

# the *Fresh Air* fund

servicing children since 1877

The Fresh Air Fund, an independent, not-for-profit agency, has provided free summer experiences to more than 1.8 million New York City children from low-income communities since 1877. Each summer, thousands of children visit volunteer host families in rural and suburban communities along the East Coast and Southern Canada or attend five Fresh Air camps on a more than 2,000 acre site in Fishkill, New York. Young people also participate in year-round educational enrichment programs at camp and in New York City.

## **Fresh Air Children**

Children are eligible to participate in The Fresh Air Fund's free programs based on financial need and are registered by social service and community organizations in all five boroughs of New York City. Our immigrant outreach project recruits children from New York City immigrant families to participate in the volunteer host family and camping programs through our network of community partners. This project focuses on newly arrived and second-generation immigrant families and provides culturally sensitive outreach and translation services.

## **The Fresh Air Fund's Summer Programs**

### *Friendly Towns Program*

Fresh Air boys and girls visit rural, suburban and small town communities along the East Coast and Southern Canada, called Friendly Towns, during the summer. During the one or two week visits with volunteer host families, children and their hosts form bonds of friendship and discover a cultural exchange of traditions, foods, and fun by sharing personal, day-to-day experiences.

- Children on first-time visits are seven to 12 years old. Reinvited youngsters may continue through age 18 and may enjoy extended trips.
- A committee of volunteer leaders supervises each Friendly Town community.
- Committee members select host families after reviewing their applications, visiting them in their homes and checking their personal references.
- There is no "typical" Fresh Air Fund host family; host families open their homes to children who might not otherwise be able to enjoy a summer away from New York City.
- There are no financial requirements for hosting a Fresh Air child.
- The Fresh Air Fund covers the cost of transportation and insurance.

### *Summer Camping Program*

The Fresh Air Fund's camping programs take place year-round on an over 2,000 acre property in Fishkill, New York. In the summer, 3,000 New York City children explore outdoor adventures and benefit from educational experiences. During the school year, students participate in weekend camping retreats.

- Camp Hidden Valley is for boys and girls with and without special needs, eight to 12 years old.
- Camp Tommy is for 12- to 15-year-old boys and is named in honor of designer Tommy Hilfiger for his dedication and support of Fresh Air children.
- Camp Hayden-Marks Memorial is for nine- to 12-year-old boys.
- Camp Mariah is for boys and girls in 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grades.
- Camp Anita Bliss Coler (ABC) is for girls, nine to 12 years old.
- Special features shared by all camps include a planetarium, model farm and nutrition center, wilderness trail, and ropes course.

## **Academic Enrichment and Leadership Programs**

### Career Awareness Program

The Fresh Air Fund's Career Awareness Program is designed to help New York City youngsters (7th- to 9th-graders) understand the relationship between school and work and how to make positive choices that will impact their futures.

- Students apply in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, and begin summer camp sessions when entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade.
- The year-round program includes weekend camping trips and an intensive three-and-a-half week summer session at Camp Mariah, named in honor of Board member/singer Mariah Carey for her dedication, support and commitment to New York City children.
- Students participate in job shadowings that offer close-up views of business, after-school tutoring with volunteer mentors, and attend a career fair.
- After 9th grade, participants continue to receive support through the College Connections Program.

### Young Women's Leadership Program

The Fresh Air Fund's Young Women's Leadership Program, launched in 2008, offers New York City girls a safe, nurturing environment to think about their futures, recognize their responsibility for educational and career planning, and overcome perceived limitations of gender, ethnicity and socioeconomic status.

- The goal is to engage at-risk girls during their formative teenage years in constructive, year-round activities to develop their self-esteem, financial literacy, and problem-solving and communications skills.
- The Precious Center for Teen Leadership at Camp ABC provides a home for the program during both the summer and academic year.
- During the academic year, students participate in the Young Women's Giving Circle (YWGC), a youth-led program that inspires girls to participate in philanthropic activities and give back to their communities.

### College Connections Program

Launched in 2012 to continue our educational support to Fresh Air students through college, the College Connections Program provides high school students enrolled in The Fresh Air Fund's academic enrichment and leadership development programs with the resources, support and

tools needed to enter and complete college. The program builds a strong network of support for students as they enter college and maintains a high level of engagement with them until they graduate. Many are the first in their family to attend college.

- Guides 10th, 11th and 12th graders through the process of selecting, enrolling, financially preparing for and transitioning into a successful college career.
- Educates parents and students about the sources of financial support available to them.
- Provides SAT and other test preparation courses, college visits, financial literacy and planning workshops, connect college students with extracurricular opportunities that will prepare them for post-college success, encourage students to complete community service hours as they transition into adulthood.
- Matches students with mentors to provide support throughout their college experience.

### **Volunteer Groups**

The Fresh Air Fund has an active group of New York City volunteers and corporate partners. Metropolitan area volunteers help reach out to New York City parents and children, support Summer Camping Programs, Academic Enrichment and Leadership Programs, the Volunteer Host Family Program, and fundraising opportunities. To volunteer, call (212) 897-8900 or visit [www.freshair.org](http://www.freshair.org).

### **Sharpe Reservation**

The Fresh Air Fund's Sharpe Reservation has more than 2,000 acres of beautiful land with lakes, ponds, streams and hiking trails through the woods. Located in the Hudson Highlands near Fishkill, NY, Sharpe Reservation is the site of The Fresh Air Fund's five summer camps. During the rest of the year, close to 18,000 children from community and school groups visit.

### **Fresh Air Fund Contributions**

The Fresh Air Fund is a not-for-profit agency, depending primarily on support from private contributions. It costs The Fresh Air Fund \$1,172.00 for a visit with a volunteer host family and \$1,925.00 to send a child to Fresh Air camp. Over 75% of The Fund's contributions come from individual donors. Tax-deductible contributions may be sent to The Fresh Air Fund, 633 Third Avenue, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor, New York, NY 10017. Families who wish to be hosts, or parents who would like to sign up their children, may call The Fresh Air Fund at (800) 367-0003 or visit [www.freshair.org](http://www.freshair.org).

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