

Uniquely You, HUGS 2015 SibCamp

The 4th Annual HUGS SibCamp was held in June at YMCA Camp H.R. Erdman, located on the beautiful North Shore of O'ahu. Nestled between the Wai'anae Mountains and pristine beaches of Mokule'ia, Camp Erdman provides the perfect camp setting for HUGS keiki.

SibCamp is a 3 day camp designed exclusively for the siblings of HUGS children. This camp provides them with a supportive environment to bond and get to know other children who are struggling with similar situations, and express their emotions about being a sibling of a seriously ill child.

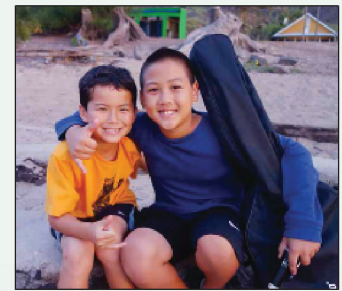
This year, the camp theme was "Uniquely You," encouraging the kids to be proud of who they are and confident in all they have to offer. In addition to fun activities such as archery, an alpine tower, and climbing wall, the kids engaged in activities that showed the true value of being "Uniquely You."

"We had the kids create 'selfies' in which they traced each other on paper, then colored in and designed their selfie to reflect who they are. Sometimes, we find that our siblings can feel left behind or unimportant in the face of their family struggling with a major medical crisis. They tend to hide their emotions, so as not to upset their parents and sibling. This activity allowed the kids to show us how they truly feel inside and to allow them the freedom of feeling whatever they want to feel, good and bad! I think it really made



them feel empowered to share without feeling the pressure of disappointing anyone." said Marty Oliphant, HUGS Director of Programs.

Additionally, campers created their own unique strand of "SibCamp beads." These beads are designed to resemble the Beads of Courage program at the hospitals. Colorful beads are given to children receiving medical treatment to tell their story and serve as meaningful symbols of courage that commemorate milestones they have achieved



along their treatment path. Our sibling

campers received beads for every activity they mastered, such as an archery bead, swimming bead, campfire bead, and much more. By the end of camp, each child had their own strand of beads to represent their journey at SibCamp.

HUGS hopes the campers enjoyed the experience just as the staff and volunteers did, and they hope to see more siblings taking part in next year's camp.

"I had the privilege of volunteering for this year's HUGS SibCamp. I could go on and on about these amazing children. They possessed a maturity and intelligence far beyond their years. These children were the most wonderful and most adorable I've been around in a LONG time! Giving of your time to those who may need you is better than any seminar, detox or retreat program when you're feeling low! Thank you for allowing me to volunteer at this amazing camp for siblings!" said Marlon, Camp Counselor.

If you would like to "adopt a camper" or find other ways to support Sib Camp 2016 contact Joan Naguwa, Executive Director at 808-380-6925. 