

LIFELONG PARTNERS

to people managing disabilities and mental health challenges



Benefits of the Summer Camp Experience

For the Campers:

The American Camping Association and Pilliber Research Associates surveyed campers and parents from 80 camps, including over 5,000 families. They found:

- 96% of campers reported that camp helped them make new friends.
- 69% of parents reported that their camper is still in contact with friends from camp.
- 92% of campers reported that camp helped them feel good about themselves.
- 70% of parents reported improvement in self-confidence.
- 74% of campers reported doing things they were afraid to do at camp.
- 63% of parents reported that their camper still participates in activities learned at camp.
- Both reported an increase sense of independence.

In addition to above benefits, studies for campers with disabilities experience the following:

- Improved attitude toward disability
- Decreased anxiety



For the Caretakers:

- Ability to rest and rejuvenate
- Respite from 24/7 caretaking responsibilities

For the Staff:

- Making a difference
- Gaining valuable experience
- Creating lifelong friends
- Learning about disabilities

Camp Easter Seals UCP Statistics

- ✓ 83% of our campers are returning campers
- ✓ In 2015, we served over 500 people including over 170 children and 160 adult summer campers, 100 weekend campers, 43 families, and several rental groups
- ✓ From a 2015 summer survey for campers and caretakers
 - 97% rated their overall camp experience as either excellent or good with 84% rating it as excellent.
 - 97% rated staff as either good or excellent

The Camp Easter Seals UCP Experience

"[Camp is] a time to be with other kids with the same disabilities as me and not be judged. I can be myself. ~ Haley, camper

What campers do:

Horseback riding
Swimming
Canoeing
Climbing wall
Campfires
Dances
Arts & crafts
Sports & games
Nature activities
Performing arts
Many more!

- Increased independence: Campers spend 3-26 days on their own away from their normal caregivers and lives. While assistance is available through trained staff, independence is encouraged with new activities in a unique and supportive atmosphere.
- Improved self-esteem: Imagine riding a horse for the first time after being told you couldn't do most fun activities that your friends and family enjoy. Not only would it be a wonderful experience but for campers it builds confidence that they can reach other goals that they once thought unreachable.



- Forged friendships and the development of social skills: From campfires to dances to playing sports, campers socialize with other campers and staff. This includes friends and peers to hang out with along 'big buddies.' The camp atmosphere allows campers to feel comfortable as a person with a disability and increases their openness.
- Break from the typical 'TV' life for a unique outdoor experience: There has never been a larger disconnect from nature than at the present time. For people with disabilities opportunities to experience nature are few and far between. While at camp, campers gain an appreciation for nature that they wouldn't get anywhere else from canoeing down Craig's Creek to sleeping underneath the stars. Nature is abundant at Camp Easter Seals UCP.

A typical camp day:

Breakfast with everyone
Camp Songs
Swimming with cabin
Crafts with cabin
Lunch with all
Rest
Climbing wall with cabin
Arts & crafts with cabin
Dinner with all
All camp talent show



- Life changing staff experience: Not only does camp serve campers but it provides staff and volunteers with a priceless experience that has been described as "life changing."

"Ben loves camp. He is outside, has many people to interact with and he receives a lot of attention. Camp is a wonderful place!" Parent