAL

For years, the Camp Fire USA Central Puget Sound Council has involved parents in their children's activities, from camping to volunteering. Recognizing the importance of families in shaping children's lives, parents are not peripheral to the Council's work. They are a central part of the organization's philosophy, incorporated in many ways beyond programs, from employee practices and grant proposals to advocacy work and council documents. In its current five-year strategic plan, the Central Puget Sound Council outlines one of its major goals: to "promote strong families through Camp Fire programs." The Council creates community connections to needed resources and helps families strengthen their social support networks, creating lasting impact on both children and parents. "Children exist within the framework of their families," says Program Director Karen Aoyama. "That is why we do our best to support parents in a way that is culturally appropriate and based on their needs."

Through youth day camps, child care, Community Family Clubs and other programs, the Central Puget Sound Council serves 17,000 children and parents annually throughout the Seattle area.



WHETHER THROUGH CAMPOUTS, CLUBS OR OTHER ACTIVITIES, WE INTENTIONALLY INCORPORATE THE WHOLE FAMILY. EMPOWERING AND SUPPORTING PARENTS IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF BOOSTING CHILDREN TOWARD SUCCESSFUL FUTURES.

—Karen Aoyama, program director, Camp Fire USA Central Puget Sound Council

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS, CAMPOUTS AND CLUBS

Whether sharing rides, providing advice on college applications or sharing information about jobs, Camp Fire parents make up a valuable support network for each other. More than 100 people attend the Special Family Weekend, which provides families with the chance to build social support networks and learn about available resources. During the annual event, families of children with special needs bond and find advice, friendship and support in each other while camping out in the woods.

The Central Puget Sound Council's 16 Community Family Clubs also provide an opportunity for parents and children to have fun together while building community with other families. At the Nasib Child Care Somali Community Family Club, refugee families gather for halal meals and Somali stories that families share, translate to English and act out in skits. At the Sea Mar Community Health Center, families are drawn to the Community Family Club because it provides enriching recreation for children. But the health center also teaches parents in Spanish about health-related issues and connects parents to resources such as English classes, immigration support and free vaccinations.

"We seek to make as many community connections for families as we can, both with other families and with supportive services," Aoyama says. "And through our partners, families are able to access numerous services beyond what we provide."

FAMILIES COUNT FAMILY STRENGTHENING AWARDS

Through a joint venture of the Annie E. Casey Foundation and Camp Fire USA, the FAMILIES COUNT Family Strengthening Awards recognize Camp Fire USA councils with outstanding programs that work to give children what they need most—strong, capable and economically successful families. Responding to the varied needs of the families they serve, these organizations improve the economic prospects of working men and women and create the services and networks of support that all families need to realize their aspirations for themselves and their children.

In hundreds of communities across the nation, Camp Fire USA serves nearly 750,000 children and their families, cultivating young leaders and boosting families toward brighter futures. By offering club, after-school, camp, self-reliance and service-learning programs, Camp Fire helps children from infancy to age 21 build confidence and responsibility, while also supporting and engaging parents. “Our councils work hard to build partnerships and meet the many diverse needs of their communities and families so that children can thrive,” says National President and CEO Jill Pasewalk. “By helping families achieve greater economic self-sufficiency, community connections, health and positive family relationships, we are helping children achieve greater success.”

CAMP FIRE USA CENTRAL PUGET SOUND COUNCIL

Jane White Vulliet, CEO
Karen Aoyama, Program Director
8511 15th Ave. NE
Seattle, WA 98115
206-461-8550
www.campfire-usa.org