



# FIRST DESCENTS

MEDICAL PARTNERSHPS

# FIRST DESCENTS PROVIDES LIFE-CHANGING OUTDOOR ADVENTURES FOR YOUNG ADULTS IMPACTED BY CANCER



I did not expect to form intense, lifelong bonds with participants. It was exactly what I needed. The physical challenge of surfing allowed me to reconnect with the active, vibrant person I was before cancer.

2016 PARTICIPANT



# WHY YOUNG ADULTS

CANCER IS THE LEADING DISEASE-RELATED CAUSE OF DEATH IN ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG ADULTS (AYAs) AND CONTINUES TO BE THE FASTEST GROWING AND MOST UNDERSERVED CANCER DEMOGRAPHIC.

YOUNG ADULTS IMPACTED BY CANCER FACE A UNIQUE SET OF CHALLENGES INCLUDING LOSS OR LACK OF INSURANCE, LOSS OR LACK OF FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE AND RE-ENTRY INTO THE WORKPLACE. THESE CHALLENGES ARE FREQUENTLY ACCOMPANIED BY FEELINGS OF ALIENATION AND ISOLATION, DEPRESSION, AND DECREASED SELF-CONFIDENCE.

70,000

young adults are diagnosed annually

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Poor Improvement  
in five-year survival rates

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Minimal Peer Support

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Rare and Aggressive  
tumor biology

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Lack of  
participation in clinical trials

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Disrupts  
normative milestones of adulthood

PARTICIPANTS ORIGINALLY HAVING THE GREATEST SYMPTOMS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS SAW THE LARGEST GAIN FOR THE LONGEST TIME. IN OTHER WORDS, THOSE WHO NEED FD THE MOST, SAW THE MOST BENEFIT.

PARTICIPANTS FELT RECONNECTED TO THEIR BODIES AND MORE CONFIDENT IN THEIR PHYSICAL ABILITIES. THEY ALSO FELT AN INCREASE IN RESILIENCY AND FELT LIKE THEY HAD MORE RESOURCES TO NAVIGATE THE HEALTH SYSTEM AND THEIR OWN TREATMENT SCHEDULES.

99%

WANT TO STAY INVOLVED

100%

100% OF PARTICIPANTS REPORTED INCREASED ABILITY TO COPE WITH CANCER AND ITS EFFECTS

81%

REPORTED INCREASED SELF-EFFICACY, INCLUDING CONFIDENCE IN PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL, AND INTELLECTUAL ASPECTS OF LIFE

BEFORE FIRST DESCENTS

17%

EXPERIENCED DEPRESSION

## WHY IT WORKS

In 2015, First Descents partnered with researchers at the University of Michigan to continue to study the quantitative and qualitative success of our programming. In 2016, we completed the research and analysis on this study. Here are the top findings from that study:

POST PROGRAM

7%

REPORTED DEPRESSION

# MEDICAL PARTNERSHIPS

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- Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
- Dana Farber Cancer Institute (Boston, MA)
- Virginia Commonwealth University – Massey Cancer Center
- University of Southern California Medical Center (Los Angeles, CA)
- Mary Bridge Hospital (Tacoma, WA)
- Seattle Children's Hospital
- University of Irvine Cancer Center (Orange, CA)
- University of California Medical Center (Los Angeles, CA)
- St Charles Hospital (Oregon)
- Children's Hospital Colorado
- Duke Cancer Institute
- Rocky Mountain Cancer Center (Colorado)
- University of North Carolina Chapel Hill
- Winship Cancer Center of Emory University (Georgia)
- Memorial Sloan Kettering (New York)
- Oregon Health & Science University
- Moffitt Cancer Center
- MD Anderson (Texas)

Medical centers assume the cost of \$8,000 for adventure programming.



# CONTACT

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