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A letter from the Board of Directors of Hope For Kids to our Families and Participants – January 2023


To all our participant families, staff, amazing volunteers, and everyone who makes up this incredible multi-generational faith community,

At the start of the New Year, the Board of Directors of Hope For Kids (HFK) wanted to take an opportunity to inform and update you all on how we are planning, praying, and programming to make this summer the best summer ever for each person that sets foot at The Forge this year. In particular, in response to the allegations of abuse levied against two of our partner organizations, we want you all to understand how we are striving to continue to ensure that HFK is a safe and encouraging place for all, especially our campers.

Exodus 34:6-7 reads: “And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “**The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God**, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished...”

In this scripture we see God’s character displayed for Moses and for us. The first characteristic is **compassion**. In the research world, **compassion** is defined as noticing suffering and feeling the motivation to alleviate that suffering, and it is always accompanied by action. At HFK, we feel intense compassion for survivors of abuse, we pray for the healing of the victims of abuse, justice to be served, and continued protection for the vulnerable. We are a faith community that strives to create a culture of accountability, transparency, and encouragement for all.

As parents and grandparents, the HFK Board of Directors knows that when you send your child or to the HFK property, you are entrusting us with one of the most important things in your life – your family. We work every day to be worthy of that trust through proper vetting and training of our volunteers and staff, proper accountability and reporting processes, and diligent enforcement of our safety policies. The current standard for safety practices that HFK has maintained through the years continues to uphold what is set forth as best practice, however, the compassion that we feel for survivors of abuse is motivating us



to redouble our efforts and assess ways in which we can create an even more safe and spiritual environment for each member of our community. Please know that we continually evaluate policies and practices to ensure that we are not only compliant with Pennsylvania law, but that we are above reproach in how we care for your children.

If you are interested in participating in committees that review our policies and practices, we would be happy to hear from you. In particular, those who have a background in education, youth programming, and human resources are invited to reach out. You can put your name forward for involvement by emailing Maria Anies, our Director of Operations at Maria.Anies@HopeforKids.Org.

We look forward to having the best summer ever at Hope for Kids and hope to see you and your family in person during our camp season.

Sincerely,

Jeff Arias,
Chairman, HFK Board of Directors

