

## Introduction

- Camp Ho'omana was developed through a collaboration between Hawai'i Pacific University's Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD) program and the Shriners Children's Hawai'i to address a long-recognized need for accessible, culturally grounded, and community-based programming for children with upper limb differences and their families (Williams et. al., 2025).
- Children with congenital upper limb differences (CULD) often experience reduced representation, social stigma, and limited access to inclusive childhood occupations such as camp participation.
- Therapeutic camps designed specifically for children with limb differences have been shown to enhance self-esteem, functional independence, and psychosocial well-being through adaptive play and peer connection (Lake et al., 2015, Williams et al., 2025).
- Camp Ho'omana serves as a novel learning environment for entry-level OTD students, allowing them to apply clinical reasoning, cultural humility, and occupation-centered intervention planning in a real-world community-based context.
- There is a need to determine the impact of Camp Ho'omana for OT students, children, and families.

## Project Description

- The one-day Camp Ho'omana was themed, "Mauka to Makai" - grounded in Hawai'i's cultural landscape, the camp incorporated activity stations representing the mountain-to-sea journey.
- Children engaged in adaptive sports, creative fine motor projects, group-based play, and collaborative challenges that reflected the Mauka to Makai theme.
- Families participated in a facilitated Parent Empowerment Activity led by a Shriner's social work and OT students, creating space to share lived experiences and to explore strategies for supporting their child's independent engagement in functional everyday tasks.
- HPU OTD students served as camp counselors, designing inclusive, occupation-centered activities that promoted occupational balance, supported diverse ability levels, and fostered meaningful engagement across ages.

## Purpose/Aims

The purpose of this project was to examine the impact of Camp Ho'omana on two key groups:

- 1. Entry-level OTD students**, by evaluating how participation in planning and facilitating a culturally grounded, community-based camp influenced their clinical reasoning, cultural responsiveness, and understanding of family-centered pediatric practice.
- 2. Children with upper limb differences and their families**, by exploring how the camp supported representation, confidence, social connection, and engagement in meaningful occupations, as well as how it strengthened caregiver support and advocacy.

## Methods

Participants	First year OT students, children with upper limb difference and their families
Design	Mix methods (qualitative and quantitative)
Data collection	Google forms survey & individual parent interviews
Data analysis	Descriptive statistics and thematic content analysis

## Results/Outcomes

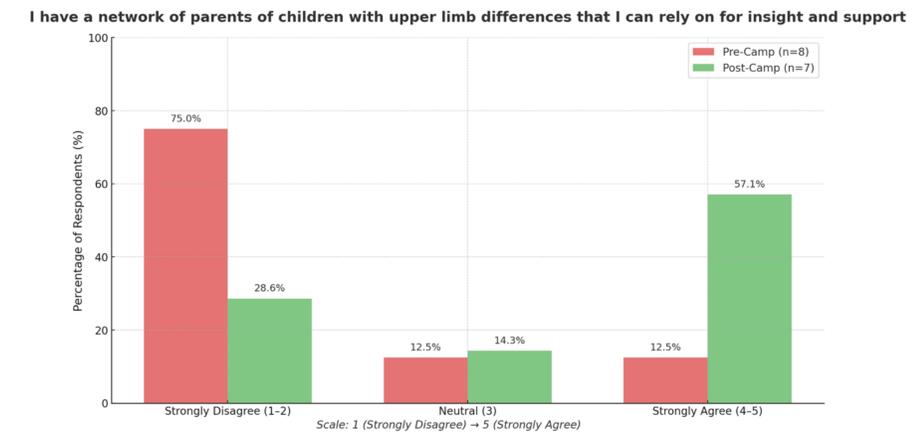
### 2025 Camp Participants:

- 33 OT students
- 8 Children
- 10 parents

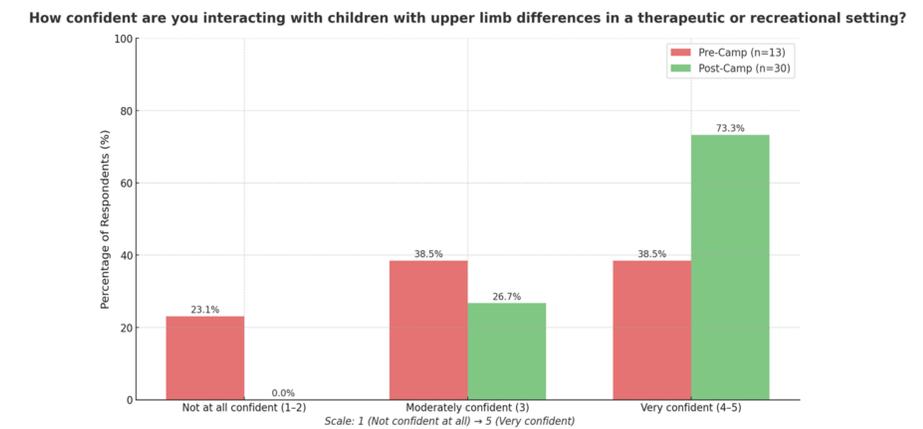
Parents reported **improved ease in all seven measured categories** related to their **children's functional engagement** one week after attending Camp Ho'omana. This suggests that the psychosocial benefits of camp translate into **increased self-efficacy** and openness to attempting difficult tasks following peer modeling.



**Figure 1. Impact of Camp on Families**



**Figure 2. Impact of Camp on Entry-Level OTD Students**



**Table 1. Impact of Camp on Families and Children Thematic Analysis**

Themes	Quotes
Community	"Parent hour was great for shy parents and gentle way of encouraging them to share... [the structure of parent hour] is a formalized way to air it out." - parent
Belonging	"Enzo also really admires getting to see the same keiki and building upon the connections he is able to make within his own community." - parent "I am not alone" – child
Confidence	"I learned to make activities more accessible or more welcoming to those with any kind of difference. The possibilities are endless." - HPU student

## Discussion

### The 2025 Camp Ho'omana:

- Promoted empowerment and functional engagement for children with upper limb differences
- Strengthened caregiver connection and support
- Provided impactful experiential learning for OT students

**Future Directions:** There are opportunities to increase stakeholder and community-based partnerships, obtaining grant funding to increased access for outer-island families, development of teen and overnight programs.

## References

