



# Camp Is Healing

For nearly a century, Camp H.R. Erdman has been more than a place of recreation. It has been a place of renewal—where children and families step away from hardship and rediscover strength, belonging, and hope.

Across generations, these grounds have held laughter and tears. Challenge and courage. Grief and restoration. Healing has taken many forms here.

## 1941: A Place of Rest During Wartime

After the December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, youth camping at Camp H.R. Erdman was suspended as the U.S. military assumed control of the site. Army Engineers constructed coastal defenses, and the camp was later leased to the 14th Naval District as a rest and recreation retreat for Navy officers through 1946.



Interior view of lounge, fireplace, and homelike atmosphere provided to naval officers on shore duty.



1944: Commissioning Ceremony of Camp Erdman with naval officers and YMCA of Honolulu leaders.

## Access for All

Since its earliest days, Camp H.R. Erdman welcomed children from working plantation families and immigrant labor communities whose families had limited financial means.

For many, camp was their first time swimming, sleeping in a tent or cabin, exploring the outdoors, or simply being a child without daily responsibilities. For some, it meant three nourishing meals each day and the comfort of being cared for.



That commitment continues today. Through the YMCA Annual Campaign and the generosity of donors, financial aid ensures that cost is never the reason a child misses camp.

## Camp Agape

In past years, Camp H.R. Erdman hosted Camp Agape, serving children with an incarcerated parent. Here, young people discovered they were not alone. Through mentorship, outdoor challenge, worship, and shared experience, they found encouragement and a different path forward. Many returned as leaders, breaking cycles and building hope.



Photos courtesy of Maricar Amuro, Aloha Images and Design

## Operation Purple

During years of heightened military deployment, including the late 2000s, Camp H.R. Erdman welcomed Operation Purple Camp for military children with a deployed parent. Campers climbed, ran the fields, learned stewardship of the `āina, and formed friendships with others who understood the sacrifices of service. It was a place to decompress, reconnect, and simply be kids.



## HUGS

And annually, Camp H.R. Erdman hosts families from HUGS, which supports Hawai'i families caring for a seriously ill child. At camp, siblings found space to express their feelings. Parents found rest. Families stepped away from hospital routines to reconnect and create joyful memories together.

