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Overview of our CHAMPS Programs

As mentioned previously, there are 2 CHAMPS Camp programs:

1. **Summer camp – offered since 2015**
   - Week long day camp in July
   - Held in Saskatoon at the U of S
   - Open for children 7-17 years
   - No fees for families to attend
2. **Fall/Winter program – offered since 2017**
   - Programming September-December & January-April
   - Biweekly camps on Saturdays
   - Held in Saskatoon at the U of S & in Regina at the Northwest YMCA
   - Open for children 7-17 years & 4-6 years
   - No fees for families to attend



Between these two programs, we service 2 different age groups.

➔ 7-17 years – offered since 2015
- Programming offered at all levels
- Most research studies encompass this age group

➔ 4-6 years (also known as “Junior CHAMPS”) – offered since 2021
- Limited programming offered
  - Fall/winter program
  - One day/special session during summer camp
- No research involvement at this time

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Components of CHAMPS Camp

At CHAMPS camp, our goal is to provide programming that encompasses all areas of health. The majority of our sessions focus on physical activity, physical activity participation and mental wellness.

At summer camp, we are able to offer a wide range of sessions such as psychology/mental wellness, various physical activities, nutrition, heart health, learning about specific heart conditions, and dental hygiene.

At our fall/winter programming, we mainly provide sessions around physical activity. We may or may not provide psychology/mental wellness sessions as well. This is usually dependent on whether our psychology students from the University of Regina Department of Psychology are working on a related, or unrelated CHAMPS research study.

CHAMPS is unique in that campers participate in most sessions independent of their parent/guardian. However, we also offer educational sessions for parents/guardians/family members. The majority of these sessions take place during our summer camp, but we may also offer sessions throughout the fall/winter program. These sessions may include psychology, nutrition, physical activity & heart health, CPR/First Aid, etc.

Visit the links below to view some examples of sessions at CHAMPS camp. These sessions took place during our virtual camps during COVID-19 (2020-2021).

Activity Sessions - Virtual Camp

Education Sessions - Virtual Camp

Parent Sessions - Virtual Camp

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Overview of Our Team

Below are the members of our team you are most likely to interact with at CHAMPS Camp. For a full list of our team members, visit our website:

https://mendinglittlehearts.ca/our-team/

Clinic Team at Jim Pattison Children's Hospital

Dr. Charissa Pockett, Pediatric Cardiologist (Head of Pediatric Cardiology, JPCH)

Dr. Scott Pharis, Pediatric Cardiologist

Dr. Tim Bradley, Pediatric Cardiologist

Marie Penner, Registered Nurse

Angela Wiens, Registered Nurse

Research Team

University of Saskatchewan:

Dr. Marta Erlandson, Associate Professor, College of Kinesiology

Dr. Corey Tomczak, Associate Professor, College of Kinesiology

Dr. Charissa Pockett, Assistant Professor, College of Medicine

Dr. Scott Pharis, Assistant Professor, College of Medicine

Dr. Tim Bradley, Clinical Associate, College of Medicine

University of Regina:

Dr. Kristi Wright, Professor, Department of Psychology, Registered Doctoral Psychologist

Mending Little Hearts Fund Team

Lynne Telfer – Registered Nurse, heart mom, patient family advocate

Juanita Praksas – Registered Nurse, heart mom, patient family advocate

Anna Maton – Heart mom, volunteer fundraiser, patient family advocate

Dana Lahti – Clinical Exercise Physiologist, CHAMPS Camp coordinator

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How does research tie into CHAMPS programs?

CHAMPS Camp has 2 pillars – community and research. It is not a requirement for children attending camp to participate in research, and vice versa. Both pillars are important areas of service to ensure the needs of heart families are being met, and to ensure the content of our programs is appropriate.

As mentioned previously, CHAMPS Saskatchewan developed from a unique and important relationship with researchers from the College of Kinesiology & College of Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan, and the Department of Psychology at the University of Regina. Our research team has worked hard to create a research program that is patient-oriented, relevant and sustainable for years to come. Our research areas include: body composition, cardiovascular physiology, exercise capacity, exercise prescription, mental wellness, nutrition, physical literacy, psychology and growth & development.

CHAMPS research may be related or unrelated to current programming. For example, researchers may run a study concurrently with summer camp, and children attending have the option to participate in that study. Researchers may also run studies to pilot new CHAMPS programs, or to examine specific research questions that are not tied to a current intervention or program. For studies such as this, children are able to participate in both the study and camp programs if they wish.

Each CHAMPS research study may have a different Research Coordinator depending on the staff/students involved in the study. If you have questions about CHAMPS research, please contact the Camp Coordinator and they can direct you to the appropriate staff.

To learn more about CHAMPS research, visit our website:

https://mendinglittlehearts.ca/research/

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Why is CHAMPS research important?

It is well known that an increasing number of children with CHD are living into adulthood as a result of advances in medical interventions. Yet, there is little research to support the physical and mental health of these individuals as they grow. We know that children with CHD are predisposed to developing modifiable risk factors later in life such as cardiovascular disease and osteoporosis. Adult cardiac rehabilitation programs are well established non-pharmacological treatments. However, these programs do not exist for children with cardiac conditions, and therefore there is little research to show the effectiveness and feasibility of a similar program to support these children.

The mission of CHAMPS research is to:

1. Determine if we can positively impact important health measures such as exercise capacity, psychological health, body composition, and nutritional habits
2. Determine if it is feasible to deliver regular year-round CHD management programming for children and their families
3. Increase the impact of health benefits that CHAMPS Camp can offer for children with CHD

CHAMPS Research is leading the way:

Improving the Outlook for Children with Congenital Heart Disease

- Featuring Dr. Marta Erlandson (University of Saskatchewan)

Why is CHAMPS Research Important? A participant perspective

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Learn More About our Research

Below are peer-reviewed research articles that have been published by our CHAMPS Research Team since 2015. CHAMPS research has been presented at various local, domestic and international research conferences.

Health anxiety and associated constructs in children and adolescents with congenital heart disease: A CHAMPS cohort study

Physical activity modulates arterial stiffness in children with congenital heart disease: A CHAMPS cohort study

A cardiovascular disease risk factor in children with congenital heart disease: unmasking elevated waist circumference - a CHAMPS study

The effect of a fundamental movement skill intervention on the physical literacy levels of children with congenital heart disease: A CHAMPS cohort study

Health anxiety and associated constructs in school-age children and adolescents with congenital heart disease and their parents- A CHAMPS cohort study

Effects of 12-Week Home-based Resistance Training on Peripheral Muscle Oxygenation in Children with Congenital Heart Disease: A CHAMPS Study

- ➢ **Visit our website**
- ➢ **Read our research blog posts**
- ➢ **Watch an overview of CHAMPS Programs & Research**

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Research Funding Provided by:











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