

# Recreation and Camp Ideas

We all need social and recreational outlets in order to enjoy life fully. This is no different for children and adults with disabilities. Every year leisure opportunities are expanding. They range from those which are inclusive (those which include both disabled and non-disabled peers), to those which are specifically geared toward certain disabilities. Below you will find a list containing both types of activities and programs. ***This listing should not be viewed as an endorsement by The Arc of Dallas, PISD, or SAGE.*** There are a number of excellent programs available. Hopefully this will give you a good start in finding the right one to fit the needs of your child. If your financial resources are limited and a program which charges higher fees catches your eye, check on it anyway. Some programs offer scholarships or can refer you to an organization which will supplement your contribution to the fee.

**Bachman Recreation Center** - Offers recreation programs specifically for individuals, ages 6 and up, with disabilities. Programs include: arts and crafts, aquatics, sports, fitness, music, drama, socialization and outdoor activities. You can contact the center for additional information regarding adult day, evening and weekend programs, summer youth and after-school programs and aquatic exercise and instruction at (214) 670-6266.

**Camp Fire Boys and Girls** - A 228-acre site located on the Cordova Bend of the Brazos River, near Granbury, TX. Camp El Tesoro offers a camp session for children with developmental disabilities. At Camp El Tesoro at least three campers with special needs are mainstreamed per session into cabin groups and camp activities. Special needs children are matched with a "camp buddy," a staff member who assists with activities and personal needs. Be sure to register early in order to complete all the required paperwork. Camp sessions begin at the end of May and run through August. For more information call (817) 831-2111.

**Camp John Marc** - a 140-acre site in Bosque County, near Meridian. It has year-round sessions for children with ADD, asthma/respiratory ailments, autism, cancer, cerebral palsy, diabetes, deaf or hearing impaired, HIV/aids, muscular dystrophy and spina bifida. Sessions last one week. Co-ed ages 6 to 16 years of age. Financial aid available. Fee per week \$76-200 for residents. Activities include arts and crafts, boating, camping skills, canoeing, horseback riding, photography, swimming, sports and nature studies. You may contact them at their Dallas office.

**C.A.M.P.** - (Children's Association for Maximum Potential) located on Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio. In 1989, *Exceptional Parent Magazine* gave the camp an award for being one of best summer camps in the nation for special needs children. They concentrate on serving children who have not been served by other special needs camps. Their goal is to accept each and every severely-involved child, even if it means the child is discharged from and returned to the hospital after camp. Doctors and nurses from the Base provide staff for C.A.M.P. along with trained volunteers. Their motto: "No child is too involved to attend." They provide a 1:1 child/staff ratio. For more information, contact the C.A.M.P. Program Director at Lackland, (210) 292-3566.

**Camp Aurora** - a day camp run by the Diabetes Foundation. Geared toward children aged 4-12 years of age who have diabetes and their siblings when spaces are available. Sessions begin in June. There are three camps, one in Lewisville near Lake Highlands Village, one in Fort Worth and one at Cedar Canyon Dude Ranch in Lancaster. Each group has a registered nurse assigned to them and a physician is always on call. There is a \$35 application fee and scholarships are available for children who are in need. For more information call (888) 342-2383.

**Camp Summit** - 117 acres located in Argyle, 30 miles north of Dallas, is one of the most well-known camps in the area. They offer one-week summer sessions and weekend sessions in the spring and fall which are scheduled by age and disability. The camper to counselor ratio is 2:1. There is an on-site health center with licensed registered nurses and 24-hour on-call physicians. Serves children and adults with physical, developmental and /or multiple disabilities. Financial assistance scholarships available. For more information, you may call them at their Dallas office: (972) 484-8900 or visit their web site <http://www.campsummittx.org/>.

**Camp Sanguinity** - sponsored by Cook-Fort Worth Children's Medical center is for children with cancer and blood disorders. It's held at Camp John Marc in Meridian, Texas (see above). For further information, contact the Volunteer Services office at the hospital: (817) 885-4000.

**Elks Camp** - is held on 10 acres in the rolling hills of central Texas between Gonzales and Luling. It is open to children between the ages of 6 and 16 years of age who have disabilities. There is a wide variety of activities to choose from. The camper to counselor ratio is 3:1. For further information call (830) 875-2425.

**Equest Therapeutic Horsemanship**- is a therapeutic riding program which offers horseback riding for children and adults in the Dallas/Fort Worth area who have cerebral palsy, spina bifida, muscular dystrophy, paralysis, traumatic brain injury, down's syndrome, vision impairment, mental retardation, autism, multiple sclerosis, dyslexia, amputation and developmental delays. It was the first therapeutic riding program in Texas and is the largest. Equest's first summer camp program is starting this year. It is primarily a day camp with some evening opportunities for teenagers and older riders. The camp will focus on riding skills, stable management and arts and crafts. Sessions run Tuesdays through Saturdays. For more information call (214) 827-7100 or visit their web site at [www.equest.org](http://www.equest.org) .

**JAF Ministries** - offers Christian oriented retreat for families who have a disabled loved one. Retreats are held in several locations throughout the country every summer and offer a wide variety of activities which include seminars and workshops. For more information call (214) 739-2523 or visit JAF's web site at [www.joniandfriends.org](http://www.joniandfriends.org) .

**S.E.E.K.** - (Summer Events for Exceptional Kampers) is for children and adults with mental retardation, orthopedic, visual, hearing impairments, or emotional disabilities. Three camp sessions are offered each summer. One is for children 9-14 years of age, one is for youth 15-21 years of age, and the third is for persons 21 years of age and older. To be eligible for S.E.E.K. a child must be at least 9 years of age. The camp is sponsored by the Methodist Church, though it is non-denominational. It is located near Lake Texoma and fees are charged. Call for further information (214) 357-5656.

**Texas Lions Camp** - is held each summer near Kerrville, Texas. The camp focuses on children that have asthma/respiratory ailments, cerebral palsy, diabetes, epilepsy, hearing impairment/deaf, mobility limitations, speech and communication impairment, spina bifida and visual impairment or blind. Camp sessions begin in June and end in August. Sessions last one week. Camp serves both boys and girls who are between the ages of 7 and 16 years of age. Transportation and financial aid are available. The fee per week for residents is \$75. Activities include archery, arts and crafts, swimming, camping skills, drama, horseback riding, music, riflery and nature/environment studies. For more information please call (830) 896-8500.

**Texas United Cerebral Palsy-** offers two camps in April and October. For more information call (512) 472-8696.

**Trips, Inc. Special Adventures** - provides safe, respectful and fun travel outings for developmentally-delayed travelers who require staff assistance. Chaperones are school teachers, counselors, residential care providers and parents. Chaperones help travelers with their medications, managing their money and personal care. Average staffing ratio is one chaperone to every three or four travelers. Call (800) 686-1013 to get additional information on the travel packages available.

**Water Tower Theatre - Act II Summer Musical Theatre Camps** - are for young people ages 6-18. Camps last from 8am to 5pm daily and will culminate in a production on the Water Tower Theatre's main stage with four performances by the students. For more information call (972) 450-6229.

NEW LISTING:

[Summer Under The Umbrella Camp](#) and other programs offered  
Specialized Education for children on the Autism Spectrum.  
[www.undertheumbrellatx.com](http://www.undertheumbrellatx.com) Lesli Bernanke 214-603-6049

## **Final Thoughts**

As you can see your summer is filled with opportunities for fun. Camps come in many different shapes and sizes. Here are a few things you might want to consider when choosing a camp.

1. Consult with your child's doctor on any needs that should be met. Talk with child about options and their wants and needs.
2. Then check the camp out, find out details about the camp you are interested in. Making sure it meets both you and your child's needs.

Finally have a great summer!

Here are a few additional sources you may wish to consider:

Texas Occupational Therapy Association <http://www.tota.org> or 512 -454 8682

American Campers Association [www.acacamps.org](http://www.acacamps.org) or 888 – 559 – 2267

Schwab Learning <http://schwablearning.org/articles.aspx>

Note: Summer Camp 2008 and the SAGE committee are not endorsing any program, camp or community based organization. We are sharing information in our community and beyond.