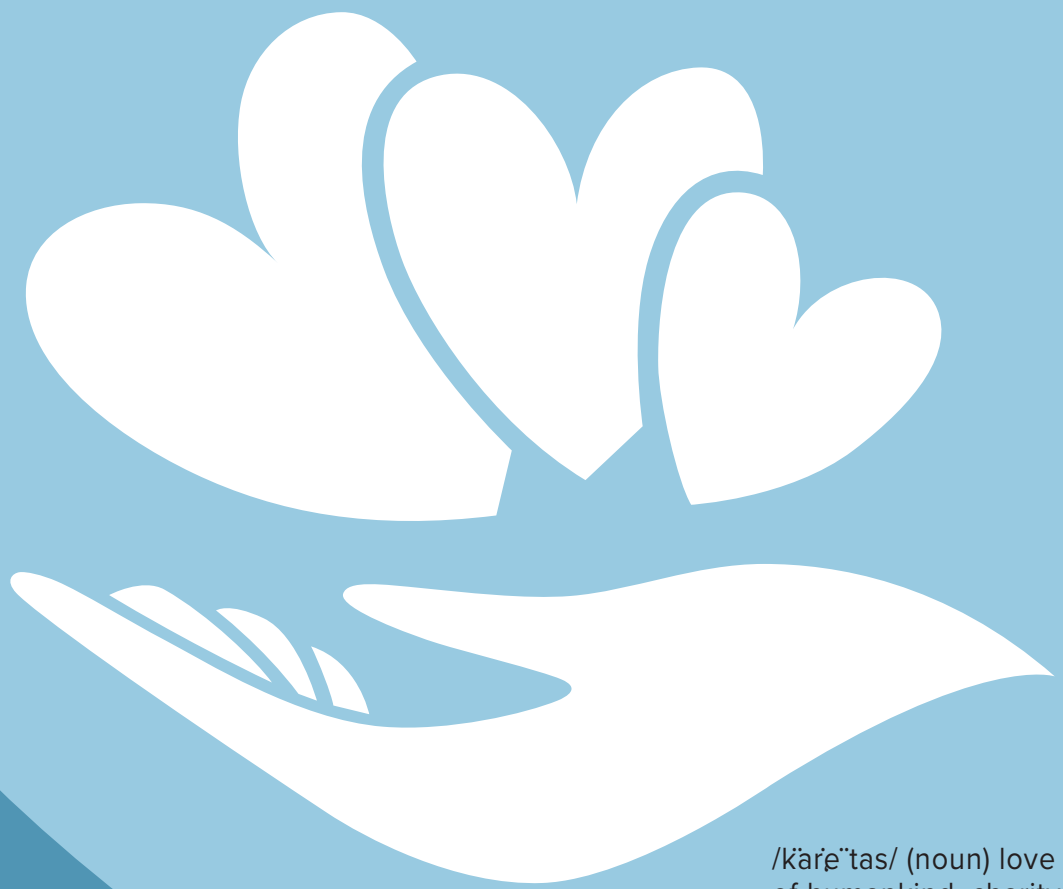


# Caritas

## Quarterly

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/kärɨˈtas/ (noun) love of humankind, charity.

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## From preparation to returning home, Deseret First Charitable Foundation shows support for missionaries

**Rebecca Olds**  
*The City Journals*

Deseret First Charitable Foundation’s biggest fundraising event of the year was in full swing on July 31 at Stonebridge Golf Club in West Valley City. The late-summer heat beat down on all 196 golfers lined up in front of the door, waiting to be divided into 50 sponsored teams.

By the end of the day, the golfing event generated \$85,000, about half of the money already allocated in the first half of 2024 to the recipients of the foundation’s generosity. With the donations, even more new and returned missionaries from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints would be receiving aid.

“We found that focusing on the missionaries was a unique way to not only give back but also be able to tell some of those stories and show this is who we serve,” said Trena Anderson, Deseret First Credit Union’s senior vice president and charitable foundation president.

### Humble Beginnings

The premise of the foundation started around 2014 as an ad campaign for the credit union to run during The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints’ General Conference for the Deseret First Credit Union.

“We went down to Missionary

Mall and just bought people’s supplies that day,” Anderson said. “We realized, wow, there’s a need out there.”

It evolved from an ad campaign

to a shoe drive and eventually to a full-fledged charitable foundation wing of the credit union.

In 2024, the foundation helps new missionaries with financial

assistance to purchase luggage, clothes, shoes and other necessities and recently returned missionaries with tuition reimbursement or a new laptop for higher education.

Any new missionaries (sisters and elders) and recently returned missionaries in the past two years are eligible to receive support from the foundation. Immigrants and international students are also encouraged to apply if they need assistance.

Deseret First Credit Union handles all overhead costs, including staffing, so donations go directly to missionaries seeking assistance. Anderson said the whole team at the credit union helps out at times.

In 2023, the foundation distributed nearly double the 2022 total — more than \$141,000 to 308 recipients. Of the recipients in 2023, 178 were male missionaries and 130 were women.

The majority of the funds went to return missionaries who were in attendance at 20 different schools. More than 69 percent (214) were returned missionaries and about 30 percent were new missionaries getting ready to start. Anderson said the foundation is on track to give even



*A future sister missionary was helped to buy a new luggage set before leaving for her mission. (Photo courtesy of Deseret First Charitable Foundation)*

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more than in any past year before 2024 is over.

**A Unique Membership**

Ties with the Church of Jesus Christ are deep for the foundation because it is where it got its start. When the credit union was founded in 1955, it was as an internal financial institution for the church, with membership restricted to employees of the church. Since then, it has expanded member eligibility to include all employees of its affiliate companies and church members around the globe.

“Every credit union has a common bond or field of membership,” Anderson said while guest-starring on the “Business Elevated” podcast. “This foundation is a way of giving back to the community that we serve.”

The foundation gives to both single male and female missionaries who serve teaching and service missions. Both groups of 18-to-29-year-olds serve for 18 to 24 months for the church.

Single missionaries pay \$500 monthly to serve a full-time proselytizing mission, according to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Each missionary pays a total of \$9,000 to \$12,000, plus extra for clothing, shoes, luggage and whatever else they might need while they serve.

“Despite my best efforts to prepare financially, the costs associated with travel, accommodations and supplies for multiple missions have added up quickly,” wrote one missionary awarded financial aid from the foundation, who will remain unnamed for privacy reasons.

This missionary was one of triplets who wanted to serve simultaneously, which would put a large financial burden on their family.

In applications sent to the foundation, instances of missionaries needing help attributed money struggles to anything from their refugee status to having to provide for their families because a parent is out of work, low income or medical bills, among other reasons.

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These brothers left to serve a mission at the same time, resulting in a significant financial burden for their family that the Deseret First Charitable Foundation was able to help alleviate. (Photo courtesy of Deseret First Charitable Foundation)



Deseret First Charitable Foundation started as a shoe drive for missionaries and grew until it evolved into the branch of the credit union. (Photo courtesy of Deseret First Charitable Foundation)

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Help from the Deseret First Charitable Foundation can help missionaries with the cost of clothing, which can add up for missionaries preparing to serve a mission. (Photo courtesy of Deseret First Charitable Foundation)



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**Completing the Circle**

Anderson spoke of one missionary who received aid when leaving for her mission and again when she returned home, calling it a “full circle” moment and the bigger goal of the foundation.

“One of our goals right now ... is we’re trying to say, ‘Can we complete the circle? Can we help them when they leave [and] help them when they get back?’” Anderson said.

The foundation is working to not only better the missionaries’ current financial needs, but Anderson said that she hopes to offer more financial education in the future.

With many more immigrants and international students applying for aid each year, Anderson also said that the hope is for each recipient to take what they learned back

to their own countries.

One particular missionary, who will be left unnamed for privacy purposes regarding the foundation’s aid, said he hopes to return home and start his own business.

“As an international student from Eswatini, we came to the United States with the goal of pursuing an education in business,” wrote the recipient. “Our aim is to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to start our own social business back home to help combat the 70 percent unemployment rate in our country.”

In February 2024, the foundation increased its financial support from \$500 for every missionary to \$1,000, putting it on track to exceed its 2023 donation total of just less than \$142,000.

“I just hope to see a continual increase as far as the number of students we’re helping,” Anderson said.

Deseret First Charitable Foundation is in the midst its annual online giving campaign, which started the week of Thanksgiving. Donations will be accepted online at [www.dfcu.com/foundation/donate/](http://www.dfcu.com/foundation/donate/).



Students from 20 different schools in 2023 received help after returning from a mission, including this one at Ensign College. (Photo courtesy of Deseret First Charitable Foundation)



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# A PLACE OF HOPE

## for Ogden's homeless families

**Aimee L. Cook**  
*Caritas Quarterly*

Family Promise of Ogden is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing homeless families with a safe, supportive environment as they work toward regaining self-sufficiency. As part of a national organization, the Family Promise of Ogden opened its doors in 2017, and the organization, as a whole, is the leading organization in dealing with family homelessness. Each chapter is its own nonprofit with a shared mission accomplished through a coordinated effort involving staff, volunteers and local services committed to the welfare and security of those it serves.

*“Compassion is alive and well in America. We want to make a difference. But we don’t always know how to connect. Family Promise allows people to make a difference in their own communities, in the lives of homeless families.*

*- Karen Olson,  
Family Promise founder*

### Self-Sufficiency Is the Goal

Achieving self-sufficiency is at the heart of Family Promise of Ogden’s efforts. The organization’s programs are designed to provide families with the tools and resources they need to transition from homelessness to stability. This includes comprehensive case management,

financial literacy workshops and employment training initiatives. Focusing on empowerment through education and skill development, Family Promise of Ogden helps families build the confidence and capabilities necessary to maintain long-term independence. In addition, these programs foster a supportive community

network, ensuring families have the guidance and encouragement to navigate challenges and achieve sustainable success.

“Our purpose is to end homelessness, that every child will have a home,” said Raquel DaSilva, executive director of the Ogden chapter. “Our shelter is a bit different; clients can come and stay for from 10 to

15 weeks. We don’t just provide for their needs, we also give them education, help them understand road blocks to independence and then when they graduate we follow them for two years.”

By integrating into the families and providing a broader supportive network, the case managers at Family Promise of Ogden expand the potential for transformational change. As families participate in the organization’s programs, they connect with a network of community partners, volunteers and other nonprofits offering additional assistance. This interconnected support system is vital,



*A volunteer visits with a young resident at Family Promise of Ogden about how her day is going. More than half of the homeless clients of the program are children — most under 6 years of age. (Photo courtesy of Family Promise of Ogden.)*

**CONTINUES next page**



that families receive the personalized attention and support necessary to achieve lasting independence.

*“You’re at that place where you can’t go anywhere else. You hit rock bottom and it’s almost like you’re in*

*this dark place and someone reaches out a hand. Everybody was just there ... and then there’s a light at the end of the tunnel. There’s no other feeling like that in the world.”*

– Krystle  
Former Resident

**FROM previous page**

offering families access to resources. Through these connections, Family Promise of Ogden ensures that families have continuous support long after transitioning to stable housing.


**Key Achievements**

Family Promise of Ogden serves up to four families at a time in its shelter. Last year, the nonprofit served 36 families, including 92 children, for a total of 5,161 shelter nights. Nearly 75 percent of families who join the program secure housing within nine weeks, a remarkable achievement that is a testament to the organization’s comprehensive support system.

Despite its extensive impact and comprehensive programs, Family Promise of Ogden operates with a lean team of only four full-time and four part-time employees. This small but dedicated group manages the shelter, coordinates the 400 volunteers and facilitates the various programs that families rely on during their stay. Their commitment underlines the organization’s ability to effectively utilize resources and community partnerships, ensuring

**FAMILY PROMISE**

**Success Story**



*Samantha and her two girls, ages 1 and 3, joined the shelter program at Family Promise of Ogden, fleeing from domestic violence. \*Samantha struggled to leave her situation, but summoned the strength to do so with the help of Family Promise of Ogden.*

*Prior to entering the shelter program, Samantha traveled over an hour a day in order to work. Once in the shelter program, Samantha got a better-paying job closer to Family Promise. She also enrolled her children at a day care nearby.*

*Samantha always looked for opportunities to improve her situation. She applied for every housing resource she could find. Although she found a better-paying job, she was unable to qualify for state-assisted programs aside from day care.*


*At first, Samantha worried about her food and other bare necessities. Her worries quickly subsided as soon as she took the financial class at Family Promise of Ogden, which helps clients take control of their financial lives. Samantha learned how to budget and manage her money to afford life expenses once she left the program*

*With her developed skills, she tirelessly researched and applied to apartments. She used her savings to comfortably transition into her new apartment. She had another two daughters from a previous relationship, and now that she had escaped homelessness, she was finally able to re-unite with them!*

\*Names have been changed to protect clients’ confidentiality

**Community Impact**  
The impact of Family Promise of Ogden on the local community is profound. The organization not only restores hope to those in crisis but also strengthens the community as a whole. Families who transition from homelessness to stable living conditions become happier, more stable

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**Family Promise of Ogden**

**Raquel Da Silva**  
Executive Director  
raquelfamilypromise@gmail.com

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Owner

**Jodie Sanders**  
Member At Large



The staff at Family Promise of Ogden



*A group of volunteers gathers at Family Promise of Ogden following a drive to gather diapers on behalf of residents of the program.*

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contributors to the community, fostering a sense of collective well-being and resilience.

“We have a very modest budget; it pays for the basics, rent, salaries and insurance,” DaSilva explained. “We don’t purchase anything to run the programs because everything is donated.”

While individual and corporate donors form the backbone of financial contributions, Family Promise of Ogden also secures funding from various foundations and gained critical support from a state grant. This multifaceted approach to funding ensures that the organization can remain flexible and responsive to the needs of the families it serves, continuously expanding its reach and enhancing its programs without relying heavily on any single source of income.

“We work with other nonprofits to make sure we don’t recreate the wheel and so we can teach our clients things like where the food pantry is to save money on food, where you can get diapers and free child care,” said DaSilva. “We teach the clients what other organizations (over 60 of them) are doing in order for them to understand what they need to create their own network.”

Family Promise of Ogden is more than a nonprofit; it is a lifeline for families facing the daunting reality of homelessness. With a mission rooted in compassion and a track record of success, the organization continues to make a meaningful difference in the lives of the families it serves and the broader community.

For more information or to get involved, visit the organization’s website at [familypromiseofogden.org](http://familypromiseofogden.org) or contact its office directly.

**Family Promise of Ogden**  
123 Main Street  
Ogden, UT 84401  
Phone: (801) 555-1234  
Email: [info@familypromiseofogden.org](mailto:info@familypromiseofogden.org)

## Did You Know?



In a typical Family Promise program over half of the guests are children, most of whom are under the age of 6



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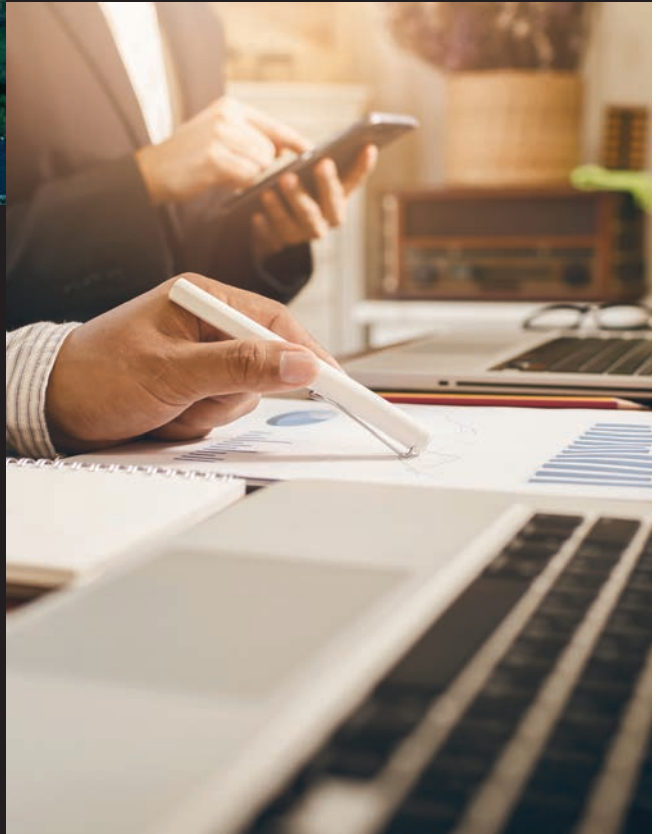
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# REWILD

## The CHILD



# Kids are getting out and enjoying the great outdoors, and they're doing it **without their phones**

Joining the Rewild Revolution is just one way teens are leading out against social media use

**Rebecca Olds**  
*The City Journals*

For most teenagers in this day and age, the answer is usually “a significant part.” In 2023, a Gallup poll reported that teens spend an average of 4.8 hours per day, or 33.6 hours a week on social media.

It’s something Glen Andersen and his team at Rewild are trying to change one person at a time by

helping kids, teens and their parents commit to take a one-year break from staring at a screen and choose different adventures and activities. The main objective is to get teens away from addictive social media.

“I think social media, in its core principles, helps to bring so much good into the world,” Andersen said. “I think the people behind social media know that if they keep people on their product for as long as they can, they can make money, and I think they’re using unfair tactics against our youth to hurt them.

“That’s why we’re here, is to help our kids,” he said, “That’s what it’s all about.”

Before starting the Rewild program earlier this year, Andersen founded the Youth Wilderness Experiences program in 2018. The Youth Wilderness Experiences program involves taking youth on week-long outdoor trips like backpacking and international trips, where they’re not allowed to use their phones.

Andersen found that youth really benefited from the face-to-face interaction and lack of phones during these trips, which inspired him to create the longer-term Rewild program to challenge kids to go phone-free for an entire year.

“I think being away from their phones for a week is still not a long enough program for sustained change,” he said. “We decided that if someone, especially a teenager or pre-teenager, got off their phone for a full year, that it would really change their lives.”

Nearly 100 people signed up to be a part of Rewild’s first cohort, which had its first meeting on Oct. 16. Participants from Utah and a few scattered across the country are taking the challenge to stay off social media until October 2025.

The first challenge of the year is to invite five people to the program, with the hope that at least two of them will join the Rewild Revolution. The reward is a chance to win \$100.

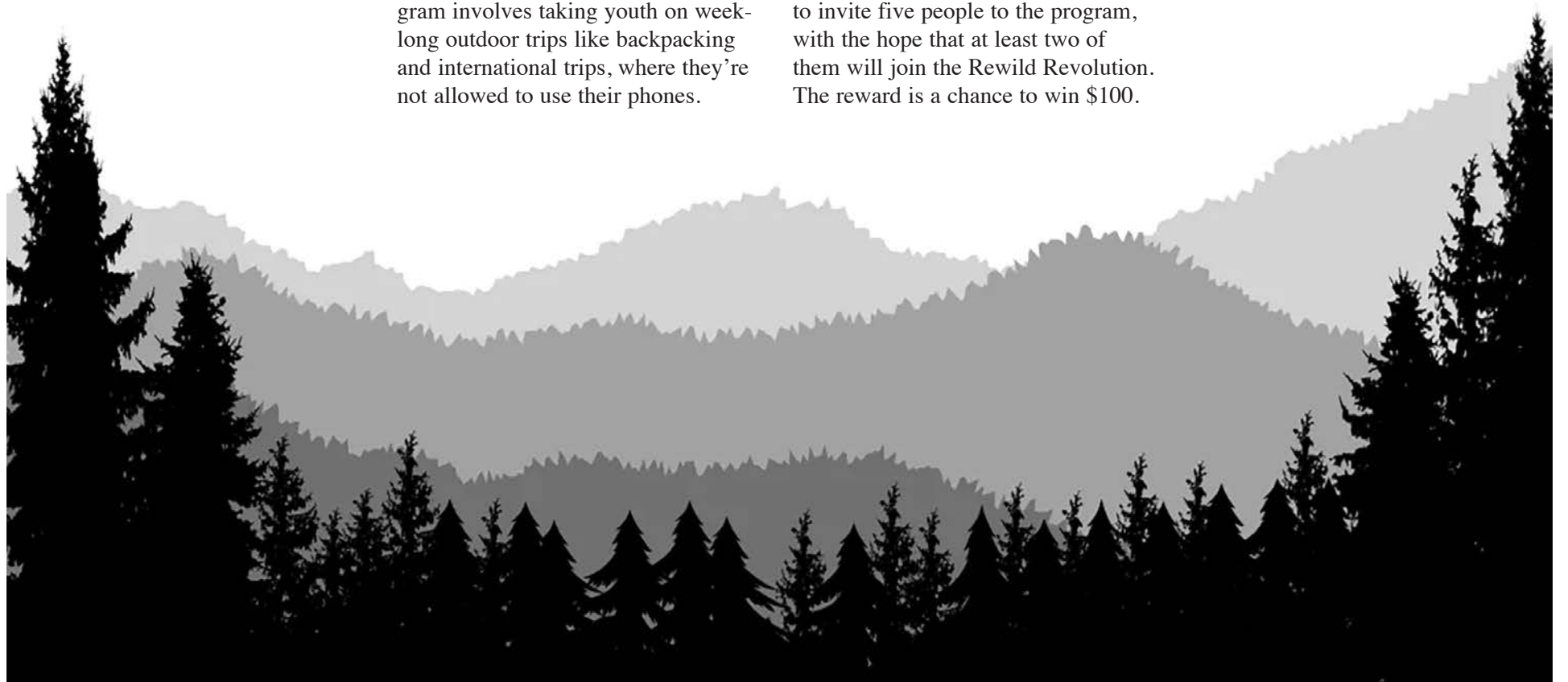
Benefits of joining the program are growing daily as Andersen continues to get local community sponsors that offer free or discounted passes to amusement parks and local activities throughout the state.

To keep them connected with family and friends in a healthy way, Rewild has partnered with Gabb to provide phones at no cost to each program participant through the company’s Gabb for Good Foundation.

### Leading Out

Brandon Jeppson, the director of product marketing and research at Gabb, shared that they have learned a

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*Around 100 teens have signed up to join the Rewild Revolution and stay off their phones for a year. (Photo courtesy of Glen Andersen)*



*Through the one-year program, perks such as discounted activity passes and cash rewards are meant to incentivize teens staying off their phones and getting out. (Photo courtesy of Glen Andersen)*

#### FROM page 12

lot from kids and parents about kids leading their own tech-free movements and being “tech rebels” by going against the norm of constant social media and smartphone use.

“It’s pretty cool to see kids lead out,” Jeppson said during the October meeting. “You guys, honestly, are leading out by being here tonight.”

Pew Research found from a study done in March that 72 percent of teens find that they often or sometimes feel peaceful when they don’t use their smartphones and 38 percent of teens feel they spend too much time on their phones.

Lori Kun, Gabb’s vice president of community impact and president of the Gabb for Good Foundation, said that programs like Rewild are giving teens opportunities to lead out on getting off social media.

“I am very hopeful about the future, and people are really getting wise and becoming more empowered,” Kun said.

Jeppson said that his team also took the challenge to put down their phones, similar to the Rewild Revolution. He said “it really transformed the way that we saw our lives and the way that we did things. So if the parents want to join in and do something similar as part of this, it’s really great for you, too.”

#### Mixed Emotions

Some participating youth expressed a mix of uncertainty at the thought of being off their phones for an entire year because they had been signed up by parents and don’t know how it will go. One teen asked about whether or not she’ll be able to use YouTube to learn things or listen to audiobooks.

The program, Andersen said, allows teens to still connect and communicate with the outside world. Tech still has benefits, such as learning to crochet online through a YouTube video, but the real focus is getting teens to stop scrolling aimlessly on social media.

Participants also expressed some

**CONTINUES next page**





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positive initial experiences from the program, like reduced screen time and improved conversations, and seem generally optimistic about what the next year will look like.

“I want to put down my phone for a year to challenge myself,” wrote Haidyn H. on Rewild’s website (some

participants' last names are not stated for privacy reasons). “I want to show myself I can do something hard. I am so excited to see what my life can become without most of it tied to a screen.”

Aunika N. wrote that she expects joining the program to put her out of her comfort zone and allow her to grow. “In a world that seems almost impossible to live without a phone, it’s important for me to remember that it’s possible to disconnect from my phone,” she wrote on Rewild’s website.

Of the October cohort, one parent expressed that since his son has started the program, he’s easier to talk to

and communicate with.

Andersen hopes to see the movement continue to spread and grow among teens but if one life is changed, he said it will have been worth it. With Rewild being such a new endeavor for him, Andersen said a lot about its future is unknown, but he hopes it keeps growing.

“Whether it’s Rewild or some other programs, we just think that this movement is ready to start, and that it’s just going to get bigger and bigger,” Andersen said. “Hopefully, we’re just like a small drop in the huge bucket that’s coming from people who are wanting to fight against the norm.”



*Rewild is an extension of Glen Andersen’s Youth Wilderness Experiences program that focuses on his desire to help teens stay off social media and experience life outside of a screen. (Photo courtesy of Glen Andersen)*



# REWILD

## The CHILD

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