

YOUR IMPACT

UNITED WAY OF PICKENS COUNTY NEWSLETTER | DECEMBER 2019



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United Way
of Pickens County

**BREAKING
NEWS!**

CAMP iROCK



The results are in—your investment in children through Camp iRock is working.

The SC Department of Education 2019 report card for Pickens County is exciting! Our 3rd grade reading levels have increased almost 20% in just two years. That is a huge increase and proves that Camp iRock is making a difference.

The news just gets better. Overall, children attending South Carolina summer reading camps grew 66% in 6 weeks, while Camp iRock children grew over 78%! How amazing is THAT!

Here is more great news! Last year, there were more Camp iRock spots available for K5, 1st and 2nd graders because the number of 3rd graders that needed intervention dropped by almost half.

While the numbers are impressive, Camp iRock is so much more than just reading

scores. It's the way the children feel about themselves and how well they do when they return to school in the fall. Principals tell us that they can easily tell which children attended Camp iRock because of the tremendous increase in their confidence and self-esteem.

These results demonstrate that your support of intensive literacy intervention programs like Camp iRock are changing the trajectory of children's lives forever. Since Camp iRock started in 2015, you have changed the lives of more than 1,200 children. Because of you, they have an amazing future.

Today, for the first time, a child woke up excited to go to school. They have you to thank.

WORKS!



MADELYN'S STORY

Madelyn was always a child who struggled and couldn't focus. Kindergarten was hard for her. After Christmas break when Madelyn's teacher suggested she might have to repeat kindergarten, her mother agreed. It was so hard to get Madelyn to read at home. Every day was a battle.

Thankfully, you understood the need for early intervention and made it possible for Madelyn and other struggling kindergarteners to attend Camp iRock at all three sites last summer.

On the first day of Camp iRock, Madelyn arrived at West End Elementary School, her first time at a different school.

"Madelyn was a very nervous student", said her teacher, Mrs. Wilson. "She didn't know what to expect. It took a while for Madelyn

to settle in, but once she did, she thrived.

Madelyn loved Camp iRock. Her mom, Heather, was thrilled!

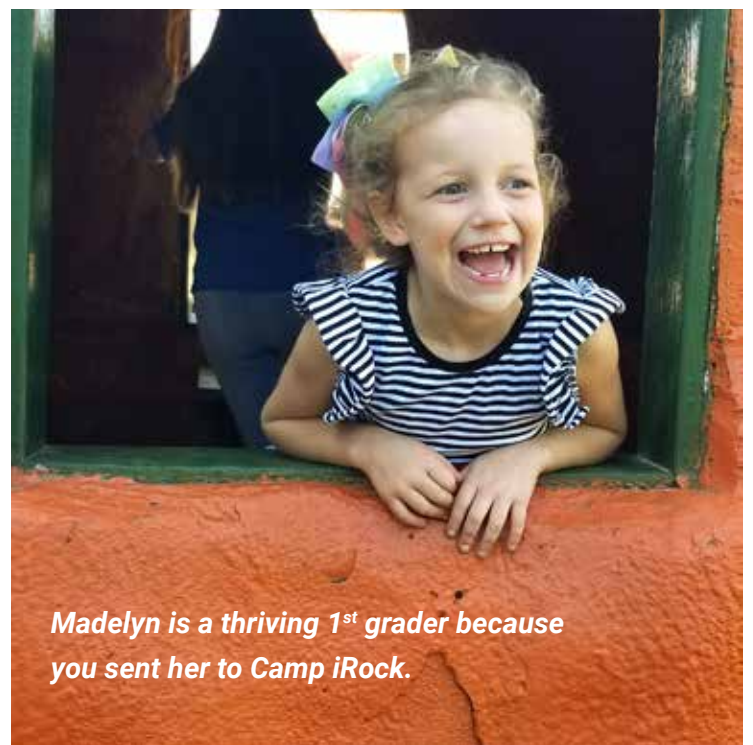
"I didn't have to fight her to get ready. She got herself dressed and was excited about Camp iRock every single day," said Heather. "She loved the YMCA counselors and is still chanting the Camp iRock cheers."

Camp iRock gave Madelyn the confidence and the reading boost she needed. Best of all, she moved up a level and did not need to repeat kindergarten! She is currently a thriving 1st grader.

When asked for her feelings about Camp iRock, Mrs. Wilson choked back tears.

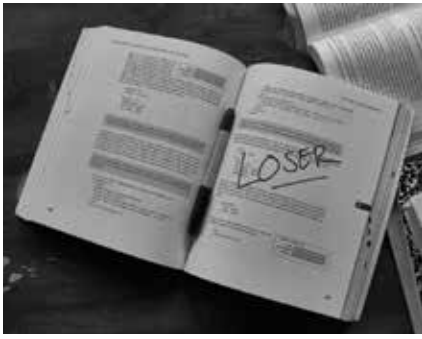
"I watched these kids grow so much. They just needed somebody to love on them; to give them the extra boost to do well."

Our first inaugural class of full time K5 was a tremendous success. You truly made a difference in their lives. You made a difference for Madelyn.



Madelyn is a thriving 1st grader because you sent her to Camp iRock.

THE REALITY OF ILLITERACY



Children who can't read on grade level by 3rd grade face a dismal future.

Today, Levi woke up with an awful feeling in the pit of his stomach. He goes to school every day feeling stupid and embarrassed because he can't read. He is only 8 and already he feels hopeless. **If something does not change for Levi, his future will unravel.**

Research proves it. If a child doesn't read at grade level by 3rd grade, it is nearly impossible for him to catch up. Chances are he will not graduate on time or find a good job. Those feelings of worthlessness and hopelessness that he felt as a child will stay with him into adulthood.

This is why your support of intensive literacy programs like Camp iRock is critically important. Yes, our 3rd grade reading levels are improving, **but hundreds of children are still struggling every day.** Without the foundation of literacy, a child's future hangs in the wings.

You can provide the intervention he needs and change his future forever.

WE NEED YOU FOR SOMETHING BIG

3rd grade reading levels predict nearly every societal problem you can imagine. Reading on grade level is so critical to our community's future that United Way of Pickens County has set a bold goal of ensuring that at least 70% of Pickens County 3rd graders will read at grade level by 2025. We know this is achievable because you have proven that you are willing to invest in programs that work. Camp iRock is one of those programs that work. **Will you make sure that one struggling reader is able to benefit from the Camp iRock experience next summer?**

YES, I will support a struggling reader at Camp iRock next summer!

- \$27 One child's home library of their favorite books
- \$52 One magical day of Camp iRock for one child
- \$260 One spectacular week of Camp iRock for one child
- \$520 Two amazing weeks of Camp iRock for one child
- \$2,080 A full life-changing summer at Camp iRock for one child
- \$ _____ Other special gift to support a struggling reader



Your gift helps struggling readers thrive!

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