

Camp Salesian 2026!

Program and Impact Report



Executive Summary

For seven weeks during the summer of 2026, the Salesian Family Youth Center (SFYC) operated Camp Salesian, providing children and young people with a safe, structured, and engaging summer experience centered on recreation, education, leadership, faith, and community.

Camp Salesian offered daily activities including Arts & Crafts, STEM, liturgy, game room activities, gym time, swimming, and other recreational opportunities. Participants also attended field trips to destinations including Seal Beach, the California Science Center, and Griffith Park. Seventh- and eighth-grade participants received additional weekly outings, including movies, sailing, Knott's Berry Farm, and Six Flags.

In 2026, **125 young people registered for Camp Salesian**, with an average weekly attendance of approximately **79 campers** and a total of **552 camper-weeks of participation** over the seven-week program.

Enrollment was lower than in previous years. This decline occurred during a year in which SFYC experienced reductions in some grant funding and introduced a new tiered pricing structure designed to increase family participation in the cost of camp while keeping the program accessible to families with financial need.

Despite having fewer campers, **camper payments generated \$30,259**, approximately the same level of camper-generated income as the previous year. This indicates that the new pricing structure helped maintain camper revenue while reducing the number of participants.

The program also continued to develop young leaders. **67 youth served as unpaid counselors**, supported by **10 staff members**, for a total of **77 people working directly to operate Camp Salesian**. Of the counselors, **53 were returning volunteers**, approximately 69% of the total counselor and staff group used for the retention calculation. In addition, **31% of counselors had previously participated in Camp Salesian as campers**, demonstrating a growing leadership pipeline in which young people return to serve the next generation.

Financially, Camp Salesian generated **\$61,919 in income** and incurred **\$68,238.37 in expenses**, resulting in a **net program deficit of \$6,319.37**. This deficit was supported through SFYC's unrestricted fundraising, including proceeds from the Annual Gala.

Camp Salesian remains an important part of SFYC's mission. The 2026 experience also provides valuable information for planning the 2027 program, particularly around enrollment, pricing, financial assistance, staffing, and the long-term sustainability of the camp.

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2026 Camp Salesian at a Glance



Measure	2026
Weeks of Camp	7
Registered Campers	125
Average Weekly Attendance	79
Highest Weekly Attendance	85
Lowest Weekly Attendance	64
Total Camper-Weeks	552
Youth Counselors	67
Staff	10
Total Staff & Counselors	77
Returning Counselors/Team Members	53
Counselors Who Were Former Campers	31%
Total Camp Income	\$61,919.00
Camper Payments	\$30,259.00
Total Camp Expenses	\$68,238.37
Net Camp Deficit	(\$6,319.37)

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1. Camp Salesian Program

Camp Salesian operated from **June 15 through July 31, 2026**, for a total of seven weeks.

The program was designed to provide children and young people with a safe and positive place to spend their summer while supporting their social, educational, physical, and spiritual development.

Daily programming included:

- Arts & Crafts
- STEM activities
- Swimming
- Gym and sports
- Game room activities
- Liturgy and faith-based activities
- Recreation
- Group activities
- Educational enrichment
- Field trips

Participants visited locations including:

- Seal Beach
- California Science Center
- Griffith Park

Seventh- and eighth-grade participants also received additional weekly outings designed specifically for their age group. These included movies, a sailing day, Knott's Berry Farm, and Six Flags.

These experiences allowed participants to build friendships, develop independence, experience new activities, and create positive summer memories in a safe and supervised environment.

2. Participation and Enrollment

Camp Salesian has served children in the Boyle Heights and surrounding communities for many years. The historical attendance data shows that participation has varied from year to year.

Average Weekly Attendance

Year	Average Weekly Attendance
2017	83.8
2018	102.3
2019	111.8
2020	22.4

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Year	Average Weekly Attendance
2021	101.3
2022	99.1
2023	107.3
2024	113.1
2025	102.0
2026	78.9

The 2026 average weekly attendance was approximately **23% lower than 2025** and approximately **30% lower than 2024**.

This decline should be recognized and addressed in future planning. At the same time, the decline occurred in the context of significant changes to the financial structure of the program, including reductions in some grant funding and the introduction of a new pricing model.

Rather than simply increasing enrollment at any cost, SFYC needs to determine an enrollment level and pricing structure that allow Camp Salesian to remain both **accessible to families and financially sustainable for the organization**.



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3. Registered Campers and Weekly Participation

In 2026:

- **125 children registered for Camp Salesian**
- Weekly attendance ranged from **64 to 85 campers**
- Average weekly attendance was approximately **79**
- The program generated **552 camper-weeks of participation**

The distinction between registration and weekly attendance is important. Not every registered camper attended all seven weeks.

The highest weekly attendance was **85 campers**, while the lowest was **64 campers**.

This information should be used when planning staffing, supplies, transportation, meals, field trips, and the financial model for future summers.

4. Pricing and Financial Accessibility

In 2026, SFYC introduced a three-tier pricing structure in response to changes in grant funding and the increasing need to better connect family contributions with the cost of operating the program.

The three tiers were:

Tier	Weekly Price	Description
Tier 1	\$90	Standard program price
Tier 2	\$65	Subsidized price, including field trip
Tier 3	\$45	Reduced price without field trip

The \$90 price was the program price established for 2026; it was not intended to represent the full actual cost of operating Camp Salesian.

This distinction is important for future planning. Based on the 2026 financial results and actual attendance, the pricing structure should be reviewed before the 2027 program to determine the appropriate family contribution, subsidy level, and fundraising support needed to operate Camp Salesian sustainably.

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The goal should be to establish a pricing structure that balances three priorities:

1. **Affordability for local families**
2. **Access for families experiencing financial hardship**
3. **Financial sustainability for SFYC**

5. Financial Assistance

Financial assistance remained an important part of Camp Salesian.

In 2026, approximately **49.86% of participating families received financial assistance.**

This percentage was lower than in previous years:

Year	Families Receiving Financial Assistance
2021	85%
2022	84%
2023	75%
2024	74%
2025	79%
2026	49.86%

However, the change does not necessarily mean that families experienced less financial need.

The financial-aid process was different in 2026. Families were first encouraged to select from the three pricing tiers before applying for additional assistance.

All households requesting additional financial assistance had **two or more children enrolled in the program.**

This approach allowed SFYC to offer different levels of subsidy while encouraging families who were able to contribute more toward the cost of camp to do so.



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6. Financial Results

Camp Salesian generated the following income in 2026:

Income Source	Amount
Foundations / Donors	\$28,800.00
Camper Payments	\$30,259.00
Disney Raffle	\$2,860.00
Total Income	\$61,919.00

Total program expenses were:

\$68,238.37

Therefore:

Net Camp Deficit

\$61,919.00 – \$68,238.37 = (\$6,319.37)

Camp Salesian ended the 2026 summer with a **net program deficit of \$6,319.37**.

This deficit was supported through SFYC's unrestricted fundraising, including proceeds from the Annual Gala, allowing the organization to continue providing the program despite the gap between program income and expenses.

7. Camper Revenue

One important result from 2026 is that SFYC received **\$30,259 in camper payments despite having fewer campers than in previous years**.

The new tiered pricing structure helped maintain camper-generated revenue while providing families with different levels of financial participation.

The average camper payment based on 125 registered campers was approximately **\$242 per registered camper**. This figure should not be interpreted as the cost of the program per child; it simply reflects the average amount collected from families across the different pricing and assistance levels.

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For future planning, SFYC should continue monitoring:

- Enrollment
- Weekly attendance
- Family payments
- Financial assistance
- Fundraising support
- Actual cost per camper-week

This information will help establish a more accurate and sustainable Camp Salesian financial model.

8. Camp Cost and Sustainability

The total cost of operating Camp Salesian in 2026 was:

\$68,238.37

The program generated:

\$61,919.00

Leaving:

\$6,319.37

to be supported through other unrestricted SFYC resources.

Based on the 552 camper-weeks recorded during the summer, the total program expenses represent approximately **\$123.62 per camper-week**.

This calculation provides an important planning benchmark, but it should be reviewed together with the detailed expense structure to distinguish direct program costs from other expenses associated with operating the camp.

The \$90 Tier 1 price established for 2026 therefore should **not be considered the actual full cost of providing one week of Camp Salesian**.

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Recommendation for 2027 Planning

Before setting 2027 tuition rates, SFYC should complete a detailed cost analysis that considers:

- Staffing
- Transportation
- Field trips
- Food and supplies
- Program materials
- Facility costs
- Insurance
- Swimming and recreation
- Administrative support
- Financial assistance
- Youth counselor support
- Other direct and indirect camp expenses

The goal should be to determine the **actual cost per camper-week** and then establish appropriate family pricing and fundraising targets.

9. Youth Leadership and Counselors

One of the most significant strengths of Camp Salesian is its youth leadership program.

In 2026:

- **67 young people served as counselors**
- **10 staff members supervised and supported the program**
- **77 staff and volunteers participated in operating Camp Salesian**

Youth counselors are volunteers and do not receive payment for their service.

Many counselors come from local public schools, particularly neighboring schools such as Roosevelt High School and Bravo High School. College students represented approximately **32.5% of counselors**.

This creates an important connection between SFYC's programs and the broader educational and leadership development of young people in the community.

10. Counselor Retention

Camp Salesian also demonstrated strong volunteer continuity.

53 counselors returned to serve again in 2026, representing approximately **68% of the 77-person staff and counselor group used for the retention calculation**.

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This level of returning participation provides continuity for the program and allows returning young leaders to take on greater responsibility.

The report also showed an increase in former campers returning as counselors.

Approximately 31% of counselors had previously participated in Camp Salesian as campers.

This is one of the most meaningful indicators of long-term program impact.

Young people who once participated in Camp Salesian are returning years later to serve, mentor, and support younger children.

11. Building a Youth Leadership Pipeline

Camp Salesian is more than a summer program for children.

It also provides an opportunity for young people to develop leadership through service.

The pathway can be described as:

Camper → Youth Volunteer → Counselor → College/Community Leader

The fact that nearly one-third of counselors were former campers demonstrate that SFYC is creating opportunities for young people to move from being participants to becoming leaders.

This supports the broader mission of the Salesian Family Youth Center to help young people become responsible, caring, and productive members of their community.

12. Who We Serve

Most Camp Salesian participants live in the **Boyle Heights and East Los Angeles area.**

Families who live outside the immediate neighborhood often have another connection to the area, particularly because their parents work near Downtown Los Angeles.

This demonstrates that Camp Salesian serves both neighborhood families and working families who rely on the Youth Center because of its location and accessibility.

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13. Age and Grade Distribution

In 2026, approximately:

- **52% of participants were in the lower grades**
- **48% were in the upper grades**

The lower-grade group included TK through fourth grade, while the upper-grade group included older elementary and middle-school students.

The program also kept seventh- and eighth-grade participants together in a co-ed structure in 2026 rather than separating them by gender.

SFYC observed a decline in sixth-grade participation compared with the previous year.

The relatively balanced distribution between younger and older participants demonstrates that Camp Salesian continues to serve children across a broad range of ages.

14. Volunteer Gender Distribution

The 2026 counselor and staff group included **77 people**.

The reported gender distribution was:

- **33 male**
- **44 female**

SFYC continues to see strong participation among young women serving as volunteers, particularly with younger age groups.

The participation of both male and female counselors allows the program to provide children with a broad range of positive youth role models and mentors.

15. Community-Based Youth Leadership

Most Camp Salesian counselors come from the public school system, with many coming from neighboring schools such as Roosevelt High School and Bravo High School.

College students represented approximately **32.5% of counselors**.

This combination of high school and college volunteers provides a valuable intergenerational leadership structure.

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Younger counselors have opportunities to learn from older volunteers and staff, while college students have opportunities to mentor high school students.

16. Program Impact

The value of Camp Salesian cannot be measured only by the number of children enrolled.

The program provides:

Safe Summer Engagement

Children have a safe, structured environment where they can spend their summer participating in positive activities.

Educational Enrichment

STEM, arts, educational field trips, and other activities help children continue learning during the summer.

Physical Activity

Swimming, sports, gym activities, and recreation encourage healthy physical activity.

Social Development

Children develop friendships, teamwork, communication skills, and confidence through group activities.

Faith and Values

Liturgy and Salesian spirituality provide opportunities for children and young people to grow in faith and values within a welcoming environment.

Youth Leadership

Older youth develop leadership and service skills by becoming counselors and mentors.

Community Connection

The program connects children, families, schools, volunteers, and SFYC staff within the Boyle Heights community.

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17. What the 2026 Results Tell Us

The 2026 Camp Salesian experience provides several important lessons for SFYC.

Enrollment

Enrollment declined compared with recent years and should be an area of focus for 2027.

Pricing

The three-tier pricing structure allowed SFYC to maintain family participation while increasing the amount families contributed toward the program.

However, the **\$90 Tier 1 price should be reviewed before 2027** because it was a 2026 pricing decision and does not represent the full cost of operating camp.

Financial Sustainability

The program ended with a **\$6,319.37 deficit**.

This is manageable within SFYC's overall fundraising structure, but the organization should continue working toward a more sustainable camp financial model.

Youth Leadership

The counselor program remains a major strength, with **67 youth volunteers, 53 returning counselors, and 31% of counselors being former campers**.

Accessibility

SFYC continued to provide multiple levels of financial support so that families could participate according to their ability to contribute.

18. Priorities for Camp Salesian 2027

Based on the 2026 experience, SFYC should focus on the following priorities for 2027:

1. Review Camp Pricing

Conduct a complete cost analysis before setting tuition rates.

The 2027 pricing structure should reflect the actual cost of operating camp while maintaining affordable options for families.

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2. Strengthen Enrollment

Develop an early enrollment and outreach strategy with schools, families, parish communities, and SFYC participants.

3. Protect Financial Accessibility

Continue providing financial assistance while developing a clearer system for determining the appropriate level of subsidy.

4. Increase Fundraising for Camp

Establish a specific fundraising goal to reduce the amount of unrestricted operating funds needed to cover the Camp Salesian deficit.

5. Strengthen the Youth Leadership Pipeline

Continue recruiting former campers and returning counselors and create additional leadership responsibilities for older youth.

6. Measure Impact

Continue tracking:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| • Registered campers | • Counselor retention |
| • Weekly attendance | • Former campers who become counselors |
| • Camper retention | • Program costs |
| • Financial assistance | • Cost per camper-week |
| • Family demographics | • Family satisfaction |
| • Youth volunteer participation | |

These measures will help SFYC demonstrate the long-term impact of Camp Salesian to donors and funders.

19. Conclusion

Camp Salesian remains an important investment in children, families, and young leaders. The program provides more than activities during the summer; it creates opportunities for young people to learn, belong, serve, and grow into leadership within their community.