

# 86% of Parents Say Camp Transforms Their Child - kiDay Reports What It Witnessed in 2026 Camp Season

*86% of parents say camp builds confidence. After 20 years placing children in camps worldwide, kiDay founder Lucie Straková shares what she saw this summer.*

PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC, August 13, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- For the past two months, Lucie Straková has been watching children leave.

She does this every summer. As founder of [kiDay](https://www.kiday.eu), an international youth program connecting families across Europe and North America with carefully selected summer camp experiences, she has spent two decades facilitating the moment a child boards a plane to somewhere new - and then waiting to hear what happens when they come back.

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*Lucie Strakova, kiDay.eu*

This summer, the pattern held.

"The worry parents have before a child leaves for an international camp is almost always the wrong shape," says Straková. "They worry about whether the child will be safe, whether the language will be a barrier, whether they will make friends. Those things resolve within the first few days. What parents are not prepared for is who comes off the plane in August."



The data from the broader industry confirms what Straková observes across kiDay placements. A 2024 American Camp Association survey found that 86% of parents reported their child developed greater self-confidence after attending camp. Seventy percent of campers report improved social skills. Research aggregated in the Rustic Pathways 2026 Summer Camp Research Report found that 60% of alumni report lasting improvements in independence,

teamwork, and leadership - not just for the summer, but in the months that follow.

For kiDay children, who attend camps in the United States, Italy, Switzerland, UK, Austria, Portugal and across Europe, the outcomes carry an additional dimension that Straková considers central to kiDay's mission: language.

"We don't send children to international camps to learn English," she says. "We send them to places where English is simply the language of lunch, of the argument about whose turn it is on the climbing wall, of the friendships formed at midnight. By the end of a two-week session, the language has stopped being a school subject and started being a tool. That shift does not happen in a classroom. It happens when something genuinely matters to the child in that moment."

kiDay this summer facilitated placements for children from 9 different countries attending residential programs across North America, alongside European programs for international families seeking quality camp experiences in a culturally rich, safe setting. Demand for cross-continental placement has continued to grow: industry data shows that 10% of U.S. campers now attend camp outside the country, with 25% of those attending programs in Europe.

The picture kiDay sees every August is consistent across years, ages, and nationalities. "They are quieter than you expect at first," says Straková. "They need a day or two to land and rest. And then you start to hear it - the stories, the friends, the things they figured out on their own. Parents tell me the same thing every year: 'She's different.' Not in a way they can fully explain.



Logo kiDay



Lucie Strakova - international youth development expert

Just more solid."

Straková also works year-round with children and young people as a child and teen coach at [kidscoach.cz](https://kidscoach.cz), and says the international camp experience frequently surfaces in her coaching sessions long after summer has ended. "Children come to me in October who attended camp in July," she says. "Something shifted for them over the summer that they are still working out how to carry - a confidence, a sense that they managed something genuinely hard on their own. That is exactly what coaching helps them build on."

Applications for kiDay's 2027 summer season open in autumn 2026.

#### About kiDay

kiDay is an international youth program connecting families across Europe and North America with selected summer camp experiences. Founded by Lucie Straková - a member of the American Camp Association with over twenty years of experience in international youth programs - kiDay provides full-service placement support, preparation, and follow-up for children and families. kiDay's foundation fund supports access to international experiences for children who would not otherwise be able to attend.

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