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CAMP INSPIRES BRIGANTINE FAMILY TO START SUPPORT GROUP FOR OTHERS WITH TOURETTE SYNDROME

June 11, 2009- Jules Bliss is an expressive young man. He has a way with words but won't share them until he's confidently chosen what he feels to be the best ones to describe a given situation- and it's always worth the wait.

When asked to sum up his experience at a family retreat for children with Tourette Syndrome (TS), Jules said "It's a really cool place where [people with TS] can stand in solidarity with others."

Each year New Jersey Center for Tourette Syndrome's family retreat weekend draws children with TS and their families from across the state. Held from June 5-7 at Camp Bernie in Port Murray, Jules and his parents Beth and Michael joined more than 100 other families.

The Bliss family has made the weekend a tradition.

"This was the best thing to ever happen to our son," said Jules' mother Beth.

Jules finds comfort in seeing familiar faces and says friends he's made during the family retreat are different than school friends. "The nice part is that [at the camp] they're open to conversation and they understand about your Tourette Syndrome because they have it too," he explained.

Understanding was exactly what the Bliss family found during their first retreat.

"The experience to be with other parents and kids with Tourette Syndrome was great. Our son was newly diagnosed when we first came to camp so we were so glad to be able to commiserate with other parents," said Jules' father Michael.

Beth and Michael decided to share that understanding with others in their region and form a support group for other families with Tourette Syndrome in the Atlantic County area.

"It was hard for us to find support when Jules was first diagnosed until we found NJCTS," said Beth, "There was nothing for families like us in South Jersey and so we decided to start a support group. So far our net has widened to include four new families over the past couple of years."

Jules enjoys the obstacle course and archery, but his favorite part of the retreat is that "everyone understands how you feel here, everyone's alike."

For more information on New Jersey Center for Tourette Syndrome visit www.njcts.org.

