



**Our Mission:**  
*To connect, empower and transform kids with Type 1 Diabetes.*

## FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN 2021 – 2025

### Table of Contents

Mission & Vision .....	1
Core Values .....	1
Critical Success Factors .....	2
Barriers to Success .....	2
SWOT Analysis .....	3
Historical Perspective .....	3-4
Camp .....	4-6
Board, Volunteer, and Staff Development .....	6-7
Marketing .....	8
Fund Development / Fundraising .....	8-10
Annual Programming .....	10
Additional Programming Opportunities .....	10

### MISSION

The mission of Camp Sweet Life is to connect, empower and transform kids with Type 1 Diabetes. Camp Sweet Life goal is to give children with diabetes life-changing experiences, empowering them to take control of their journey with diabetes.

### VISION

Our vision is to continue its growth into a sustainable organization that can fulfill its mission by serving children and young adults with Type 1 diabetes and provide its mission and programs in Minnesota and surrounding areas.

### Core Values: P.R.I.D.E.

- **Passion:** An intense or overpowering emotion for the cause
- **Relationships:** Collaborators and Partners working with Staff, Family, and Campers to deliver a great camping experience.
- **Integrity:** Steadfastly adhering to high moral principles, safety, and professional standards.
- **Dedication:** The quality of being devoted or committed to something.
- **Empowerment:** Providing campers and families with the tools, self-confidence, and attitude to take control of their journey with diabetes.

### Critical Success Factors

1. Have goals with measurement and accountability.
2. Volunteer Development
  - a. Well-defined roles for volunteers
  - b. New energy and skills for volunteers
  - c. More involvement and renewed enthusiasm

- d. Sharing of duties
3. Camp Sweet Life Board Development
  - a. Well-defined roles for board members
  - b. New energy and skills on the board
  - c. More involvement and renewed enthusiasm
  - d. Sharing of duties
4. Better overall communication
  - a. Focus on individual idea generation from board members: strategic ideas and direction.
  - b. Utilize Camp Sweet Life communication tools: google drive, board roster, board group email.
  - c. Maintain “open door” communication between Executive Director and board members.
5. Reach more children and families.
6. Successful camp programming
  - a. Camp strategy on growth and development (in writing – plan).
  - b. Reach Camp Sweet Life max capacity according to growth plan.
  - c. Exhaustive staff (counselor/medical) recruiting places.

#### **Potential Barriers to Success**

1. Board issues
  - a. Burnout Lack of timeliness
  - b. Cynicism
  - c. Disorganization
  - d. Lack of participation
  - e. Lack of commitment
2. Lack of organization
  - a. Insufficient plans and processes
  - b. Repeating past processes
3. Lack of availability with Camp Courage
4. Absence of communication with all stakeholders
5. Lack of volunteer/staff appreciation
6. Lack of funding
7. Changes in regulation

#### **SWOT Analysis**

- **Strengths**
  - Passionate, caring staff and board members
  - Lions Clubs and other donors and their connection to the cause
  - The cause we serve – Our mission.
  - Evidence camp does have a measurable impact.
  - Provide actual services to target audience, as many competing entities are fundraising for a cure.



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- **Weaknesses**
  - Communication
  - Inexperienced board members lacking leadership, training, and succession planning.
  - Non-strategic, operationally focused board of directors.
  - Lack of delegation, lack of depth of “doers,” assumption of duties.
  - Lack strategy and aligned yearly work plan.
- **Opportunities**
  - Financial stability, donor development, show appreciation to donors.
  - Continued growth of executive director and staff.
  - Addition of grant-writer and camp director.
  - Training development for staff, board, and volunteers.
  - Further develop existing board with new board members and more business involvement.
  - Technology development plan
- **Threats**
  - Finances
  - Expansion of service will require significant scaling of operation.
  - Availability, quality, staffing, business model threat.
  - Industry changes.
  - Over-commitment of kids during summer, weekends, and general appeal of traditional summer camps versus niche camps.
  - Lawsuits

### **Historical Perspective**

Camp Sweet Life Adventures, Inc (CSL) is a non-profit organization which was incorporated as a 501c3 non-profit back in 2010. CSL was organized to provide youth and young adults and families with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) in Minnesota and surrounding states an opportunity to connect with other kids and families with T1D, learn how to take better care of themselves, and have loads of fun in a carefree summer camp environment. CSL organizers originally met only to plan a camp, but after the first camp in 2010 they realized the needs of the community and possibilities for improving the lives of kids with T1D were so much greater!

The mission of the organization is to connect, empower, and transform kids with Type 1 Diabetes and their families by providing fun opportunities for learning, connecting, and sharing. CSL achieves this by facilitating a sense of community for children and families with T1D. Summer camp and other seasonal outings (we call them CSL Connects) have the primary focus of encouraging fun and establishing social connections. It is the belief of the organization that T1D affects many aspects of a child’s life, from the way they eat and sleep to the way they learn and plan. Since the family of a child with T1D is also greatly affected by the round-the-clock care required by a chronic health condition, our events focus on including activities and informal education for caregivers and family members as well. Our organization’s purpose is to provide safe, medically supervised outings so that children can experience camp, outdoor fun, and social activities just like any other child.



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CSL activities include camp, seasonal activities, youth development, parental development and other community activities that are run by a volunteer Board of Directors and two very part-time staff members. All the work is done by volunteers who are very passionate about providing these opportunities for children with T1D. Camp Sweet Life is the only diabetes camp in Minnesota, and we service families from IA, MN, ND, SD, and WI and have had campers come from as far as NY!

Being diagnosed with a chronic health condition can be very expensive and one of the goals of CSL is to provide experiences that are not a financial hardship for the entire family. CSL has been able to keep the cost of camp down by earning money with fundraisers, including our Glow Run, Sweet Ride (Motorcycle Ride), Strike Out Type 1 Diabetes, obtaining grants, business donations, and personal donations.

**Note:** Due to Covid-19 in person activities (including Camp) were suspended in 2020. However, we did hold virtual camp sessions, our Glow Run (virtual) and an online silent auction with the Glow Run. Plus, in November we held our 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Strike Out Type 1 Diabetes Event (virtual).

### **Camp**

GOALS MUST BE S.M.A.R.T. – SPECIFIC, MEASURABLE, ATTAINABLE, REALISTIC, TIMELY

### **OVERALL GOAL**

Camp Sweet Life will offer a measurable number of camping experiences and help more children live and deal with diabetes. We will develop a scalable program and staffing plan to offer a minimum of one additional mission serving program, with 30% of children participating having never attended Camp Sweet Life's programs before.

### **METRIC**

Camp Sweet Life will achieve a 70% camper retention rate year-to-year, with an average Parent/Camper satisfaction rating of 95%, and an average overall Staff satisfaction rating of 85%.

### **Objective 1: Camper Recruitment & Engagement**

We will recruit new campers and engage old campers to create more activities throughout the year to keep families involved in camp and grow overall numbers of campers.

- Hold a weekend day family event once annually somewhere in State of MN. The family event will include regular camp activities and access to doctor/medical staff in a nonclinical environment.
- Increase engagement across and between current, past, and prospective camp families.
- Include younger children during family events (6+) to recruit for future summer camp sessions.
- Research and implement program or event for campers transitioning to college/workforce.
- Utilize the High School Diabetes Network and College Diabetes Network as a basis for connecting with and creating the program.
- Program activities will include outdoor activities with dedicated time to discuss diabetes management at this new stage in life.



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- Camper Increases: Camp Sweet Life will maintain its current Camper level of 120 overnight campers and 15 day campers and review annually. **Note: with an increase of 10 campers, we will need to increase 2 Counselors and 2 Medical Staff.**

### **Objective 2: CIT Program**

We will research and implement desired components of a Counselor-In-Training program.

- Review Camp Sweet Life past CIT program as a basis for creating a new and improved CIT program.
- Identify the pros and cons of a CIT program.
- Identify appropriate age to being CIT program (16 or 17) while taking into consideration status as a current camper.
- Outline the responsibilities of a CIT and the benefits of being a counselor.
- Gauge camper interest in a CIT program during the current session and include a few informal activities for the oldest campers.
- Look at 2021 as the earliest start date for new CIT program.
- Develop CIT manual and protocols.

### **Objective 3: Organizational Timeline**

Develop an integrated business operational and camping program operational timeline and work plan, including volunteer roles/responsibilities and alignment.

- Continually review and improve the current staff manual to successfully utilize it at camp session.
- Review and revise volunteer job descriptions as needed.
- Clearly identify and distinguish between the two camp sessions while maintaining the brand equity of the Camp Sweet Life name.
- Utilize and expand upon the existing marketing, events, and fundraising calendars to support volunteer recruitment efforts and work plans.

### **Board, Volunteer, and Staff Development**

GOALS MUST BE S.M.A.R.T. – SPECIFIC, MEASURABLE, ATTAINABLE, REALISTIC, TIMELY

### **OVERALL GOAL**

To fulfill Camp Sweet Life's mission by increasing commitment, competence, and satisfaction at all levels of the organization, particularly through developing efficient and effective recruitment, orientation, training and evaluation processes for all board, staff, and volunteers.

### **METRIC**

Build a highly trained, engaged, and functional board with a minimum of 6 members but no more than 10 board members.

### **Objective 1: Board Development**

Strengthen board leadership through recruitment, training, and development with an increased focus on accountability to improve overall organizational performance and board member satisfaction.

- Strategic board recruitment (identify key community members with a particular focus on those who have board development, fundraising, legal, HR, and volunteer development experience, who can further our mission). Build a highly trained, engaged, and functional board of no less than 6 members and no more than 10 board members.
- Develop board orientation for new members and board manual for all members to include personal involvement plan, expectations, strategic plan, committee explanations, and measurable outcomes for each board member. Measure: All board members will know what is expected of them and have clearly defined individual and committee goals.
- Find opportunities for board member training (organizational leadership, fundraising, non-profit leadership, etc.) through community research and relationships.
- Strengthen board leadership through recruitment, training, and development with an increased focus on accountability to improve overall organizational performance and board member satisfaction.
- Build a functional, effective, sustainable infrastructure with clear delineation between high-level board function and Camp week execution. Measure: The Camp Committee will be able to execute Camp week so that the Board can focus on growth, fundraising, and improving Camp development at all levels.
- Develop a positive Board culture with a focus on building relationships, team-development work, and diversity training. Measure: Board attendance at all meetings and events.
- Develop evaluation process to assess board member satisfaction and board member performance to be administered annually for each board member.
- Create board recruitment and planning calendar based on term end dates for current board members.

### **Objective 2: Volunteer Development**

We will strengthen Camp Sweet Life's volunteer program by developing volunteers who are passionate, engaged, and committed to Camp Sweet Life's mission and vision who consistently feel valued and appreciated by the organization.

- Evaluate to possible increase staff/intern to support the growth plan.
- Staff recruitment will be bolstered through an increased focused on pharmacists, increased partnerships with medical/nursing schools and colleges, more promotions at events and meetings.
- Develop an effective volunteer engagement strategy.
- Improve upon the existing volunteer training program by looking at independent, virtual, and off-site training opportunities.
- Improved focus on volunteer appreciation opportunities such as a post-camp/event annual appreciation event.



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- More focus year-round on communication with volunteers and maintaining meaningful connections with staff/intern.

### **Objective 3: Staff Development**

Develop highly trained, engaged, committed, and satisfied staff members committed to the mission and vision of Camp Sweet Life.

- Develop staff evaluation and satisfaction process to be performed annually for all staff.
- Develop positive organizational culture for staff.
- Clearly defined roles of staff, and implement succession planning for all staff positions. This includes an emergency succession plan for ED.
- Implement training process for all staff and volunteers. Provide staff with training/career development opportunities quarterly at minimum.
- Develop a training needs assessment for staff members to identify overall training needs for the coming year. Develop highly trained, engaged, committed, and satisfied staff members committed to the mission and vision of Camp Sweet Life.
- Ensure volunteer training program is developed for all camp.
- Develop job descriptions for every volunteer position.
- Research and consider future positions within organization and develop job descriptions and hiring timelines.
- Develop plan for volunteer recruitment, (Identify Chair) and train volunteers to assist in the process.

### **Marketing**

GOALS MUST BE S.M.A.R.T. – SPECIFIC, MEASURABLE, ATTAINABLE, REALISTIC, TIMELY

### **OVERALL GOAL**

To fulfill Camp Sweet Life's mission by increasing commitment, competence, and satisfaction at all levels of the organization, particularly through developing efficient and effective marketing strategy and program utilizing the tools available.

### **METRIC**

Build a highly trained, engaged, committee to constantly initiate Camp Sweet Life's Marketing Plan and goals.

### **Marketing Plan**

Develop a communications and marketing plan.

- Coordinate with Camp Committee and other committees to execute annual marketing strategies.
- Utilize the annual fundraising calendar of events to assist fundraising volunteers with marketing the fundraising event.
- Develop a communications plan for fundraising that includes all tools and touch points.
- Develop tools and messages for each campaign.



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- Work with community partners (Social Media, Press/Radio/TV, etc.) to collaboratively promote events, fundraisers, and other opportunities for engagement.

### **Fund Development / Fundraising**

GOALS MUST BE S.M.A.R.T. – SPECIFIC, MEASURABLE, ATTAINABLE, REALISTIC, TIMELY

#### **OVERALL GOAL**

Camp Sweet Life will develop and implement an annual fundraising campaign that will focus on diversifying revenue sources through individual and corporate fundraising, camper registrations, grants, foundation partnerships, and in-kind donations. All aspects of the fundraising plan must be based on building personal relationships with donors.

#### **METRIC**

\$70,000 - \$80,000 new revenue over the next 12 months; No more than 33% of operating expenses coming from a single source by 2021.

#### **Objective 1: Fundraising Plan**

Develop a fundraising plan based on building personal relationships with existing and future donors and organizations.

- Develop and identify committee members with fundraising skills, community connects, and medical connections.
- Develop committee chairman job description and committee member descriptions so expectations are understood.
- Increase frequency and improve touch points with existing and new donors in all campaigns and events.
- Consider identifying a chairperson for each campaign and develop a job description for the role, to reduce workload and spread responsibilities amongst more members.
- Research hiring of a fundraising consultant to provide direction and support.
- Send Executive Director and board members to fundraising training.
- Seek grant-writing/fundraising support initially on a part-time or contract basis, with the possibility of full-time employment based on results.

#### **Objective 2: Marketing Plan for fundraising activities**

Develop a communications and marketing plan for fundraising.

- Utilize the annual fundraising calendar of events to communicate goals leading up to each fundraising event.
- Develop a communications plan for fundraising that includes all tools and touch points.
- Develop tools and messages for each campaign.
- Work with community partners (JDRC, Social Media, Press/Radio/TV, etc.) to collaboratively promote events, fundraisers, and other opportunities for engagement.





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- Develop relationships with nonprofit community and support networks, such as the MN Council of Non-Profits, CLOVE, and other community nonprofits.

### **Objective 3: Campaigns and Events**

Identify and execute multiple fundraising campaigns and events each year.

- Develop a means to communicate and promote the Fundraising Toolkit to interested constituents.
- Develop a process for communicating fundraising efforts to staff and board. Allow open discussion and assistance with questions and ideas on fundraising.
- Provide regular updates on final results and funds raised. Evaluate Risk on Investment (ROI) of all fundraising events, whether monetary or awareness based.
- Create an annual campaign where each board member is responsible for 25 individual donors and 5 business donors.
- Ensure that all donors receive multiple touches throughout the year to engage them around the Camp Sweet Life cause.
- Identify top 30 individual donors and plan a donor appreciation event.
- Host annual event with increased fundraising goal each year (\$20,000 - \$25,000 \$30,000)

### **Objective 4: Grant Strategy**

Develop a grant strategy to increase overall grants.

- Utilize MCNP and other grant databases to identify grant opportunities.
- Identify and utilize grant writer to provide grant research direction, support, and expertise in the grant writing process.
- Seek grant-writing/fundraising support initially on a part-time or contract basis, with the possibility of full-time employment based on results.
- Diversify grant prospects with both large and small grant opportunities.

### **Annual Fundraising Events:**

- Strike Out Type 1
- Sweet Ride
- Glow Run
- Raffle
- Other Fundraising Event - ?

### **Annual CSL Connects Activities:**

- Parent Support Sessions
- JDRF Walk to find a cure – February
- JDRF at Valley Fair – July
- Concession Stand volunteering – July
- CSL Camp – August
- JDRF One-Nation – November



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- Lions Diabetes Rally - October
- Kiwanis Holiday Lights – December

**Additional Programming Opportunities (for future) 2024, 2025**

- Second session for Southern MN site day camp or overnight (1 night) camp
- Camp Reunion – develop committee to implement Annual Camp Reunion