



Camp Lilac  
3583 Ingleside Road  
Shaker Heights, Ohio 44122  
[camlilac.org](http://camlilac.org) | 440-623-8162

Dear Friends,

March 2nd, 2024

I am writing to you today as the Senior Director of Youth Services of Camp Lilac, an overnight camp for transgender and gender diverse youth, with a volunteer staff who are also transgender or gender diverse. I would like to ask for your help in sponsoring a child to come to camp who cannot cover tuition independently.

Camp Lilac provides a comfortable and safe environment where transgender youth can socialize with their peers, an important part of development for all young people. Many of our campers face negative experiences throughout their lives, and/or come from communities that do not accept and support them, so an affirming environment can be a scarce resource. This causes high stress, feelings of hopelessness and depression, and thoughts of suicide, self-harm, and attempted suicide. For transgender youth, such self-destructive behaviors occur at much higher rates than in the general population.

Fortunately, these outcomes are not inevitable. An opportunity to simply be themselves, relax, and have fun with other trans youth is a special and necessary experience, and research has repeatedly proven the benefits of providing an affirming approach for trans and gender diverse youth. Despite this, negative experiences of trans youth in Ohio have been exacerbated by the recent passage of legislation (namely, HB 68) restricting their access to medical care and participation in sports. Further attempts to limit their participation in public life continue each day in the Ohio legislature, Ohio Department of Health (ODH), and other such bodies.

I am asking for help for these vulnerable children at a time they need it more than ever. We don't want the cost of camp to be a barrier for anyone who needs it, and we invite you to sponsor attendance for one or more children in your community. Camp tuition is \$950 for the week, for one child. This pays for the space in a woodland setting, fresh nourishing food, and many outdoor activities such as boating, swimming, ropes course, archery, arts and crafts — all the things that you would find at any other overnight camp.

We are working toward the day when everyone is protected and treated equally. Meanwhile, Camp Lilac offers our campers respite from a stressful “regular life” and a chance to experience a safe, warm, accepting community. Our campers have said it best: “We want to just be ourselves and have fun together.” To learn more, please be in touch ([connor@camlilac.org](mailto:connor@camlilac.org)), or see our website ([camlilac.org/donate](http://camlilac.org/donate)).

Thank you in advance for your consideration. I remain, sincerely,

**Connor Mahon**

Senior Director of Youth Services, Camp Lilac