

## Worcester, Massachusetts kids cleanup Camp Aurora

Tamami Okano  
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In Worcester, MA, 40 high school students and young adults participated in the annual Camp Aurora Cleanup and cleaned up the campsite that they use for summer camp each year. “High school students from all over New England joined together and were able to reconnect with each other,” said youth pastor Tamami Okano.



Along with the cleanup, the staff engaged the participants with thoughtful activities taken from the Youth Ministry website. A few of the staff shared about how they had once felt something was holding them back from connecting to the Heavenly Parent. Afterward, each high-schooler wrote a letter to God to share how they were doing. Following this, everyone found a partner and shared their letter and then found a quiet place to pray out loud for each other. The students then posted their letters onto the walls so other people could read them and write words of encouragement and support with sticky notes. The activity ended in a group prayer and a giant group hug!

Tamami expressed how moving the experience was for everyone. “Because of the bonds of heart and spirit that all of the kids have created over the years, they were able to easily become vulnerable and share honestly with each other. There was no hesitation in sharing in pairs or with the entire group because kids knew they could trust one another. The kids supported each other through many hugs and lots of heartwarming words of encouragement. Many youth noted that it was

really refreshing and just what they needed at this point in time. They were grateful to have brothers and sisters who they could talk with about their relationship to God.”

The event was a welcome check-in point between the group’s two major workshops: Camp Aurora in the summer, and the New England Winter Workshop. Tamami noted how inspiring it was to see some of the older high school students make an effort to reach out to their younger brothers and sisters. “I felt as if it showed the extremely impacting effect youth ministry can have on youth’s life of faith.”