



in partnership with TomTod Ideas

presents:



camp What if

AKRON

*The ideas you hear today are the product of the imaginations of middle schoolers and of a variety of experiential learning opportunities encountered throughout **Camp What If: Akron**. You will find a schedule overview below that provides some of the highlights of the week:*

Monday

LAB SESSION 1: CWAHAH (COMMUNITY-WIDE-HUMAN-ADVENTURE-HUNT)

A scavenger hunt of a variety of significant sites throughout downtown Akron with a particular focus on arts, business, communications, entrepreneurship and more. We ended the CWAHAH at [Lock 3](#) with a special guest from the [Downtown Akron Partnership](#) and a picnic of tasty local food (check out the Food section on the back for all the amazing local restaurants we had the privilege of trying out throughout the week. Yummy food is definitely an Akron asset!)

LAB SESSIONS 2 AND 3

Learning Labs were experiential field trips throughout Akron, connecting campers with community leaders and core organizations. We jumped right in on Monday with labs that included:

- [Shanti Farms](#)
- [South Street Ministries](#)
- [The Well Community Development Corporation](#)
- [Nightlight Cinema](#)
- [Akron Public Library](#)
- [S3 Technologies](#)

REFLECTIONS & CONNECTIONS

Each day we spent time reflecting and connecting on our experiences, considering the strengths and challenges of the community and imagining what we might create together.

Tuesday

LAB SESSIONS 4, 5 AND 6

Tuesday was a full day, with lots of Labs and other fun activities. Tuesday's labs included:

- [Akron Rubber Ducks](#)
- [Devil Strip Magazine](#)
- [Northside Marketplace](#)
- [Dirty River Bicycle Works](#)
- [Summit Artspace](#)
- [Akron Recreation & Parks](#)
- [North Akron Community Development Corporation](#)
- [First Glance Student Center](#)
- [Just A Dad From Akron](#)

wednesday

SIP (SPEEDY INTERVIEW PLUNGE)

Interviewing community leaders, "speed dating" style! Campers created the questions and then groups rotated in seven minute blasts to fire away!

Guests:

- [Dan Whitaker](#), Summit Education Initiative
- [Byron Delpinal](#), Torchbearers
- [Kemp Boyd](#), Love Akron
- [Ace Epps](#), BOUNCE Innovation Hub
- [Teresa Hogan](#), First Energy
- [Bronlynn Thurman](#), The GAR Foundation

Wednesday continued...

LAB SESSION 7

For our Wednesday lab we went as one big group to [Akron City Government](#). There, campers had the chance to meet council members and sit in council chambers, converse with members of the Mayor's Cabinet, and meet with a representative of the Akron Police Department.

GAMES, PROCESSING & IDEATING

We spent the remainder of Wednesday afternoon engaging in activities helping us consider what we had learned and also started our first round of ideation. By the end of the day, we had oodles of ideas that we hoped could enhance the common good & we capped the day off with fun games.

Thursday

PROCESSING & IDEATING

From 100+ ideas, we whittled down to our top 20 favorites, then our top 3, taking part in a series of brainstorming activities such as "Yes, and..." With the final top 3, we researched and explored what could be before everyone ranked the final pitch groups they wanted to be in. We did all this while getting to explore a new space to us that had been our neighbors all week, the [Reach Opportunity Center at Summit Lake](#).

Friday

IDEATION

With our final ideas in mind, today was spent putting meat on their bones. We scheduled meetings and traveled back to various places we had visited earlier in the week to pick the brains of community partners in the know. Campers took all of the information and formed it into final presentations that we're sharing with you now!

Thank You's!

FOOD

Throughout the week, we enjoyed meals from a variety of local restaurants:

DIAMOND DELI, SPAGHETTI WAREHOUSE, STACHIA'S ALMOST FAMOUS WINGS, HAMAD'S ON MAIN, AND DA VINCI'S PIZZERIA

SPACE

We're incredibly grateful to [the Summit Lake Community Center](#) for letting us take over their multi-use room and gym! We used the space throughout the week as our home base & ideation lab.

FUNDERS

[The City of Akron](#) is proud to offer this camp to middle schoolers in our community, empowering young people as engaged citizens today, tomorrow, and for years to come.

CAMP WHAT IF / TOMTOD TEAM

The team behind Camp What If includes year-round TomTod team members, as well as seasonal teammates. We had a blast as co-learners and co-explorers with our incredible campers and thank parents for the privilege of getting to know their campers over the week and are grateful to the community of Akron for the many ways in which they partnered with us in investing in middle schoolers this week!

Year-round TomTod Team:

Patrick Gerber, Zane Sanders, Sam Slovisky, Kayla DeVitto, Amy Ropp, Joel Daniel Harris

Summer Teammates:

Walker Collins, Kaley Weaver, Kassie Ketchum, Makenzie Yoder, Gabrielle Freeman

IDEA SUMMARIES: WEEK 3

We had three exciting ideas pitched at our closing program for the final week of **Camp What If: Akron**:

Single-Person Calm Rooms in Schools

A small room in each school that students can go to once a day for 15 minutes if they get angry. These small spaces will have calm music, relaxing seating, and fidgets. These rooms will also teach kids about mental health and ways to calm down like mediation and yoga.

Middle School Advertising Agency

Middle schoolers will learn marketing and then create advertising for small businesses for free. They will create things like logos, social media posts, websites, and youtube videos. Their goal is to attract small businesses to Akron and help small businesses with no money for advertising.

Lock 3 Redesign - The Ultimate Public Space

Middle Schoolers are creating their vision for Lock 3 in Downtown Akron and other public spaces. The goal is to make a space that is used and enjoyed frequently by adults, families, and kids.

NEXT STEPS:

With our Akron camps completed, we are beginning to take initial steps to follow up with campers. In the coming weeks we'll work to evaluate ideas, gauge camper interest in pursuing ideas this fall, and pursue mentors and community collaborators to join campers in their next steps.