



## ADVENTURE AWAITS

**October 2022**

Welcome to the first edition of “*Adventure Awaits*”, the quarterly newsletter for A Kid Again – Central Carolinas. We are thrilled to launch this newsletter and hope that you will enjoy reading updates about our incredible mission and features of the amazing families that we serve across the Carolinas.

For our friends and guests, we will endeavor to highlight the Adventures of the past quarter and share some of the exciting and fun-filled moments that were captured. In doing so we invite you to join us as we celebrate the Hope, Happiness and Healing that is experienced by our Central Carolinas families.

For our families, we look forward to making this newsletter more interactive and fun, with opportunities to submit good news, as well as links for games and puzzles that families can download and enjoy for an at-home mini-Adventure. In the meantime, we hope that our newsletter will help spread awareness to other families across the Carolinas of our mission and invite them to be a part of the fastest growing movement in the Carolinas – A Kid Again.

In this edition, we are delighted to bring you all of the fun and excitement that occurred in the summer of 2022, including a Birthday Bash at Carowinds, a baseball game with the Charlotte Knights, and our inaugural Adventure in Raleigh. Plus, we have a few huge Adventures and events scheduled for this fall that we are excited to announce.

We hope that you enjoy the first edition of “*Adventure Awaits*”.

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## EXCITING ANNOUNCEMENT!!!

**A Kid Again Central Carolinas** is thrilled to announce the inaugural **Adventures & Wishes 5K & Family Fun Run at Carowinds**. And, we have invited an incredible partner to join us – *Make A Wish Central & Western NC!*

This event is an exciting partnership between two incredible organizations and will allow runners and walkers of all abilities to come together as we CELEBRATE these great missions with a day of HOLIDAY FUN at Carowinds. Both the 5K and Family Fun Run course will allow participants to experience unique and entertaining routes throughout the Carowinds property.

As a bonus, **every registered 5K and Fun Run participant will receive one (1) free admission ticket to Winterfest on Saturday, December 3rd!** This is an added incentive for

guests, friends and other (non-immediate) family members to participate in the 5K/Fun Run and enjoy the evening at Winterfest (starting at 5PM) as well.

All proceeds from this event will be split 50/50 between the two organizations. This is the perfect opportunity to make a holiday gift with **TWICE THE IMPACT!**

There are multiple ways to participate:

1. **REGISTER for the 5K or Family Fun Run** - Every registered/paid participant will receive a free admission ticket to Winterfest, a race t-shirt and special commemorative gift for all finishers.

2. **Create a TEAM** – invite your friends, co-workers or family members to join you for the race. Each registered/paid member of your team will receive one free admission to Winterfest (beginning at 5PM)\*.

3. **SUPPORT an A Kid Again and/or Make A Wish family/team** – donate to a family/team who is participating in the 5K or Family Fun Run. Donors/ sponsors do not have to be present or participate in the 5K/Fun Run to sponsor your family.

4. **DONATE** – make a general donation to the event. All of the proceeds will be split 50/50 between the two organizations.

To [register](#) for this exciting event and/or learn more about these two incredible organizations, visit our [Race Website](#). If you have additional questions, email Ian Corley at [icorley@akidagain.org](mailto:icorley@akidagain.org)

Join us on December 3<sup>rd</sup> as we celebrate the brave kids and families who are battling life-threatening/critical illnesses and raise funds for two impactful missions!

*\*Race participants will receive one (1) free admission to Winterfest on Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>. Parking and food/drinks not included. Winterfest will open to the general public at 5PM. Guests who are not participating in the race will need to purchase an admission ticket to accompany race participants to Winterfest.*

*\*\*A Kid Again families – be sure to check the information on the private A Kid Again Facebook group for additional details about our A Kid Again Holiday Adventure at Carowinds.*

# 1200

## FAMILIES!



**1,200 FAMILIES!** We are thrilled to welcome our 1,200th family to our Central Carolinas chapter. We continue to remain amazed at the incredible enrollment that we have seen in our chapter over our first 18+ months. Even more exciting is the high level of engagement that we experience with families and website-breaking registrations that occur with our Adventures.

Such a fast rise in enrollment and participation has brought with it some growing pains. We are committed to working through these challenges and continuing to identify, plan and execute quality Adventures that are available to all of our Central Carolinas families!

Thank you to all of our A Kid Again families for allowing us to serve you and your family. We treasure each Adventure and opportunity to connect with your families and deliver on our mission.

Next stop...1,500!

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## Welcome Ian!

Welcome our newest addition, Ian Corley, to the Central Carolinas A Kid Again Family!

Ian Corley was hired on our team as a development coordinator at the end of June. Ian is a local of the Carolinas and he was born and raised in Fort Mill, South Carolina where he graduated from Nation Ford High School. He then continued his education at Winthrop University where he later finished his undergrad with a B.S. in finance.



We are excited to bring Ian on board with us. He is a young and enthusiastic person with all the raw talent to make a long career in the non-profit industry. Help us welcome Ian to our A Kid Again Team!



## Birthday Bash at Carowinds

On Sunday, April 3rd, our chapter celebrated our first birthday in the best way; by bringing together all of our favorite families for an amazing Adventure at our favorite place!

We welcomed **over 2,700 members of our A Kid Again family** to Carowinds for a full day of fun. It was a day filled with laughter and joy, as our A Kid Again families got a day away from all of the sickness, anxiety and worry of their daily lives.

The staff at [Carowinds](#) created a first-class experience for our A Kid Again families. In addition to the incredible water park, roller coasters, rides, and shows, families were treated to a number of A Kid Again-only opportunities, including a private gathering space where lunch and drinks were provided, along with incredible entertainment, including a DJ, jugglers, face painters, stilt walkers and visits from Peanuts characters.

Special park-wide accommodations were also made to ensure that every A Kid Again family could have the full Carowinds experience. Strobe lights were disabled for the day to accommodate families that have seizure and epileptic challenges, and live performances were adjusted to accommodate for children with sensory issues. Private cool down rooms were even established throughout the park so that A Kid Again families could escape the hot Carolina day.

A Kid Again families were thrilled with the day, and were happy to share their excitement, *“Thank you, A Kid Again staff and volunteers! Not only did you give our kids a great time, but you allowed us as a family to just relax and enjoy our life and escape the everyday stress we have on our plates. We are so grateful for the day you gave us, and we will forever remember it! Myla has talked nonstop about the rollercoasters and tall man, and the balloon people! This may forever be the greatest day of her life, and we owe it all to you!”* – Kaitlyn, A Kid Again mom

Want to see the Birthday Bash Adventure for yourself? Check out our our video: [Central Carolinas Birthday Bash - YouTube \[youtube.com\]](#).

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## Charlotte Knights Baseball

On Saturday, July 16th, 300 members of the A Kid Again family joined us for our very first baseball Adventure. The Adventure was filled with [Charlotte Knights](#) baseball and a few extra special treats for our A Kid Again families.

It was Dino Day at Truist Field and our A Kid Again families received a private experience with the dinosaurs and exhibits prior to the game. Our friends at Atrium Health were sponsors for the day and every A Kid Again kid received a custom Charlotte Knights Dino Day hat. And, prior to the game, A Kid Again families were given the opportunity to go down to the field to run, explore and play catch with their parents and siblings. Even the summer heat and afternoon rain storms could not dull the excitement of the day as we cheered the Knights to victory!

It was a magical day that provided countless smiles and memories for our families. Thank you to Megan Smithers, Matt Harper, and the rest of the Charlotte Knights crew for making our Adventure possible!

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## Marbles Children's Museum

We made it to Raleigh! We were so excited to host our first Triangle Adventure at Marbles Children's Museum on Sunday, September 11. With nearly 200 families from the Triangle region, we have been working really hard to identify and develop Adventures that are closer in proximity for our Triangle families.

We were thrilled to partner with our friends at Marbles for our very first one. Marbles Museum is an interactive museum with over 15 exhibits that encourage play through art, science, technology, engineering, imagination, and more.

Over 700 A Kid Again family members registered for our Adventure. Thanks to the incredible Marbles staff, A Kid Again families had private access to the *entire museum* for the evening. After the Adventure, our team re-energized the families with cookies and cotton candy desserts, along with a swag bag of goodies. In all, our first Triangle Adventure was a great success!

This was just the first of many Triangle Adventures to come. As we plan for next year, we hope to bring 3-4 Adventures to the Triangle in 2023!





## Scare School at Scarowinds

October 9th - 1:00PM-3:00PM

This year, Scarowinds and A Kid Again are teaming up to put together a **teens only** crash course in how to become a real life monster. A

Kid Again teens will learn the ins and outs on how to be a world class monster. Participants will receive a walk through on how to walk and act like a monster, a makeup/costume tutorial, and everything else that it takes to be a Scarowinds monster!



## Boo at the Zoo

October 16th - 9:00AM

Come join our first ever adventure at the North Carolina Zoo! We are taking you guys to the zoo in Asheboro, North Carolina where the zoo is home to over 1,800 animals and over 250 species. The North Carolina Zoo is the **WORLD'S LARGEST** natural habitat zoo and we are going there in October.



We also will continue the fun by participating in **Boo at the Zoo**. Boo at the Zoo will include sights and sounds of the season with decorations, music, treats, and more. To learn more about the NC Zoo and Boo at the Zoo click [here](#).

## Parent's Night - Virtual Education Night

Thursday, November 10 - 7PM

*"How to Talk with Little Kids about BIG Feelings"*

We are thrilled to partner with our friends at Mitchell's House to provide our A Kid Again parents with an exciting virtual education opportunity. Ellen S. Hefner, a pediatric mental health therapist at Mitchell's House, will talk with us about how to help young children develop a feelings vocabulary, express feelings in healthy ways, and employ coping skills. Specific tools will be shared with parents & caregivers to encourage conversations about feelings + coping skill development at home.



**MITCHELL'S  
HOUSE**

Mitchell's House provides counseling and play therapy services to sick children with a terminal or life-threatening diagnosis, their siblings, parents or legal guardians regardless of ability to pay.

Mitchell's House is a project of Mitchell's Fund. Learn more and apply for services at <https://mitchellsfund.org/>

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## Holiday Adventure at Winterfest



**December 3rd - 3:00PM**

Is there a better way to celebrate the holiday season than with thousands of family members and 7 million holiday lights?!?! For our Holiday Adventure we are excited to welcome our A Kid Again families back to Carowinds for a day at Winterfest.



## North Carolina Zoo

**Sunday, October 16th - 8AM - 1PM**

We can't wait to be a part of Boo at the NC Zoo on October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022! During this Adventure, our Adventure Guides will help families check in at the zoo, take pictures to capture the fun and memories, and be available to help our families have a fantastic time at boo at the zoo! If you are interested in becoming an Adventure Guide for Boo at the NC Zoo, click below for more information and sign ups.

Click [here](#) to register to be a NC Zoo Adventure Guide.

## Holiday Adventure at Winterfest

**Saturday, December 3rd - 3PM - 7PM**

Join us for one of our largest Adventures of the year! During this Holiday Adventure, Adventure Guides assist families with check in at Carowinds, pass out t-shirts and goodies, take pictures to capture the fun and memories, and be available to help our families during our exclusive time with Santa!

If you are interested in becoming an Adventure Guide for our Holiday Adventure at Winterfest, sign-ups open October 17th. Click [here](#) to register to become an Adventure Guide today!



Hugs are important. They have been determined to help to lower blood pressure, reducing the risk of heart disease, heart attack, or stroke. Hugs boost self-esteem. They are a powerful way to convey feelings of safety, love, and connection to a greater community.

For all those reasons, hugs connect with our mission at such a foundational level. To us, it makes sense that when we want to recognize an amazing partner or individual within our mission, we do it with a virtual HUG.

For our first edition, we would like to send special HUGS and appreciation to our friends at [Carowinds](#), and their parent company [Cedar Fair Entertainment](#), for the tremendous support and assistance that they have shared with A Kid Again and our families. These

partners are deeply committed to providing our families with the very best Adventure possible. Their level of compassion, commitment and selflessness is something that we want to recognize and celebrate.

Carowinds has been an incredible partner for our Central Carolinas chapter since we launched into the Carolinas. They have used their creative genius and compassionate hearts to help us design and execute amazing Adventures at the park, including our very first Adventure, this year's Birthday Bash and our Holiday Adventures at Winterfest. They have also been a wonderful partner as we plan our Adventures & Wishes 5K this December.

The leadership and team at Cedar Fair Entertainment has been behind our Central Carolinas chapter since the very beginning. While we officially launched our chapter on March 24, 2021, work behind the scenes began months prior. With the assistance of our friends at Cedar Fair, our chapter staff was provided with the work space and resources at the Cedar Fair corporate office in Charlotte, to begin work on this chapter.

We are forever grateful to our friends at Carowinds and Cedar Fair for the Hope, Happiness and Healing that they have helped us provide for our Carolinas' families.

Help us show our appreciation to the Carowinds team this December. Give them a smile and a great big THANK YOU while you are at the park!



**Connect with us on Facebook.**

[A Kid Again Central Carolinas Page](#) -  
@AKidAgainCentralCarolinas

It's the best way to learn all of the up to date information about Central Carolinas chapter news, Adventures, events, and volunteer (Adventure Guide) opportunities.



[A Kid Again Family-Only Private Group](#) - This private Facebook group provides A Kid Again families with an additional Facebook resource. Our private chapter family page

allows only approved Central Carolinas families the opportunity to join, connect with one another and ask questions to other approved families and staff. Its a wonderful way to engage with the A Kid Again family in a safe and monitored venue. To join the private group, click the link above and complete all of the required questions.

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[www.akidagain.org](http://www.akidagain.org)

[Donate](#)

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