CAMP JOSLIN REFLECTIONS
By Maria Conroy, camper parent

We would like to share an email we received from a parent at the end of July. This mom has graciously agreed to share her thoughts.

My son, Brendan, just finished up session 3 at Camp Joslin last weekend. This is his fourth year at Camp Joslin and probably his favorite time of the year. I know you all work so hard to give these boys a meaningful experience, and I just wanted to relay some of our and Brendan’s reflections of the past few days in response to a bombardment of questions, or just in the course of the day as a memory strikes him.

* When asked how much he misses Camp Joslin on a scale of 1-10 (10 being the most), he gave an 8.
* He mentioned quite a few past counselors who had other commitments this year but came back to volunteer and/or visit. The only names I can think of are Mashley and Jon but I know there were others. This is truly remarkable.
* He was so proud to show us his new site for his CGM - on his thigh.
* He loved the tape used by the infirmary to keep everything secure so much that he found out where to get it and had me write it down (www.stayputmedical.com).
* We learned (and often say) Camp Joslin grace for every meal.
* We also learned the morning announcements chant complete with banging on the table.
* "Cordon bleu" is the best meal ever.
* He randomly yells out catch phrases or song lyrics and has a huge smile on his face as he tells us the story behind them.
* I'm pretty sure he relives winning the gaga game for the blue team at least once a day. That may be the best moment of his life.

Overall, we can't imagine a better experience for him than Camp Joslin. It allows B to treat having diabetes just like any shared interest. It's hard to describe the relief we feel in hearing him talk to his friends there about cgm's and site changes in the same conversation as how many games the Red Sox are ahead of the Yankees or what they are doing for the rest of the summer.

At Camp Joslin, diabetes is a connector. Everywhere else, it is a divider. Brendan is a strong kid, but being different wears him down, and the strength he gets from Camp Joslin really builds up his confidence. We can't give enough credit to the counselors (and the staff who choose them) who serve as positive role models for how to live an active life with diabetes and be proud of it. We hope one day that Brendan is able to provide that amazing gift to other little boys looking for guidance and hope.

Thank you. We are already looking forward to next year.

Life is Good

The Barton Center was lucky to welcome Life is Good co-founder John Jacobs as a keynote speaker during staff pre-camp training this year. Jacobs helped our staff see how truly lucky they are that they “Get To” be at camp each and every day being with their friends and doing what they love. He also taught how the power of optimism helps us live life to the fullest and to enjoy the ride because life truly is good. Our visit from John Jacobs set the tone for the whole summer and allowed staff to develop positive, can-do attitudes to pass along to all of the campers.

Along with the visit from Mr. Jacobs, The Barton Center has now formed a partnership with the Life is Good Corporation. This allowed for camp customized “Life is Good” t-shirts to be sold during each camp session this summer! Designs included a navy blue “This is my Happy Place” shirt, along with a sky blue “Lake my Day” design. Both shirts included the names of each resident camp, as well as, Barton Day Camp, on the sleeve. As part of this partnership, we are pleased to announce that they are offering a custom 25% off Friends + Family Discount to be extended to Barton families and community for all Life is Good products. Shop online and use our promo code, BARTON, to receive 25% off your purchase! This offer will be available through December 31, 2018.

The Barton Center couldn’t be more thankful to John Jacobs and the Life is Good Corporation, and we can’t wait to see what this partnership brings us!
Bret was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at six years old. Like everyone else, our lives were turned upside down. We, of course, learned to live with our new normal. Bret was the only child in her grade who had diabetes. In the beginning she did not want any of her friends to know about it, so finding Clara Barton Camp (CBC) was one of the best things that has happened to Bret since she was diagnosed. Camp is where she not only learned to be more independent and understand how to live with type 1, but it is also a place where she has made lifelong friendships.

Bret has been a camper at CBC since the summer of 2014. When we first told Bret she was going to sleepaway camp, her initial reaction was excitement as her older sister went away to camp as well. However, as the time grew closer to camp time, she seemed a bit anxious and kept saying, “Why are you making me go, I want to stay home.” At this point, we signed her up for the first session which was three weeks. We explained to her that she was not going for the entire summer, that it was going to be an amazing experience, and to trust us.

We can’t say the beginning was one hundred percent easy for her. While we never received phone calls from camp, we learned she was quite homesick in the beginning. However, she was very happy at the same time. This is normal for first-time campers. The first three weeks seemed to pass very quickly, but we were anxious to see Bret. What we found when we arrived to Clara Barton Camp was nothing we had ever seen. In the short three weeks that Bret was there, you could immediately tell she had changed. She seemed more mature and social. She was happy to see us, but the way she was interacting with all of the campers and counselors was unique. It was like they were all sisters and best friends at the same time. In addition to this obvious bond that had been created with the counselors and campers, she also bonded with Ashley Napear, the Assistant Camp Director. Ashley was truly amazing with her and was always there when Bret was homesick. In addition they look alike and had fun with that as well. They often dressed as twins for dance night. She made Bret’s time away from home an even easier transition.

When it was finally time to depart camp to head home, Bret was now sad to leave. She did not want to leave camp! We arrived home and she went to day camp. After a week at home she turned to us and said “I want to go back. Please call them and see if there is room.” We did and she went back the next day!

The connection they all have because of type 1 is, of course, an important part of their connection to one another, but it is way more than that. It is the day-to-day activities they take part in together like gaga, the ropes course, basketball, yoga, campfires, and just simply making friendship bracelets together. Clara Barton Camp is much more than a camp for children with diabetes. It is a home away from home.

Five years later and now a Bartonian (which means you have been at camp for five years), Bret lives 10 for 2! As soon as she comes home, the countdown begins for next summer. It is the most special place in her life.

Until next summer! Peace, love, and insulin!
My Camp Joslin CIT Director Experience

By Tommy Jacobsen

Being a CIT (Counselor-in-Training) Director at Camp Joslin has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. Hands down. No debate. In this role, I have the distinct honor of working with potential future employees of camp, and I am charged with preparing them for their future, with or without camp. It is my responsibility to give these young men the tools necessary to succeed as employees of The Barton Center, as well as young men in our dynamic, challenging modern society. I feel incredibly privileged to carry out this duty, and I am eternally grateful to Camp Joslin for providing me with this opportunity.

I cannot even begin to express how fortunate I feel to be in a position to give back to Camp Joslin, particularly given how much it has provided for and supported me over my last eleven years as a camper, CIT, and staff member. As a child who was diagnosed with diabetes at the age of nine in a town with few other kids like him, Camp Joslin really helped provide me a sense of normalcy that I needed after feeling so alienated following my diagnosis. Camp helped me develop a greater sense of self and form an identity that I could be proud of.

Just as our campers are going through this program, I too once had the same training. There are some differences, which I will discuss later, but the gist of the program is the same. The CITs are taught every aspect of what is expected of staff members, as well as trained on the nuanced aspects of working with children with diabetes. They go through numerous education sessions throughout the first two weeks of their four-week program, after which point they are placed with cabins to gain practical experience working with the campers. I try to use my experience in the program as a resource to help me remember the difficult and positive moments that I went through. In doing so, I feel I am better able to empathize with the CITs as well as maintain realistic, albeit high, expectations of them, which I hope they will begin to hold themselves to.

One way, and arguably the most important way in my opinion, the CIT program has changed in the last few years is that there is a much greater focus on the universal nature of the lessons CITs learn as they progress through the curriculum. The hope is that even if a prospective staff member is unable to return, they still should be able to walk away from the program saying that they learned something practical and helpful toward their development as human beings. I particularly appreciate this aspect of the job because it translates really well into my future occupation, a high school English teacher. As a teacher, I will have to be able to not only instruct my students in reading and writing, but also educate them on how to navigate their future and assist them in becoming better, more prepared people. Helping these young men progress has been a passion of mine for years and getting to do so in this setting is all the more meaningful for me.

However, the job is not without its challenges. Working with a group of sixteen-year-old boys can be mentally and physically taxing, especially when they are separated from their phones, their friends, and their families for an extended amount of time. On top of that, they hold a very unique place in camp in that they exist somewhere in between campers and staff, resulting in a particular set of rules and expectations that can be confusing at times.

These challenges are nothing compared to the rewarding experience of the job though. Getting to see these young men grow and learn is something that I would not trade for the world. Every day they find a new way to surprise me, and oftentimes confound me, but I love them all the same. I learn as much, if not more, from our CITs than they could ever learn from me. Their motivation, determination, energy, and passion are an inspiration to me, and I am so excited to see how they continue to develop in the coming years both as staff and as people.

Being in charge of shaping the future of camp is a daunting task, but also an exciting one. I relish the opportunity to help these kids as well as set camp up for success for years to come. I may never know how successful I am at my job, as our CITs will continue to grow and develop long after I am gone, but I don’t worry about that. All I can do is charge forward each day with the same vigor and zest for life that our kids do--after all, they are doing it because I told them to.
Day Camp

The Barton Center kicked off the 2018 Day Camp programs with Rainbow Club Day Camp in Greenwich, CT, and what a way to kick it off! The energy level provided by the counselors from the first day to the last was infectious for the kids. The campers participated in many fun games including gaga, rocks, and Dr. Dodgeball. Every day we had a water activity. We played slip slide kick ball, had water relay races, and even had a shaving cream fight. The atmosphere that the counselors helped to create allowed campers to make new friends and gain some confidence with their diabetes management. One camper parent wrote that her daughter “made a pump for her stuffed animal and asked me to take a picture of it and send it to all her Rainbow friends.” That is what camp is all about!

Back at our Worcester Day Camp program, campers had lots of fun playing games that everyone loved. We played games such as Dr. Dodgeball, gaga and rocks. They enjoyed swimming and water activities including boating and also did a lot of fun arts and crafts projects. We tie dyed shirts, painted cubbies, and made awesome scratch art. The campers also spent a day at our Camp Joslin site enjoying a wide variety of activities including wiffle ball on our newly revamped fields. All of our campers and their families had so much fun at our family picnic on Friday where all campers received awards at our closing ceremony. When talking about camp, a parent commented, “My daughter loves reconnecting with friends from past years, making different crafts, and especially loves the movie sleepover night!”

Next we traveled to our Danvers Day Camp program where our enthusiastic group of campers had a blast despite some rainy weather during the week which brought some games indoors. Campers enjoyed gaga, rocks, capture the flag, and one of their favorite games, Army Rangers. The campers and staff split into two teams for Army Rangers. One team hides and the other seeks. The fun part about this game is that the hiding team provides three clues as to where they are hiding. However, one of these clues will be a lie and the seeking team will have to determine which clue is false in order to find out where they are hiding. Another popular game we played is Sardines, where one person hides and the rest of the campers try to find the person. Once the hiding person is found, the seeking campers hide with them until the remainder of the camp finds them. The campers also enjoyed the swimming pool on sunny afternoons. One parent said, “My daughter is very excited to attend next year, we as a family were very happy at how well this camp was run and how comfortable my daughter felt because she was with other kids that shared the same diagnosis.”

Our last stop this summer was at our Long Island Day Camp program for two weeks where campers saw an array of activities, with a few special days happening within the program. Campers at Week 1 participated in our Color Wars event, with the Blue team taking on the Red team. Throughout the day, teams of campers worked together to take their team to the top through various activities. Some of the events included a dodgeball game, drip drip drop (our aquatic spin on duck duck goose), and the ever sought after shaving cream battle. All in all, all campers had a fantastic time competing in the Color Wars games, and in the end, the large amount of fun that everyone had well outweighed the idea that one team would come out on top. Color Wars day was a successful blast, and campers had the opportunity to take part in some special camp activities. The fun continued during Week 2 with themed days that included tie dye day, America day, and water day. The week also included plenty of swimming, gaga, and a game of cities. In addition to having lots of fun, campers learn more about diabetes as one parent noted about her daughter, “She spoke about nutrition, carbs, proteins, and sugars. They taught her how to give herself insulin. This empowered her. She’s a pro!”

This summer has been wonderful at each day camp location. The campers, CITs and staff had a great time as we combined fun activities with diabetes education. We look forward to seeing everyone again next summer or perhaps sooner at one of our Fall, Winter, Spring programs!
Vermont Overnight Camp

The Barton Center ran another very successful weeklong overnight camp in South Hero, Vermont. The camp was once again held at Camp Ta-Kum-Ta. We welcomed a lot of returning campers as well as new campers. They were all able to build lasting friendships through group activities and education sessions. There is truly no better feeling as a staff member than seeing campers come back year after year. They show up with huge smiles and a lot of excitement. Many of the kids even say that this is the best week of their whole summer. The campers and staff had an outstanding time as they played camp classic games such as capture the flag, cities, and gaga. Of course, we can’t forget all of the fun that the campers had in the salt water pool. Each day the kids were playing games like Marco Polo, tag, and even having contests to see who could do the coolest jumps and tricks into the pool.

On Tuesday night, the campers and staff held a dance in the barn where everyone was able to relax and hang out with their friends to just let loose. The campers danced like crazy to some of the camp classics like “Cupid Shuffle” and “Wonderwall.” The camp dance is always a favorite, especially with some of the older teenage campers.

Camp isn’t all about fun, high intensity games, however. The campers also participated in activities to learn more about themselves and their diabetes. They played games that included nutritional information and other diabetes-related subjects. The kids were able to get engaged and learn more about themselves as well as each other through many of these programs.

On the last night, the campers and staff spent time in the chapel on the camp property. The staff gave individualized awards to each camper, some funny, some serious. At the chapel, the kids also got to announce to the group any “firsts” that they had. A “first” is anything diabetes related that a camper or staff member has done for the first time. Some examples may be putting a new infusion set in, drawing up or giving their own injection, or simply checking their glucose level in a new spot for the first time. The campers went up one by one to ring the bell and explain their first. The rest of the camp cheered for them as they did so. After our time in the chapel, many campers and staff spent time just hanging out outside of the cabins, looking up at the stars, and talking about their experience at camp.

Overall, it was a fun-filled week in Vermont, and the campers all had an amazing time. When the kids were given surveys at the end of the program some of the responses were pretty powerful and moving. Some of these quotes include things like, “Camp is my happy place. I love coming here each year and feeling just like everyone else.” Another quote stated, “This was my first time at the camp, but I already love it and have made so many friends. I cannot wait to come back next summer.” It is statements like these that truly show how much of an impact camp and the programs that we run can have on a child and their outlook on diabetes.

Family Camp 2018

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For more information, please visit www.bartoncenter.org.

**NOVEMBER WACKY WEEKEND**  
November 16-18, 2018  
Coed, Ages 6-16  
Come for a weekend of exciting new games and activities! Ever hear of FIFANBA? How about Alaskan baseball? These interesting and new games will accompany traditional camp activities like gaga and capture the flag. If snow falls, you can bet we’ll be trying to build the biggest snowman camp has ever seen! You may bring one friend or sibling without diabetes to this program!

**WINTER CAMP**  
December 27-30, 2018  
Coed, Ages 13-17  
Teensage campers come to learn more about themselves and their diabetes, all while having a winter blast of fun! Under the guidance of our health care team, campers will take on a more involved role in their self-diabetes care, including charting blood sugars and calculating insulin doses. Campers will be immersed in winter-themed games as well as discussions of topics related to teens and diabetes. A past participant said, “It’s a stress-free, judgment-free zone to meet new people and learn about yourself.”

**FEBRUARY WACKY WEEKEND**  
February 15-17, 2019  
Coed, Ages 6-16  
Who’s ready for a weekend full of fun, education, and most importantly hanging out with others living with type 1 diabetes? With the addition of new games last year, and even newer games this year, we are ready to have the time of our lives. We also typically have a lot of fun outside building snowmen and sledding at this program. One of our campers last year commented that their favorite part about this program was, “All the new friends I get to meet.” You may bring one friend or sibling without diabetes to this fun weekend.

**CAREGIVERS WEEKEND**  
March 8-10, 2019  
Coed, All Ages  
Caring for a family member with type 1 diabetes can be challenging, especially when that family member is a young child. This weekend helps parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and others overcome those challenges through warm and embracing education. Come along with the child to learn the basics of type 1 diabetes care and engage in fun recreational activities together with many families working to enhance their knowledge.

**SPRINGTIME FAMILY CAMP**  
April 26-28, 2019  
Coed, All Ages  
Here at Barton, camp is a family affair! Join us for a weekend of family-oriented games, learning activities, and even a little education. Everyone gets the chance to be a camper while we take care of all the planning and cooking! Now Dad can put his art project on the fridge, and Mom can shred competition during ultimate Frisbee. All of this while getting the chance to meet other parents of children with T1D. When asked what her favorite part of this program was, a mom from last year told us, “Meeting other parents, a weekend of no cooking, and seeing other technology.”

**BARTON OPEN HOUSE**  
April 28, 2019  
2 p.m. to 4 p.m.  
Coed, All Ages  
Are you thinking about sending your child to summer camp, but you want to get a sense of what camp is like before you decide? This is your opportunity to come see what Barton summer camp programs are all about: get to see where your child will be sleeping, eating, and playing while at camp!

**Annual Auction**  
October 27, 2018 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.  
Please join us at the Penta Dining Hall at Camp Joslin in Charlton for our annual auction hosted by Clara Barton Camp and Camp Joslin alumni. The evening will feature both silent and live auctions, appetizers, dinner, and desserts. For more information, tickets, or for sponsorship opportunities, please call 508-987-2056, Ext. 2003 or email events@bartoncenter.org.

**The Apple Run/Walk for Diabetes**  
November 3, 2018 9:30 a.m. walkers 10 a.m. runners  
This five-mile road race/walk begins and ends at the Brookfield Apple Orchard, 12 Lincoln Road, North Brookfield, MA. The event is hosted by the Lions Club of the Brookfields and The North Brookfield Youth Center. Cash prizes will be awarded to overall 1st and 2nd place male and female finishers, and there will be other prizes for top finishers in each age category. All proceeds will benefit Clara Barton Camp and the Diabetes Research Team at UMass. To register or for more information, please email Jim Buzzell at buzzelljim@yahoo.com or call Jim at 508-344-4141. To register online, please go to http://running4free.com/RaceDetails.aspx?raceid=111.

**Annual St. Patrick’s Road Race/Walk**  
After 18 years of St. Patrick’s Road Race fun, we have exciting news to share. We have decided to amp up the event and turn it into a “Walk for Barton.” The walk will take place in September, the first one being September 2019 to ensure we have enough time to properly plan. For those of you who fundraise for camperships at the event, have no fear! We are hosting a March Madness Camp Clean-Up Day which you can collect pledges for your campership fee. See below for more information.

**March Madness Camp Clean-Up Day**  
March 16, 2019 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
Coed, All Ages  
We will be hosting a Camp Clean-Up Day at Clara Barton Camp and Camp Joslin. Come spruce up camp and get ready for the summer. This is a great opportunity for campers to raise money for their camp fee by collecting pledges for their hours worked! More information will be available soon on our website.

**Clara Barton Camp Alumni Day**  
Summer 2019—Date to be determined  
We will post the date on our website as soon as it is available. Join the fun and catch up with camp friends at Clara Barton Camp. Family and friends are welcome. The day will include tours, lunch, and an activity with the campers. There will be an alumni day at Camp Joslin in 2020.

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