# A Summer Beyond the Diagnosis: Miracles for Kids Celebrates 15th Annual Surf & Paddle Summer Camp

*Three fun-filled water events gave critically-ill children a chance to simply be kids*



Families about to board the outrigger and head out to an inflatable obstacle course courtesy of Newport Aquatic Center

IRVINE, CA, UNITED STATES, September 30, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Miracles for Kids wrapped up its 15th Annual Surf & Paddle Summer Camp after three memorable events that brought critically-ill children and their families out of hospital rooms and treatment centers and onto the sand and water for a summer filled with paddling, surfing, laughter and connection.

Part of Miracles for Kids' Balance Program, Surf & Paddle Summer Camp is designed to give critically-ill children and their siblings opportunities to step away from the realities of treatment and experience the joys of childhood together.

> Surf & Paddle Summer Camp gives our families a chance to experience something new together and create joyful memories that have nothing to do with an illness or diagnosis."
>
> *Autumn Strier, Co-Founder and CEO of Miracles for Kids*

The annual summer tradition began in August with a learn-to-paddle day at Newport Aquatic Center, followed by two surf days - one in August at Huntington Beach and the second in September at Newport Beach. For families navigating the emotional and financial realities of childhood critical illness, the summer series offered something that can be difficult to find amid treatment schedules and hospital appointments: the opportunity to simply play and be kids.

Throughout the three sessions, Miracle families took to the water for paddling, surfing and bodyboarding, while also

enjoying beach games, family activities, sand castle building and time together along the Southern California coast.

The summer series culminated on September 12 with a final surf session, where children even received a harbor boat water salute while enjoying the ocean alongside volunteer instructors and community supporters.



Learning to surf with the help of Corky Carroll's Surf School instructor



Standing up on a surf board for the first time thanks to Endless Sun Surf School and Waves of Impact instructors

"For families caring for a critically-ill child, so much of life can revolve around treatments, appointments and uncertainty," said Autumn Strier, Co-Founder and CEO of Miracles for Kids. "Surf & Paddle Summer Camp gives our families a chance to leave some of that behind for a few hours, experience something new together and create joyful memories that have nothing to do with an illness or diagnosis."

Surf instruction was provided by Endless Sun Surf School, Waves of Impact, and Corky Carroll's Surf School helping children safely experience the excitement of surfing. Volunteers from National Charity League, Inc. also supported families throughout the program, both in the water and on the sand.

The 15th Annual Surf & Paddle Summer Camp was underwritten by Toyota of Huntington Beach and Swift Slip Dock and Pier Builders, Inc., helping Miracles for Kids bring its Balance programming to families throughout the summer.

Additional community partners included Sun Bum, which donated sunscreen to help keep families protected; Perricone Farms, which provided refreshing juices; and Jersey Mikes, Avilas El Ranchito, and Fresh Brothers, which provided lunch after a day on the water.

From first paddle strokes to first surf sessions, the three-event series created memories that extended far beyond a traditional day at the beach. For children whose summers can often be shaped by medical care, Surf & Paddle Camp offered adventure, confidence and play! For

parents and siblings, the opportunity to spend meaningful time together as a family was priceless.

Surf & Paddle Camp is one of the experiences offered through Miracles for Kids' Balance Program, which supports the emotional well-being of families facing a child's life-threatening illness through programs that foster connection, community and opportunities to cope with the stresses surrounding critical illness.

Learn more about the Balance Program and Surf & Paddle Camp at https://miraclesforkids.org/how-we-help-2/heal/.

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ABOUT MIRACLES FOR KIDS: Miracles for Kids is a non-profit serving children with life-threatening illnesses and the families that care for them. Founded in 2004 by Co-Founder & CEO, Autumn Strier, the organization creates stability for families that are crumbling from the financial and emotional devastation of fighting for their child's life. With programs providing financial aid, basic needs, housing, and wellness to patients and their families, Miracles for Kids fulfills a mission to help caregivers battle bankruptcy, homelessness, hunger, and depression, so they can concentrate on what matters most. In 2025, 82 cents of every dollar collected was spent on programs that directly benefit the families they serve. Based in Orange County, California, Miracles for Kids currently serves families in treatment at CHOC Children's, Children's Hospital Los Angeles, UCLA Mattel Children's Hospital, Rady Children's, UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital, By the Bay Health, City of Hope, Loma Linda University Hospital, Phoenix Children's Hospitals. Follow on Instagram @MiraclesForKids to see how you can make a difference and get involved at MiraclesForKids.org.

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