

# A Camp for Everyone!

A Guide to Including Children of All Abilities in Summer Camp Programs



Written by  
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Palsy of Delaware, Inc., with  
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Delaware Developmental  
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***“It’s not about adding people in after the fact.  
It’s about planning for differences up front.”***

*Dr. Laura Eisenman, Associate Professor, School of Education, University of Delaware*

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## PREFACE

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Over two million school-aged children in the United States have a disability, and this number is growing.<sup>1,2</sup> As the population of children with disabilities grows, so should the diversity and inclusiveness of schools, recreation activities, and other aspects of daily life. Since 1949, the national office of United Cerebral Palsy has been dedicated to helping children and adults with disabilities live their lives “without limits.”

United Cerebral Palsy of Delaware, Inc. (UCP) recognizes that *fun* is a part of life that should be open to *all* children of *all* abilities. UCP runs three inclusive summer camps every year: Camp Manito in Wilmington, serving New Castle County; Camp Lenape in Felton, serving Kent and Sussex Counties; and the Parents And Children Together at Tech (PACTT) summer program at Sussex Technical High School.

UCP opened its first camp in 1953 and originally served only children with disabilities. In the early 1990s, UCP began to realize that opening the camp doors to children without disabilities as well would be beneficial to all campers. UCP started with a two-week pilot program at Camp Manito. The benefits of inclusion spilled over across all groups: parents loved that they could bring all of their children to one place, siblings enjoyed being together, and compassion and understanding were fostered in both groups. Inclusion has since been a major program goal in UCP’s recreational programs, and this manual is part of a project aimed at spreading that goal to other camps.

There are dozens of camps that each provide unique experiences, and all kids can benefit from having this variety of experiences. Children with disabilities want to have fun and learn about sports, music, art, nature, and history, just like everybody else. They have unique talents and interests that make them who they are, just like kids without disabilities.

Similarly, parents of children with disabilities are like other parents: they want a variety of experiences for their children. As empowered consumers, they want choices that will expand with their children’s changing interests.

This manual is not meant to replace your existing staff manual. Working with children with disabilities is not much different from working with other children. A good counselor has patience, humor, strength, love, organization, maturity, responsibility, respect, and adaptability. We at UCP know you already value these attributes. What we want is for you to *embrace inclusion* and *have fun* while doing so!

## DEDICATION

This manual is dedicated to the thousands of campers with disabilities across the country who enjoy the recreation opportunities available to them every summer, to the campers who return to Camp Manito and Camp Lenape year after year with increased enthusiasm, and to my beloved former campers from my time at Camp Fairlee Manor as a camp counselor. Thank you for making me smile every day and for illuminating the immense love, humor, and strength that exist within the human spirit.

Lilia Melikechi





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We would like to first and foremost thank the dedicated and loving parents of children with disabilities who continue to fiercely advocate for their children everyday and who fuel the fire for projects such as these.

We would also like to thank the youth organizations, recreation programs, inclusion organizations, and individual childcare providers and experts, both locally and nationwide, for taking the time to provide their expertise through interviews, research materials, and donations of services. These individuals donated their time from universities and organizations across the country including the Boys and Girls Clubs, Boy Scouts, Delaware State Parks, Girl Scouts, Kids Included Together, Inc., the National Inclusion Project, the University of Delaware, the YMCA, and countless others. This manual would not have been possible without your support and expertise.

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The DDC's Children and Families Committee was directly involved in the reviewing of this manual and oversaw this project from its beginnings. We would like to thank the DDC for both their financial support and guidance throughout the editing process.

All of these resources and more can be found in the directory [in Appendix C](#). We strongly urge you to take advantage of these resources, as all of them provided us with valuable knowledge coming from years of experience and dedication to inclusion.

The earliest phases of this project involved looking into what other camps and organizations were doing to promote inclusion and researching best practices. We picked out the most effective strategies and put them together for you in one place. We hope that you can learn as much from this information as we have in compiling it, and we thank you for helping us to fulfill our mission.

Monica Edgar, Susan Gosney, Joan Hensel, William McCool, Lilia Melikechi, Lindsay Pawlikowski, and Eileen Sparling

Camp Inclusion Training Project Committee

### CHAPTER I: SETTING THE CONTEXT

#### INTRODUCTION

Congratulations! You have already taken the first step to improving your program and making things even more fun for everybody.

As childcare workers, we all know about the benefits of summer camp. Children grow emotionally, mentally, and physically from the friendships and independence that camp affords them under our care. This is also true for children with disabilities. Children with disabilities want to have a fun camp experience, just like everyone else. This guide has been created to help explain the many benefits of inclusion and to provide tips and strategies to maximize the fun.



Your campers love your camp. But why? Think about your camp's mission and the games and programs you offer. What makes your camp unique? Do you encourage healthy lifestyles? Do you get kids in touch with nature? Do you enrich their lives with new interests, hobbies, and possible careers? Do you just have fun? There is something in your mission that brings your campers back year after year.

***Children with disabilities are kids first—they also deserve to benefit from your camp's mission and unique offerings.*** Inclusive programs and activities bring all kids together so they can *all* enjoy activities equally and nobody is left out of all the fun. It is a lot easier than you think.



## SETTING THE CONTEXT

Throughout this manual, there are a few key points to keep in mind:

**1. See the child first.** Children are children; they are not their disabilities. This manual provides general information about supports for children with different disabilities. But for every “rule” presented here, there are hundreds of exceptions. The best way to provide a positive camp experience for any of your campers is to get to know *that one* child as best you can.

**2. Focus on ability.** All children have strengths and weaknesses. Camp should be a place where your campers feel supported and loved. Focusing on your campers’ abilities makes inclusion easier and helps build their self-confidence. Find out what your campers are good at and what they love to do, and find opportunities for them to shine.

**3. Anticipate differences.** Inclusion has to be a proactive effort. Think about your campers and plan for their needs *before* they come to camp. Will they all be able to have an equally fun and positive experience? If the answer is no, think of ways to make that happen *before* your campers arrive. This makes things better for both your camper and you.

**4. Inclusion is a group effort.** In order for inclusion to become embedded in your camp culture, everyone has to believe in it. It takes a village to raise a child, and it takes a supportive *community* to include all children.

**5. Parents, caregivers, and, most of all, campers themselves are often your best resource.** Your campers’ parents or caregivers have cared for them since day one and know all of their likes, dislikes, quirks, and needs. Open and honest communication with campers, parents and caregivers is the best way to learn what you need to know in order for that camper to have fun and be included.

**6. Relax!** Don’t expect to be an “inclusion expert” right away. Working with children with or without disabilities is a learning experience. A sense of humor, flexibility, and a willingness to ask for help as needed will allow you to find the best ways to make campers feel included.

**7. You can do this!** There is no “secret” to effectively interacting with children with disabilities. They are kids who want to have fun at camp, just like everyone else. We are just here to help. Often times, a few simple strategies in your back pocket and knowledge about working with children with disabilities may be all you need to be successful at inclusion. Inclusion is complementary to what your camp already does and helps you work with children both with and without disabilities.

### WHAT IS INCLUSION?

An inclusive camp is set up to accommodate people from all backgrounds and with all abilities. For example, instructions for games are automatically provided orally as well as visually so that people with all different abilities and learning styles will be able to understand. Inclusion means there is an opportunity for every camper to play and excel in every activity. Everyone feels like they belong when we anticipate differences and plan for inclusion. Inclusion increases the fun everyone has at camp.

***“Inclusion means all participate and all belong.”***

*National Inclusion Project, 2011*

Every child should be included so they can all enjoy the fun. At the same time, we know that children are different from one another. Inclusion means *anticipating* those differences—whether they are differences in ability or otherwise—and then *planning* to include all children. Becoming more inclusive is a *proactive* planning strategy. The earlier you plan for differences, the better.

Look at your camp schedule at the beginning of each week. Compare the settings and rules of your upcoming activities to your campers and their needs. Step back and look at the big picture. Has everyone been included? As the summer goes on, learn from your experiences to keep working towards your mission of inclusion.

Sometimes, it can appear to be tricky to figure out the best way to make activities more inclusive. Even if an activity seems inclusive, a simple tweak can make a world of difference. Here are some examples:

Try...	Instead of...
giving all campers the opportunity to choose the activities in which they want to participate, and working together to make things fun for everyone;	giving campers without disabilities the opportunity to choose from a wide range of activities, while assigning separate activities to children with disabilities.
pairing children with disabilities with children without disabilities in an arts and crafts room so everybody has a partner and can sit together;	putting children with disabilities at a separate table in the arts and crafts room and assigning counselors to assist them.
letting all campers sit with their friends at the talent show, making room for those who use wheelchairs;	having special seating for wheelchairs at the front of the room for a camp talent show.

### CREATING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION

Your camp has a culture all its own. Maybe there are games that you play *only* at your camp. Maybe you have a camp mascot you treasure. Maybe you have ghost stories or camp legends and traditions that nobody else would understand. Maybe everyone at camp has an extra pep in their step every Taco Tuesday, even if the tacos are not that good.

Think about what makes camp something your campers and staff look forward to every year. It is laid back, fun, and has a family feeling. You might have inside jokes with your camp friends that people in “the real world” might not understand. Your campers love being a part of your camp culture.



Making inclusion a part of that culture is easy and benefits everyone.

There are several small steps you can take to start to create a culture of inclusion:

- **Give your campers and staff nametags!** Simple but effective. From the very start, staff should introduce themselves and greet all campers by name and with a smile. Encourage campers, perhaps with an icebreaker, to greet each other this way also. This makes children feel more included, cared for, and relaxed.<sup>3</sup> It is also much easier for new campers to feel included when they can quickly learn everybody’s names. Nametags help make this happen. This can particularly make a difference for children with disabilities who may sometimes feel ignored or excluded. A child should start camp by knowing they are in a place where they are seen as just a kid and not a disability. See page [17](#) for some helpful tips on approaching people with disabilities if you are unsure of how to greet your camper. As long as you are treating all of your campers equally, you are doing something right!
- **Switch up your activities.** This will help to bring old and new campers together *and* keep camp fun year after year.<sup>4</sup> Campers who already know the rules and routines might get bored listening to them again and form cliques with their old buddies. Switching things up keeps everybody interested and connected. Try some of the inclusive activity examples on pages [49](#) to incorporate new games into your camp.
- **Model inclusive behavior.** Get to know *everyone* at camp, and use teambuilding exercises to prevent staff *and* camper cliques. Encourage all campers to interact with each other. Frequent icebreakers are a great way to do this.

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- **Build relationships.** Bring campers and counselors together as peers. High-fives, camp-wide inside jokes, and other shared activities can create a fun and inclusive atmosphere for everyone. In this atmosphere, people feel more comfortable being themselves and, most importantly, they feel like they are a part of the group.<sup>5</sup>
- **Focus on the present!** It is great that campers have happy memories to share, but it can exclude people who are new to camp. Keep new campers included by avoiding reminiscing about past summers. Consider hosting camp reunions during the year to provide a space for campers and staff to reminisce without alienating new camp members, or let old campers share their favorite camp memories with new campers so they can see what the buzz is about. You can also switch up your activities so that everyone is on the same playing field.<sup>6</sup>
- **Materialize the camp spirit.** Bring campers together with videos, songs, and souvenirs they make together themselves. That way, campers can take a piece of the culture of inclusion home with them and remember that inclusive feeling all year long.<sup>7</sup>
- **Inclusion is a team effort.** Make sure staff and campers know they are working toward the same common goal: inclusion. Promote inclusion amongst staff and campers by educating them about disabilities, encouraging them to assist each other, and asking them to suggest ways to make activities more inclusive. Work together to find solutions if special accommodations have to be made. Page 28 provides some examples of appropriate ways to talk to your campers about disabilities.<sup>8</sup> Care must be given to obey Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) laws. A child's specific disability should not be discussed among other campers or staff unless deemed necessary by the parent or caregiver.
- **Do not segregate by sex.** Inclusion covers all forms of differences, not just differences in ability.<sup>9</sup>
- **Scan for inclusion.** If you see someone by himself or herself, ask them how you can include them. Part of a counselor's job is to constantly scan to make sure everyone is included and having fun. Campers should always be busy.
- **Make your camp yours!** Have unique foods, clothing, activities, and words that only your staff and campers know about. You probably have some of these already. Nicknames and camp games are a part of this, too (as long as the nicknames are not derogatory and have the camper's approval). Maybe your camp is the only place where your campers feel comfortable coming out of their shells or



## SETTING THE CONTEXT

- wearing a Superman costume “just because”—that is the fun of camp, kids can just be kids!
- **Invite everyone in.** Orient campers who come in late or are entering a group for the first time. Teach them the “lay of the land”: what you call the different camp buildings, what activities you do where, and who’s who. You can pair veteran campers up with new campers to make this easier on you *and* to promote inclusion amongst your campers!
  - **Keep everyone in.** In games with elimination, give campers who have been eliminated an activity so they are not just sitting on the sidelines. Or, better yet, switch up the rules to the game so there is little to no elimination involved. See page [49](#) for some inclusive games you can play to pass the time and avoid elimination.<sup>10</sup>
  - **Find similarities.** Use things your campers have in common to group them into teams using a variety of categories like favorite ice cream flavor or birthday month so they each get a chance to mingle with everybody else.<sup>11</sup>

All of these little elements and more come together to create a culture of inclusion. They may seem like small things, but they can make a huge difference. During the off-season, when your campers are at home, they will remember the way camp made them *feel*—like a part of the group. They will remember that everyone knew their name, the games and songs and memories they made with their new friends, and the lessons they learned together about the value of inclusion.



### DISABILITY ETIQUETTE

*A “disability”, according to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), is a “physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities” like breathing, speaking, walking, working, or eating.<sup>12</sup>*

This is a broad definition that includes most people at some point in their lives. You might break your wrist and not be able to eat the same way for a few days. Or, you might get into an accident and be unable to walk, talk, or dress yourself without assistance or in the way you did before. As you get older, you might lose your memory or you may require assistance caring for yourself. All of these count as disabilities.

“Etiquette” means respectful and considerate behavior in which people in a group generally agree. It means treating others with respect and the way you want to be treated. You would not think to stare at someone or call them “ugly” because it is disrespectful and you would not want to be treated or talked in to that way.

An important part of disability etiquette is using **person-first language**. You would not want people to identify you as “cancerous” if you have cancer or “arthritic” if you have arthritis. This is also true of people with disabilities. People with disabilities generally do not want to be described primarily by their disability.<sup>13</sup>

Similarly, people with disabilities live long and fulfilling lives. Pity and words like “suffering”, “victim”, or “wheelchair-bound” reduce people to a patient or victim status. There are certainly challenges that occur when living with a disability, but everyone encounters obstacles that do not define them as a person.<sup>14</sup>

People with disabilities are siblings, parents, athletes, artists, teachers, friends, and much more. By using person-first language, you make it clear that you recognize and **appreciate** all of the unique and beautiful things about a person rather than defining them by their disability.

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### PERSON FIRST LANGUAGE

Say...	Instead of...
People with disabilities	The handicapped or disabled
Paul has a(n) intellectual/cognitive disability/diagnosis	He's mentally retarded*
Kate has an autism spectrum disorder/a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder**	She's autistic
Jose has Down syndrome/a diagnosis of Down syndrome	He's down's; a Down's person; mongoloid
Sara has a learning disability/diagnosis	She's learning disabled
Bob has a physical disability	He's a quadriplegic/is crippled
Maria uses a wheelchair/mobility chair	She's confined to/is wheelchair bound
Tom has a mental health condition	He's emotionally disturbed/mentally ill
Ryan receives special ed. services	He's in special ed.; is a sped student/inclusion student
LaToya has a developmental delay	She's developmentally delayed
Children without disabilities	Normal/healthy/typical kids
Communicates with her eyes/device/etc.	Is non-verbal
People we serve/provide services to	Client, consumer, recipient, etc.
Congenital disability	Birth defect
Brain injury	Brain damaged
Accessible parking, hotel room, etc.	Handicapped parking, hotel room, etc.
She needs/she uses	She has a problem with/she has special needs

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## SETTING THE CONTEXT

*\*A note about the “r-word”:* The r-word (“retarded,” “mental retardation”) was formerly the official medical diagnosis for intellectual disabilities, and many older people still may use this terminology. However, **the r-word is a fiercely derogatory term** that opponents liken to the n-word. Using it in any case, whether referring to a person with an intellectual disability or not, carries a very negative connotation deeply and personally hurtful to many families. Using *any* form of derogatory language demonstrates poor etiquette, poor vocabulary, and a lack of professionalism.

Recently, the “Spread the Word to End the Word” movement, aimed at banning the r-word, has been very successful in banning this word and raising awareness about the hurt it causes many families. A federal law, Rosa’s Law, was passed in 2010, banning the use of the r-word in federal health, education, and labor policy.<sup>15</sup> A similar bill was passed in Delaware in 2011.<sup>16</sup>

Despite these advances, many people still do not know what terminology they *should* use. Avoiding talking about intellectual disabilities altogether or pretending like they do not exist is *not* the answer. Educating people about using more positive language is. Today, both the terms intellectual and cognitive disability are acceptable, and the American Psychiatric Association has officially changed the diagnosis of “mental retardation” to “intellectual disability.”<sup>17</sup> Next time you hear someone use the r-word, take it as an opportunity to educate him or her about less offensive terms they can use. And encourage your fellow counselors to take a pledge to ban the r-word by visiting <http://www.r-word.org/>.<sup>18</sup>

**\*\*Autism is a spectrum disorder, meaning individuals are diagnosed with “autism spectrum disorder” and fall somewhere on the spectrum according to the severity of their disability.**

## TEN COMMANDMENTS OF ETIQUETTE FOR COMMUNICATING WITH PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES<sup>19</sup>

It sometimes feels uncomfortable meeting someone for the first time. When you are meeting a person with a disability, there is only one thing to keep in mind: You are meeting a person, who just so happens to have a disability. There is no complex method that you must use to communicate or interact. “Hello” usually works just fine.

A respectful strategy is to approach people with disabilities as you would approach anyone of their age or in their position: “Mr./Mrs.” if they are older than you, and simply by name or nickname if they are your peer. You can also ask what they would like to be called! Here are some tips for easing the discomfort in certain situations:

1. When talking with a person with a disability, speak directly to that person rather than through a companion or sign language interpreter.
2. When introduced to a person with a disability, it is appropriate to offer to shake hands. People with limited hand use or who wear an artificial limb can usually shake hands. Shaking hands with the left hand is an acceptable greeting.
3. When meeting a person who has a visual disability, always identify yourself and others who may be with you. When conversing in a group, remember to identify the person to whom you are speaking.

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4. If you offer assistance, wait until the offer is accepted. Then listen to or ask for instructions.
5. Treat adults as adults. Address people who have disabilities by their first names only when extending the same familiarity to all others. Never patronize people who use wheelchairs by patting them on the head or shoulder.
6. Leaning on or hanging on to a person's wheelchair is similar to leaning on or hanging on to a person and is considered rude. The chair is part of the personal body space of the person who uses it.
7. Listen attentively when you are talking to a person who has difficulty speaking. Be patient and wait for the person to finish, rather than correcting or speaking for the person. If necessary, ask short questions that require short answers, a nod, or a shake of the head. Never pretend to understand if you are having difficulty doing so. Instead, repeat what you have understood and allow the person to respond. The response will clue you in and guide your understanding.
8. When speaking with a person who uses a wheelchair or a person who uses crutches, place yourself at eye level in front of the person to facilitate the conversation. Find a chair to sit in or lean on one knee so you are face-to-face.
9. Not all people who are Deaf can read lips. For those who do lip-read, be sensitive to their needs by placing yourself so that you face the light source and keep hands, cigarettes and food away from your mouth when speaking.
10. Relax. Don't be embarrassed if you happen to use accepted, common expressions such as "See you later," or "Did you hear about that?" that seem to relate to a person's disability. Do not be afraid to ask questions when you are unsure of what to do.

*Remember, if you are unsure of what to say or do, just politely ask! People are willing to help you if you treat them with respect.*

### **Some additional tips:**<sup>20</sup>

- Offer an alternate way of communicating if you really cannot understand what someone is saying; you could try signing, writing things down, or acting out your message.
- Some people use communication boards to communicate. Make sure these are always available for them to use.
- When working with individuals who are blind or have visual disabilities and require guiding assistance, be sure to warn them of upcoming steps, curbs, furniture, doors, or other changes in the terrain. If they ask for assistance with guiding, ask them *how* you can assist—they may have a preferred method, like linking arms or holding hands.

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- Let people who are Deaf or who have hearing disabilities take the lead in how they wish to communicate. Everyone is different, and they may have a unique way of communicating that you can learn.
- Speaking more loudly will not necessarily make you more easily understood when speaking to someone who is Deaf or has a hearing disability. Shouting at someone is interpreted as patronizing and offensive. Instead, try finding a non-verbal way to communicate.
- If your camper has a service animal, remember that the animal is “on the job” when with your camper so do not try to pet or play with the animal. Ask your camper if and when it would be appropriate to pet the service animal.
- Just as saying “see you later” and “did you hear about that”? are not considered offensive, neither are questions such as “Did you watch that movie”? (as opposed to “Did you hear that movie”? when speaking to someone who is blind or has a visual disability) and “Do you want to go for a walk”? (as opposed to “Let’s go for a roll!” when speaking to someone who uses a wheelchair.



## CHAPTER II: INTRODUCTION TO DISABILITIES

### APPRECIATING DIFFERENCES

Every child is different. And every child with a disability is different. Though there are general characteristics of various disabilities, these individual differences mean the best way to get to know your camper's needs is to get to know your camper the same way you would with anyone else. Ask them about their likes and dislikes. Find things you have in common. Talk to them about their hobbies and dreams. Have fun together!

*If you know one person with a disability, you know one person with a disability.*

Educating yourself about different disabilities, the disability rights movement, and strategies for inclusion are all great ways you yourself can become a part of the disability rights movement and advocate for your campers and friends. You might even find yourself interested in disability-related careers like special education, advocacy, physical or occupational therapy, or adapted recreation.

Reading a description of the symptoms of a disability is vastly different from actually getting to know someone with that disability. The wide spectrum of symptoms and the natural occurrence of individual differences in people make generalizations about people with different disabilities ineffective. The second you start forming expectations of people, their personalities, behaviors, or abilities based on their disability, a person with that disability will come along and prove you wrong.



### RECOGNIZING PEOPLE FIRST

People have disabilities, but they are not their disabilities. Every single person is a *person first*. So, although educating yourself about disabilities is a great thing to do, be careful not to let it color your perception of a person based on their disability. A disability can play a major role in someone's life, but it does not make them who they are. Children with disabilities are more like other children than they are different.

### ASSUMING ABILITY

Maximize your camper's independence. Focus on their abilities and assume that they can do things for themselves rather than that they cannot. Encourage children to be more independent by saying things like, "I think you can do that yourself. Why don't you try it?" Step in to provide assistance only if it is necessary. For children who require assistance with some things, the things they *can* do for themselves are even more important. Give your camper as much time as is required for them to complete activities independently. Sometimes, maximizing independence is more important than getting things done quickly or neatly.

### RESPECTING PRIVACY

Your camp should ask important questions about certain aspects of your campers' healthcare needs—medications taken, allergies, care needed, and history of medical issues—in order to maximize the safety of your campers. The law recognizes that camps may need to ask for this information, but regulates who can share this information and how it can be shared. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) is a federal law that protects and regulates the sharing of private individual medical information.<sup>1</sup> Disabilities are medical diagnoses protected by this law. HIPAA applies only to "covered entities," which include healthcare providers, health plans, and healthcare clearinghouses. Some camps may be considered covered entities depending on the services they offer. Camp administrators should go to [www.cms.gov](http://www.cms.gov) to determine whether your camp qualifies as a covered entity under this law. Counselors should ask camp administrators if your camp qualifies as a covered entity and, if so, what you need to know about sharing your camper's medical information. See page [100](#) for a sample registration form that asks for this valuable information.

To learn more about federal HIPAA laws, go to: [goo.gl/6exCOs](http://goo.gl/6exCOs)

For frequently asked questions about federal and state HIPAA laws, go to: [goo.gl/xZZSqQ](http://goo.gl/xZZSqQ)

For information about how HIPAA applies to summer camps, go to: [goo.gl/HCvfVG](http://goo.gl/HCvfVG)

### LIST OF DISABILITY ORGANIZATIONS

To learn more about some of the most common disabilities, including cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities, mental illnesses, and sensory disabilities, please see [Appendix A](#) or visit the following websites:

#### *All Disabilities: General Information*

Center for Parent Information and Resources  
<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/>

United States National Library of Medicine  
[www.nlm.nih.gov/](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/)

#### *Down Syndrome*

National Down Syndrome Society  
[www.ndss.org](http://www.ndss.org)

#### *Cerebral Palsy*

United Cerebral Palsy of Delaware, Inc.  
[www.ucpde.org/faqs](http://www.ucpde.org/faqs)

#### *Epilepsy*

Epilepsy Foundation  
[www.epilepsy.com](http://www.epilepsy.com)

#### *Intellectual Disabilities*

American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities  
[www.aidd.org](http://www.aidd.org)

#### *Learning Disabilities*

National Center for Learning Disabilities  
[www.ncld.org](http://www.ncld.org)

#### *Mental Illnesses*

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry  
[www.aacap.org](http://www.aacap.org)

Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre  
[www.keltymentalhealth.ca](http://www.keltymentalhealth.ca)

National Alliance on Mental Illness  
[www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)

#### *Selective Mutism*

Selective Mutism Anxiety Research and Treatment Center  
[www.selectivemutismcenter.org](http://www.selectivemutismcenter.org)

#### *Sensory Disabilities*

American Foundation for the Blind  
[www.afb.org](http://www.afb.org)

National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders  
<http://www.nidcd.nih.gov>



### CHAPTER III: COMMUNICATION

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#### COMMUNICATING WITH CAMPERS

The counselor-camper relationship is at the heart of the camp experience for both individuals. The more you get to know your campers, the more you will be able to find small ways to make camp an unforgettably fun experience for them. You are both a caregiver and a friend to your campers. Enhance that bond by talking to your campers, getting to know their backgrounds, likes, and dislikes, and by enjoying camp activities together.

*The use of non-verbal modes of communication is “a matter of degree rather than difference.”*

*International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication*

We all use both verbal and non-verbal methods of communicating. You have most likely used hand gestures or facial expressions to supplement your verbal speech. Some people use these non-verbal methods of communicating more often—it is “a matter of degree rather than difference.”<sup>1</sup> If a camper uses a communication board or other form of assistive technology to communicate, they will most likely bring that technology with them to camp. Ask your camper plenty of questions—about how they prefer to communicate, any special assistive devices they may use, their preferred methods of assistance with personal care needs, and what coping strategies they use if and when they get upset.

#### ***Behavior as a method of communicating:***

Get to know your camper so that you can unlock what they are trying to say when they behave in different ways. The list below describes various methods of communicating. These may be either a primary method of communicating or a supplement to verbal speech for your camper.

## Unaided methods of communicating:

These methods of communicating require no assistive technologies.<sup>2</sup> You most likely use these in your regular speech:

- **Behavior:** “All behavior speaks.”<sup>3</sup> Many behaviors interpreted as “bad” are actually a child’s attempts to communicate something to you. Your camper may feel uncomfortable or restless because they are tired, need to use the bathroom, or feel overwhelmed in the environment. Work with your camper to figure out what their behavior means so that you can find a way to address their needs and learn more effective methods of communicating. See pages [65 to 69](#) for tips on interpreting your camper’s behaviors and supporting positive behavior.
- **Gestures and facial expressions:** Some children use sign language, while others use simple gestures or facial expressions. Think of the hand gestures and facial expressions you use in daily life: a point to indicate something you want or need, or a smile to indicate happiness. These gestures are effective methods of communicating. Some children may have gestures unique to them—work with your camper, their parents, and their caregivers to learn what these gestures mean.
- **Sign language:** Any child may use sign language to supplement their verbal speech or as a primary method of communicating. Although it is not necessary to become fluent in sign language in order to effectively work with your camper, a few simple signs can make a world of difference. Try these basic signs to get you started:<sup>4</sup>



***Aided methods of communicating:*** These methods include assistive devices to make communication easier.<sup>5</sup> All of these methods are easy to use.

- ***Paper and pencil:*** Some campers may bring a notebook to use in order to communicate. They may communicate with you by writing words or drawing pictures, and may ask you to do the same.
- ***Communication books and boards:*** These provide words or pictures that the user can indicate using points, light pointers, eye gazes, a head/mouth stick, or a simple

indication of “yes” or “no” while the listener goes through the options. Communication boards may be simple books, electronic devices, or special apps on an iPad or cell phone.<sup>6</sup>

- ***Keyboards:*** These are just like regular computer keyboards. Users type the messages they want to convey, and the keyboard will either say these messages out loud or be available for listeners to read.<sup>7</sup>



*Communication boards provide an easy, effective method of communicating*

These various methods of communicating are not limited to children with particular disabilities. Children both with and without disabilities use a variety of methods of communicating, and using these different methods can help *all* of your campers to understand you.

Note: Limiting a child’s ability to communicate by confiscating assistive technology they use to communicate is illegal.<sup>8</sup>



### COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

The goal of communication with parents and caregivers is to work together to provide the best camp experience for their child you possibly can. This includes finding out information about how to keep their child safe, happy, and healthy. You want to get an idea of what the child's daily life is like to ease the transition into a different setting. Parents are putting a lot of responsibility into your hands, and they will be happy to see you are taking that responsibility seriously.

The following list provides examples of questions you may consider asking parents to get the conversation going *before* camp starts. These topics should also be discussed directly with your camper. Ask those questions you think are most relevant to your camper:

#### Background information

- What would you like to see your child get out of summer camp?
- What are your child's likes and dislikes?
- How does your child prefer to communicate?
- How can I explain things in a way your child will best understand?
- How can I make your child comfortable in our program?
- In what situations is it particularly hard for your child to feel comfortable?
- What sorts of accommodations can help your child have a positive experience?
- What should I keep in mind when working with your child?
- Does your child have trouble with transitions? If so, how can I make transitions easier for him or her?
- What motivates your child?
- How does your child react to change?

- Does your child have any anxiety regarding eating or going to the bathroom around other people?
- What helps your child to learn?
- How can I contact you if I need help?

#### Behavior

- Does your child have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) to which I can refer? (These forms can list supports children use in schools to help them learn and strategies to help teachers understand behaviors.)
- What are some warning signs I should watch for or triggers I should avoid in order for your child to be most comfortable?
- What adaptive coping strategies do you use to support your child?

### *Personal care*

- Does your child use any special equipment?
- With what might your child require assistance?
- How do you usually assist with dressing/feeding/transferring your child?
- Are there any specific exercises or stretches I should do with your child on a regular basis?

### *Safety*

- Is your child on any type of special diet?
- Does your child have any allergies I should know about?
- Should I be concerned about including your child in any activities?
- Does your child tend to wander from the group?

A responsible counselor asks extensive and informed questions about their campers with the campers' best interest in mind. For the most part, parents will appreciate this enthusiasm. The more honest and open the communication, the better. This communication should be ongoing throughout the summer. In a focus group held by UCP for this project, parents indicated that they prefer daily verbal or e-mail communication with updates on their child's behavior, daily activities, and emotional state. Keep parents informed about any concerns that may come up during the week.

Consider giving your camper a notebook with time at the end of each day to write about what they did that day.

If you find it difficult to communicate with parents, talk to your camp director about other possible solutions.

For sample questions relating to specific disabilities, see [Appendix A](#). Remember not to give out a camper's diagnosis or other confidential medical information without consent. See page [21](#) for information about medical privacy laws and how they may apply to your camp.

### TALKING TO CHILDREN ABOUT DISABILITIES

Children are naturally curious and may ask questions about another child's disability. Other children may not notice any differences at all. Remember that differences in ability are just one part of what makes each person unique, like race or sex. How would you respond if a child asked why someone was a different color than they, or why an older woman had white hair? Make these teachable moments that emphasize both the importance of respecting differences and the similarities between the child and the person in question.<sup>9</sup> Your answer should be given in a developmentally appropriate way and in a way that protects the camper's medical privacy rights under HIPAA. Here are some examples:



#### *Why does Tommy talk funny?*

Tommy has mouth muscles that move differently than ours. He's going to be playing capture the flag with us later. It is his favorite game, just like you!

#### *Sarah's leg is tiny! What happened to it?*

Sarah's legs grew differently than yours. But she is a great swimmer, isn't she?

#### *Why doesn't Phillip talk?*

He does! You use your mouth to talk, and Phillip uses this board to talk.

#### *Can what happened to Sydney happen to me?*

Most people with disabilities are born with them. You can't catch them like a cold. Accidents can happen to anyone, and that is why we always practice safety first. Let's go ask Sydney if she wants to play Uno with us.

#### *Why does Rodney get to use the iPad when he gets upset? Nobody else gets to do that!*

Playing with the iPad helps Rodney when he gets upset, just like you like going for a walk. Everybody has different things that help them feel happy. But you and Rodney *both* love to swim in the pool!

### *Chantelle told me she has depression. What does that mean?*

Everybody feels sad sometimes. When that sadness goes on for a long time and makes people start acting in different ways, it might be depression. A lot of people have depression. Did you know that Chantelle won the dance competition last year? Why don't you ask her to be on your team?

Remember not to give out a camper's diagnosis or other confidential medical information without consent. See page [21](#) for information about medical privacy laws and how they may apply to your camp.



### CHAPTER IV: FOR CAMP ADMINISTRATORS

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#### PROACTIVE ADMINISTRATIVE STRATEGIES FOR INCLUSION:

Inclusion means planning for differences up front, and much of this planning falls under the responsibility of camp administrators. Proactive strategies to promote inclusion include considering hiring staff with disabilities or with an interest in disability services; updating camper registration forms; establishing policies and procedures to ensure effective communication between campers, caregivers, and camp staff; taking a comprehensive look at your current facility and determining its level of accessibility; planning for accessible activities; securing necessary adaptive equipment; reviewing behavior policies to address social-emotional and behavioral needs; formulating policies to address personal care needs; and expanding staff training and orientation.

#### *Before Camp Begins:*

***Consider hiring staff with disabilities or with experience or interest in disability services:*** hiring people with disabilities or people interested in or with experience in the area of disability services, including special education, will benefit both your campers and your employees. Your camp is a potential source for the launching of fulfilling careers! Even a few experienced support staff members assigned to specific tasks can help to promote inclusion.

***Update camper registration forms:*** Your camp's culture of inclusion should be evident to parents before they arrive. Make your message of inclusion clear by advertising your camp as ***"open to all abilities,"*** reaching out to local disability organizations, and updating camp registration forms. A simple "yes" or "no" or a check in a box to a question about medical conditions is often not enough to describe the full range of a child's needs. Giving parents plenty of space to explain their child's needs demonstrates that you are open to all abilities and interested in getting to know their child. Ask about likes and dislikes, medical and behavioral history, personal care needs, and history of being away from home. Also ask about medications and how they are administered; some children may only take their medicine from certain people or in a certain way. You can request that parents attach IEPs or BIPs to the camper application so you are prepared to provide any necessary accommodations. The sooner your camp has this information, the sooner you can plan for inclusion up front.

See [Appendix B](#) for an example of a camp registration form promoting inclusion.

***Establish policies and procedures to ensure effective communication between campers, parents, caregivers, and camp staff:*** an open, honest relationship between parents, campers, and counselors is vital to a successful camp experience for your campers. Offer ***camp tours*** before camp opens to give parents a feel for the camp and an opportunity to work *with* the camp staff to plan for inclusion. Consider calling parents with specific questions about working with their child, and encourage parents to call camp with questions of their own. A ***“meet the counselors” night*** before camp begins allows campers, parents, caregivers, and camp staff to meet and discuss strategies for inclusion. Encourage parents to visit camp throughout the summer to check in on their children. Consider giving campers notebooks with “journal time” each day to write about what they did that day or starting a camp blog for parents to see what their children are doing at camp.

***Take a comprehensive look at your current facility and determine its level of accessibility:*** accessibility means that people of all abilities who come to your camp have equal access to the programs you offer. This includes architectural accessibility and other physical accommodations, as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA; see page [34](#)) as well as the types of activities you provide. Walk through your campsite and ask yourself whether it is accessible; see the chart on pages [36 to 37](#) for examples of walk-through questions.<sup>1</sup> If you have additional questions about the ADA or your camp’s accessibility, contact the Mid-Atlantic ADA Center ([see Appendix C](#)). A list of facility accessibility consultants provided by the center is [in Appendix D](#).

***Plan for accessible activities:*** activities should be designed *ahead of time* to accommodate all abilities! After reviewing your camper registrations, *before* the camp season begins, consider your campers’ needs while writing activity plans. Are your activities equally accessible and fun for everyone? Give your counselors a copy of the camp schedule so you can discuss any concerns before the campers arrive. These schedules should be presented with pictures, such as the schedule on page [56](#), to accommodate a range of abilities. Work together to find ways to make activities as inclusive as possible. See pages [45 to 57](#) for information on making activities inclusive and examples of inclusive camp activities.

Think about your camp activities and the children you will serve. Do you have a camper who uses braces? Do you have a camper with an intellectual disability? Do you have a camper with a visual disability? Challenge yourself to find ways to make all of your activities inclusive. Activities should be the same level of difficulty and fun for the campers as they would be without the accommodations.

Any trips should especially be planned with your campers' needs in mind. Is your destination (doorways, bathrooms, dining areas, etc.) accessible? Is the available transportation accessible? Will you need to make arrangements to ensure all of your campers will have a positive, equal experience? *Anticipate* any issues that may arise, and have multiple backup plans available. If your destination presents a difficult situation for a particular child, consult that child's parents for recommendations on possible accommodations. (For example, if you are going to the movies and a child is afraid of the dark, parents may tell you that letting him or her sit at the end of a row eases anxiety.) There may be a simple solution to the problem, and making the phone call could help you find that solution.

Consult an adapted physical education teacher from a nearby school or adapted aquatics instructor before camp begins for help with making your activities more inclusive. Nearby schools may employ adapted physical education teachers, and several YMCAs have adapted aquatics instructors who offer adapted swim classes for children with disabilities. These professionals may be willing to provide advice about adapting your activities to become more inclusive.

**Secure necessary adaptive equipment:** There are many easy, low-to-no cost accommodations that can make some activities more inclusive. Research do-it-yourself accommodations for popular toys and art supplies. The Toys "R" Us Toy Guide for Differently Abled Kids is one helpful resource to consult when selecting developmentally appropriate toys for children with disabilities.<sup>2</sup> Contact the Delaware Assistive Technology Institute (DATI; see [Appendix C](#)) to inquire about borrowing adaptive equipment such as card holders for assistance when playing cards. The sooner they receive your inquiry, the sooner they can find equipment you are looking for in their inventory or find a way for you to obtain it elsewhere.



### **Review behavior policies to address social-emotional and behavioral needs:**

all camps have policies and procedures that address social-emotional and behavioral needs. Camp administrators should meet to discuss what policies work for their particular camp. Considering your camp's mission for all children to be both safe and included, ask yourself the following questions.

- What is our camp behavior policy?
- Does it promote inclusion?
- Does it disproportionately affect children with disabilities?
- Does it encourage proactive strategies like positive behavior support and prevention of challenging behaviors?\*
- Does it consider special circumstances like self-soothing behaviors and effects of medication?\*\*
- Do we look for the simplest solutions, like speaking to the child, moving the child to a different group, changing counselors, or providing alternate sensory stimulation, first?
- At what point should parents be contacted?
- At what point should campers be sent home?

*\*Children must never be restrained or secluded.* Emphasize this in your camp's behavior policy. Restraint and seclusion include restricting a camper's movement, secluding a camper in a room by themselves, or giving campers medications they have not been prescribed. These practices are *illegal* in many states.<sup>3</sup>

*\*\*Self-soothing behaviors* are a common behavioral symptom of autism spectrum disorders marked by repetitive body movements. Self-soothing behaviors can include hand flapping, rocking, and jumping. These are self-regulatory behaviors that the child adaptively uses for comfort and sensory stimulation. Some of these behaviors are used as forms of communication. Most self-soothing behaviors should not be discouraged, as they are helpful for the child. If you notice maladaptive self-soothing behaviors, such as head banging or biting, simply redirect the child and provide alternate forms of sensory stimulation using toys or games.<sup>4</sup>

Consult pages [65 to 69](#) for ideas on policies supporting positive behavior.

Most existing camp behavior policies will work for children of all abilities. After asking yourself these questions, you may find that no changes will need to be made at all!

**Formulate policies to address personal care needs:** considering your camp's limitations and commitment to safety and inclusion, determine:

- who is in charge of personal care (dressing, eating, going to the bathroom, etc.);
- whether the camp can provide a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) or other professional that can provide personal care services;
- and how the camp will accommodate campers who will be coming to camp with an aide.

If counselors will be providing personal care, a parent, CNA, or other professional should provide hands-on training. Gloves should always be available at camp for personal care. All staff should be instructed on how to use them. See page [64](#) for ideas to get you started on formulating a personal care policy.

**Expand staff training and orientation:** once these policies are formulated, your staff should be made aware of them. Although this manual provides valuable information about making your camp inclusive, hands-on learning is best. To promote inclusion, orientation should address disability etiquette, communication with campers, parents, and caregivers, and inclusive activities. Topics such as personal care, transferring, and handling assistive devices can be covered by a parent, CNA, physical or occupational therapist, or other professional. These trainers can provide a “high-level” overview, but should not replace a thorough conversation with campers, parents, and caregivers about their needs and usual routines. Personal care needs and routines are highly individual to the child. Behaviorists and licensed social workers can provide valuable information about managing behaviors if they work directly with children who will be attending your camp. Take advantage of any educational opportunities to expand your staff’s skills. Contact organizations such as the DDC, UCP, the Epilepsy Foundation of Delaware, or the National Alliance on Mental Illness in Delaware (NAMI) that may be willing to come to your camp for free to provide educational information about working with children with disabilities ([see Appendix C](#)). Your mission of inclusion should be emphasized throughout the orientation process.

## THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT AND OTHER LAWS REGARDING INCLUSION

Laws seeking to protect the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities include the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. *Programs that are covered by these laws are legally prohibited from discriminating against people because of their disabilities.* Issues such as physical accessibility, employment, and accommodations are legally regulated.<sup>5</sup>

**The ADA:** The ADA defines a **disability** as “a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of [an] individual, a record of such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment.”<sup>6</sup> “Major life activities” in the context of camp include learning, communicating, and concentrating.<sup>7</sup> Some children may have trouble with these, but reasonable accommodations can be made to make it easier and to ensure that all of your campers have a positive, inclusive camp experience. See the chapter on inclusive activities on pages [44 to 57](#) for ideas on how to adapt your existing camp activities to be more inclusive.

The ADA applies to most programs that provide services to the public. Under the ADA, covered entities *cannot*:

- deny acceptance to a *qualified* youth. Denying admission to children based on race, creed, ability, or sexual orientation is illegal. If your program has requirements for admission such as an age limit, and the child fits those requirements, you must accept them to your program.<sup>8,9</sup>
- make assumptions about whether a child can participate based on their disability.<sup>10</sup> Do not speculate on your own about whether a child will be able to participate in camp activities. As this manual shows, there are often multiple simple ways to accommodate activities to be more inclusive. Children with severe disabilities and extensive medical needs may surprise you. Honest and open communication with parents will help to ensure the best possible experience for everyone involved.
- require children with disabilities and their families to accept accommodations they do not want.<sup>11</sup> Respect these wishes and only use special accommodations that have been approved by the family.

The ADA also addresses issues of physical accessibility. If your program serves the general public, anyone who enters your facility should have equal access to the grounds. This may mean increasing the width of doorways to accommodate wheelchairs, adding ramps and railings, or providing accessible pathways between buildings.

## MAKING YOUR CAMP ACCESSIBLE

### *How will I know if we are accessible?*

Ask yourself what your program offers to the public. What would a typical visit to your facility involve? Then ask yourself if those activities really are open to the public. See pages [36 to 37](#) to get you started.<sup>12</sup>



## FOR CAMP ADMINSTRATORS

<b>Entrance into the building</b>	Is there a step or are there steps to your <i>main</i> door? Is the door wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair? If you have a ramp, are there rails available?
<b>Walk around the camp</b>	Can <i>all</i> of your campers navigate through campgrounds? Are there accommodations to description plaques for individuals with visual disabilities? (e.g., audio-assisted technology and headphones or Braille print) Is there a place to stop and sit down if someone needs a rest?
<b>Lunch</b>	Are accommodations available for all of your campers to be able to know their food options and get it for themselves (e.g., low counters, wide pathways for wheelchairs, and specialized utensils)? Are you accommodating different dietary needs (see page <a href="#">58</a> )? Will all individuals be able to get their food, sit at a table, eat their lunch, and leave without difficulty?
<b>Bathroom break</b>	Are there accessible bathrooms easily available? Does everyone have equal privacy?

## FOR CAMP ADMINISTRATORS

<p><b>Horseback riding</b></p>	<p>Are there people or assistive technologies available to accompany someone requiring extra assistance sitting up straight on the horse? Do you have a ramp for people who use wheelchairs or with mobility limitations to use to mount the horses? Are there different saddles to accommodate different sizes? Can everyone enjoy horseback riding easily, safely, and <i>equally</i>?</p>
<p><b>Swimming in the pool*</b></p>	<p>Do you have a lift or a ramp? Are there handrails on your steps or ramp? Is the slope on the ramp gradual enough to allow easy entry into the pool? Are your lifeguards trained in how to handle seizures in the pool? Are there lifejackets and/or other flotation devices available in case someone has a seizure or requires extra assistance staying afloat? Can everyone move around easily, safely, and <i>equally</i> through the pool?</p>
<p><b>Pick up and drop-off</b></p>	<p>Are there accessible parking spaces in your parking lot? Can visitors easily get from the curb or sidewalk onto the lot? (Check for bumps in the pavement that may be difficult to get over for people who use wheelchairs or other mobility aids) Is there a spot with extra space available for loading and unloading wheelchairs into cars and buses?</p>

## FOR CAMP ADMINISTRATORS

Suggested accommodations in the preceding chart are recommendations and are not necessarily required by the ADA. Check with the Mid-Atlantic ADA Center ([see Appendix C](#)) for more information on what may be required at your particular facility.

*\*Pools and accessibility:* Your camp's pool may be required to have a lift or ramp depending on pool size, age, pool users, and other factors. Both the ADA and the American Camp Association (ACA) have rules regarding pool accessibility. Check the ACA website for updated requirements and information on how the ADA applies to camps.

For more information:

If you have additional questions about the federal and state ADA laws or your camp's accessibility, contact the Mid-Atlantic ADA Center ([see Appendix C](#)). A list of facility accessibility consultants provided by the center is [in Appendix D](#).

You can also call the ADA Information Line toll-free at 800-514-0301 (voice) or 800-514-0383 (TTY) or visit their website at [www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov).

Federal ADA Pool Requirements: [goo.gl/z8kSKJ](http://goo.gl/z8kSKJ)

Frequently Asked Questions about Accessibility Requirements for Pools: [goo.gl/lYx3KA](http://goo.gl/lYx3KA)

Read the ADA in its entirety at [goo.gl/YymKd3](http://goo.gl/YymKd3)

If you are planning any major renovations to your camp, your camp may have to be brought up to current ADA accessibility standards.

The ADA is a federal law. Check your state laws for special additions to this law. *In cases where the state and federal law seem to contradict, it is lawful to follow that which provides the most protections for people with disabilities.*

The best practice is to ask an expert accessibility consultant or specialist for advice. Be sure to confirm that they have the appropriate credentials and experience to provide accurate information.<sup>13</sup>

*For more information about the history of the disability rights movement in the United States and the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990, watch "Lives Worth Living," a PBS documentary produced by filmmaker Eric Neudel. Consider educating your staff and campers about this important but often overlooked aspect of the civil rights movement in the United States!*

**Other Inclusion Laws:** If your program is operated, funded, or contracted by a public school, you or the school may be subject to the Individuals with Disabilities Education (IDEA) Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. These laws support the inclusion of children with disabilities in school-related recreation programs. See [goo.gl/aXShZk](http://goo.gl/aXShZk) for more information.<sup>14</sup>

***“Inclusion of children with special needs is a very saleable concept.”***

*John Gordy & Tim J. Hall, For ALL the Kids program at Boys & Girls Clubs of National City, California*

### FUNDING INCLUSIVE PROGRAMS

Many camp programs assume that implementing inclusive programs will be costly. Not so! The idea that inclusion must be expensive is a myth. A survey conducted by the Job Accommodation Network from 2004 to 2013 found that 58% of the accommodations companies made were free, and the benefits of accommodating employees with disabilities included increased safety, morale, and profitability.<sup>15</sup> The general finding is that inclusion benefits everyone.

Here are some answers to questions you may have about funding inclusive programs:

***“What if I need a ramp, accessible bathrooms, or widened doorways? Where do I find funding for them?”***

- There may be grants available to help with funding for non-profits seeking to become more accessible.
- Most necessary accommodations are fairly inexpensive, and tax incentives exist to ease any financial burden for for-profit camps. Visit [goo.gl/WKY7A3](http://goo.gl/WKY7A3) for more information on these incentives.

***“If I make the architectural changes to my camp this year, will I have to make other changes next year?”***

- The ADA recognizes the needs and limitations of *both* people with disabilities *and* programs. Programs are only required to make ***“readily achievable”*** steps to accessibility under the ADA.
- “Barrier removals” are separate from facility alterations, and are simple steps toward inclusion that do not trigger additional obligations. Examples of barrier removals include moving an activity to a more accessible room or lowering a paper towel dispenser for easier access.

### *“Who can help me with recommendations about accessibility?”*

- Architects are experts in making architectural changes both visually appealing and accessible.<sup>16</sup>
- If you have additional questions about the ADA or your camp’s accessibility, contact the Mid-Atlantic ADA Center ([see Appendix C](#)).
- A list of facility accessibility consultants provided by the center is [in Appendix D](#).

### *“What are some specific things I can do for free to promote inclusion?”*

- **Hire volunteers!** This is a great way to have extra eyes on your campers while keeping costs low. Volunteers can be young people looking for work experience, junior counselors or counselors-in-training, parents, people who are aging, people with disabilities, and other people in the community. Both the Boy and Girl Scouts have “disability awareness” badges earned for working with people with disabilities.<sup>17,18</sup>
- **Provide internships!** Many college students majoring in special education, physical and occupational therapy, and other fields are seeking hands-on experience and will bring invaluable knowledge to your program.
- **Adapt existing camp practices.** If your shortcut through the woods to the pool is not very accessible, start taking the long way, singing songs and playing games along the way so everyone has fun. See pages [46 to 48](#) for more creative, free ways to adapt common camp activities.
- **Communicate** honestly with parents about your funding concerns—they are often familiar with these concerns and may be willing to work together to find a solution. If you cannot provide one-on-one care, for example, ask if it is possible to have an aide paid by a third party source to attend camp with their child.
- **Borrow** adaptive equipment and toys at no cost from DATI. Contact electronics companies about assistive technology they may be willing to give away for free or at a reduced cost to non-profits.
- **Use donated equipment.** For example, UCP’s Camp Manito uses used manual wheelchairs for transferring campers into the pool. Campers are transferred from their wheelchairs into the donated ones and then wheeled down the ramp into the pool. If your camp already has a pool ramp, this is a safe and inexpensive alternative to pool chairs.
- **Contact** the ADA network in your area to get a feel for the accessibility of your program and estimates on structural changes that may need to be made to your facility ([see page 108](#)).

***“So inclusion is free? I am not convinced—there must be something I have to pay for!”***

Yes, there are some financial concerns that come along with inclusion that are of interest to camps, such as:

- keeping costs down for parents,
- one-on-one care,
- special equipment,
- nursing staff or other special staff.

There are resources available to help with these costs:

- **Seek** health insurance and government programs that cover the cost associated with a child with a disability attending your camp.
- **Garner community support.** Rotary clubs, United Way, the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation, Lions clubs, and Kiwanis clubs have a long history of supporting services for children with disabilities. Countless other community and volunteering organizations look for people who could benefit from their help.
- **Search for grants** that may be available in your community for funding inclusion at your camp.
- **Fundraise** for specific inclusion-related costs. For example, host a dance marathon to pay a nurse for a week of camp or a basketball tournament raising money to build a ramp. Get the campers involved to come up with creative ideas together.

Though it may be challenging to find financial resources, *a child must never be turned away from your program because you do not have the funds to accommodate them.*



## MARKETING INCLUSIVE PROGRAMS

A recreation survey conducted by the University of Delaware's Center for Disabilities Studies in 2013 found that 60% of parents of children with disabilities in Delaware did not feel there were adequate recreation and leisure options for their child. *The biggest obstacles they cited were lack of training and inclusive programs—NOT money or physical accessibility.*<sup>19</sup>



The same survey found that parents get information about recreation opportunities through a variety of sources, some of which your camp may already use, including: schools, state and county park websites and brochures, newspapers, word-of-mouth, MetroKids magazine, Google searches, and disability organizations like Autism Delaware, Delaware Family Voices, and Special Olympics.<sup>20</sup>

All families can benefit from sending their children to summer camp. Children get to have fun, make friends, and gain new skills and interests, and their parents get a much-needed break! Unfortunately, many parents of children with disabilities are reluctant to take advantage of this resource. They know about their child's needs and wonder if someone else will be able to accommodate them. Other parents are afraid they will be turned away if programs find out about their child's disability. Others simply do not think of non-disability specific programs as options for their children. Advertising your camp directly to the disability community will encourage parents to be honest with you about their child's needs and will enhance the experience for all involved.

Gaining parent trust is critical to gaining access to families who have children with disabilities. Once you gain the trust of one parent, word will spread quickly and you will find that the number of campers with disabilities you serve, as well as your expertise in serving them, will grow.

## FOR CAMP ADMINISTRATORS

You can make it known that you are ready and willing to serve children with disabilities at your camp in a variety of ways. When advertising your camp in newspapers, magazines, camp fairs, or elsewhere, be sure to mention that you ***“welcome children of all abilities.”*** Parents of children with disabilities will take note and appreciate that enthusiasm.

In addition to your usual outlets, you may consider advertising directly to the disability community through disability organizations. Contact the DDC, UCP, Easter Seals, The Arc, Family Support and Healthcare Alliance Delaware (Family SHADE), Delaware Family Voices, or other organizations in your area and ask them to let their clients know about your services.

Your organization is a resource for the community, and that community includes children with disabilities. You *are* able to serve these families who want to be a part of all you have to offer—so let them know you can!



## CHAPTER V: INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

### CHAPTER V: INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

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What's the best thing about camp? It's *fun*! Playing games and learning together are what make camp fun—for both campers and counselors! All children can and should be included in your camp activities. This chapter lists some strategies for making sure everyone is included and having a good time.

When it comes to inclusive activities, ask yourself:

- What is the overall goal of this activity?
- How can all of my campers achieve that goal within a single inclusive space?

Ask yourself these questions before your campers arrive: look at your schedule as soon as you get it, and then look at it again. Think about your campers and how they will be included in your activities. Are there things you can do differently to accommodate them? The earlier you plan for differences, the easier inclusion will be! Plan for alternate activities in case your campers finish an activity early or are unsatisfied with the planned activity.

Activities should be designed *ahead of time* to accommodate all abilities. The activity should be challenging and exciting, as it would be without the accommodations.

***"It's not about adding people in after the fact. It's about planning for differences up front."***

*Dr. Laura Eisenman, Associate Professor,  
School of Education, University of  
Delaware*

Camp is all about fun. If your camper is safe and having fun, you have succeeded in reaching your goal. Instead of emphasizing rules or winning, emphasize *fun, involvement, teamwork, and sportsmanship*. The more casual and flexible an activity, the more involvement there is possible.<sup>1</sup> Look out for campers who are off on their own and encourage them to participate by providing different options for participation.

Emphasizing sportsmanship and teamwork is an important way to build character and it promotes your message of inclusion. Encourage your campers to come up with *team names, chants, or uniforms* so that everyone can feel like they are part of the group. If good sportsmanship is rewarded, campers will have an incentive to encourage their fellow campers to participate as well. Consider having *award ceremonies* where every camper presents another with an award for their hard work. That way, campers are encouraged to find the positive qualities in *all* of their fellow campers, promoting a positive and inclusive atmosphere.

## INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

### COMMON CAMP ACTIVITIES AND MODIFICATION IDEAS

Activities can be adapted in three ways: through *equipment*, *changing the rules* of the activity, and by offering *multiple ways to participate*.<sup>2</sup> Examples for various camp activities are listed in the chart on pages [46 to 48](#).



## INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY	MODIFICATION IDEAS
<b>Musical chairs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forget the chairs and make it more like hot potato: everyone runs/wheels around in a circle around the outside of the room. When the music stops, whoever is in one particular spot is “out.” The spot can be marked by a carpet square or a piece of paper.</li> <li>• Alternatively, play traditional musical chairs, but instead of people being “out,” all of the campers have to fit on the remaining number of chairs. People who use wheelchairs have to touch the chairs rather than sit in them. Or, try using carpet squares or pieces of paper instead of chairs.</li> </ul>
<b>Soccer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If your camper does not have use of their legs, but does have some or complete use of their arms, allow them to throw the ball instead of kicking it, providing hand-over-hand guiding to assist with arm movements if necessary.</li> <li>• Try giving your camper a hockey stick to hit the ball instead of using their feet.</li> </ul>
<b>Basketball</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Chair ball”: have a chair on either side of the court under the baskets. The goalies have to stay seated in their chairs. Create a “safety area” around the chairs off-limits to players. Campers must get the ball in their team’s goalie’s lap for a point, either by passing or placing it there. If you have a lot of campers, substitute players from both teams after each point.</li> </ul>
<b>Hiking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider using a less rugged trail or path smooth enough for wheelchairs. The state parks have several wheelchair-accessible paths.</li> <li>• Path making or “trail clearing” with sand, fine gravel, or other smooth, natural materials can also be a camp activity for everyone.</li> </ul>

## INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY	MODIFICATION IDEAS
Arts and crafts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adaptive equipment is available to assist with fine motor skills that make arts and crafts a challenge for some children. Look for triangle crayons and other products for young children in your local arts and crafts or toy store.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Try contacting DATI (<a href="#">see Appendix C</a>) to borrow adaptive equipment.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Pair up your campers for extra assistance—children with limited use of their hands may benefit from “hand over hand” guiding from other campers or counselors to assist with arm movements.</li> <li>Have different forms of art supplies available. For example, glue sticks might be easier than glue bottles for some campers.</li> <li>Make your own adaptive crayons by pouring melted crayon wax into plastic Easter eggs, letting them dry, and cracking off the eggs for an easier grip. Push pencils through balls or hacky sacks secured with rubber bands to provide extra support for motor skill needs.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some children enjoy exploring different textures like paints, clay, leaves, and dirt. Others are bothered by these textures or dislike getting dirty. Accommodate different sensory needs by having gloves, paintbrushes, and other extra supplies on hand. Arts and crafts activities should provide an opportunity for children to express themselves with materials they feel comfortable with.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Bird watching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage your campers to identify birdcalls <i>as well as</i> identifying birds by sight to accommodate auditory learners and children with visual disabilities.</li> <li>Add a tactile element to the lesson by bringing along feathers for the campers to feel and see and match with different bird species.</li> </ul>

## INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY	MODIFICATION IDEAS
High ropes/rock climbing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This activity may require specialized equipment and training. Contact DATI for information on inexpensive sources for equipment (<a href="#">see Appendix C</a>).</li> <li>• For some camps, field trips may be a simpler solution. Contact Camp Fairlee Manor in Chestertown, Maryland, and inquire about using their accessible rock climbing and high ropes facilities (<a href="#">see Appendix C</a>).</li> <li>• Be honest with your camper's parents about possible obstacles you will work together to overcome, and ask them for suggestions. It is possible that their child has tried rock climbing before and found a unique way to accommodate their needs.</li> </ul>
Ball games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pin Ball: Each team stands on one side of the court with a line dividing them. Do not cross the line. Line pins up on either side of the court or scattered throughout. Try to knock down the other team's pins. If one team knocks down the other team's pin or catches a ball, they can put up one of their own pins. Keep playing until time runs out or one team has knocked down all of the other team's pins.</li> <li>• Get Your Trash Out of My Backyard:<sup>3</sup> Line up several soft balls of various sizes in the middle of the court. At start, campers grab as many balls as they can and throw them to the other side. On "freeze," or when the music stops, count up the balls. Use both a verbal and visual signal, like a hand sign, to accommodate different sensory needs. Whoever has the least balls on their side wins. Switch up how long the game lasts each time to keep campers on their toes.</li> <li>• You can also try using beanbags or milk cartons instead of balls for many games, because they are easier to manipulate and pose less of a hazard.<sup>4</sup></li> </ul>

### EXAMPLES OF INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

It is always a good idea to keep camp “fresh” by introducing new activities. Try these inclusive options with your campers:

#### *Lemonade!*<sup>5</sup>

*Ages:* 10 and up

*Objective:* Promote inclusion and teamwork by capturing all of the other team’s players to your team.

*Organization:* Large open rectangle space (e.g., a basketball court) with a midline and marked boundaries. The lines on either far end of the space (e.g., under the baskets) will be “free lines.”

*Equipment:* None

*How to play:*

1. Divide the group in half. Each team faces each other about 20 yards apart on opposite sides of the game space, about halfway between the end and middle lines.
2. The “it” team huddles together and decides where they are from and what they do. Say you pick a singer from Raleigh, North Carolina. Don’t tell the other team!
3. The teams then line up and link arms so each person is across from someone on the other team. The “it” team starts first.
4. The “it” team chants “**Here we come**” as they take one large step towards the other team.
5. The other team answers with one big step forward saying, “**Where you from?**”
6. The “it” team chants “**Raleigh, North Carolina,**” taking yet another step.
7. The other team chants, “**What’s your trade?**”
8. The “it” team chants, “**Lemonade,**” taking one more step toward the other team.
9. The other team chants, “**Show us some if you’re not afraid.**”
10. The “it” team then immediately pantomimes being a singer, doing such things as mouthing a song, holding a microphone, or dancing. No talking allowed!
11. As they pantomime being a singer, the other team yells out occupations they think they are such as baseball player, teacher, or personal trainer.
12. If anyone from the other team yells out “singer,” the “it” team turns and runs to the free line behind them as the guessing team runs after them to try and tag them before they reach the free line.
13. If a player on the “it” team is tagged before he or she reaches the line, he or she must join the other team.
14. The other team huddles and now picks a new place and occupation. They may be hula dancers from Hawaii, surfers from California, or Broadway actors from New York.

### ***Zig-Zag Baseball/Kickball<sup>6</sup>***

**Ages:** All ages—older kids will most likely be able to handle baseball, and all kids can use the kickball version

**Objective:** Work together with your teammates to run past as many cones as you can before your ball gets to the container, while making the game fun for campers of all abilities!

**Organization:** Best played on a softball or baseball field but can be set up in any large area and adapted for indoors

**Equipment:** Five cones placed evenly apart along the first baseline, one base, a hoop or a plastic container located at the pitcher's mound (or closer); for baseball—a bat, an oversized softball/rag ball, batting tee (optional); for kickball—a large rubber ball

**How to play:**

1. Partner up the campers. Pick a pairing description (like reds and blues," "apples and oranges," or "SpongeBobs and Patricks." Be creative!).
2. Split up the partners so that the "Reds" and "Blues" become two separate teams. This is an effective way to split teams evenly because kids on the same level typically partner together when allowed to split on their own.
3. Even though they split on different teams, they must remember who their partner on the other team is.
4. Number off the first team in a batting order.
5. Number one's partner on the other team pitches to him. You may have unlimited pitches, use a batting tee, or decide on a standard number of pitches depending on the skill level of the child.
6. When the player hits the ball into the field, he or she takes off and runs in a zigzag pattern around the five cones placed evenly apart down the first baseline and back to home plate.
7. As the child is running, the team in the outfield is trying to get the ball to the person who pitched the ball. Only the pitcher can place the ball in the container on the pitcher's mound to stop the play.
8. The game is scored by how many cones the batter can run past before the pitcher puts the ball in the container. A home run earns ten points. If the pitcher gets the ball in the container and the batter only passes two cones, he or she earns two points.
9. Rotate through until everyone of the first team to bat gets a chance to hit.
10. Switch sides and repeat.

The scores will be really high depending on the size of your group. The emphasis should be on reaching a goal as a team or whole group instead of one group versus another.

### Parachute Games<sup>7</sup>

Campers love parachutes—the game possibilities are endless, and games can be altered to accommodate all abilities and age levels. Try some of these ideas to get started and then see what you can come up with on your own. Switch up the activities to keep things interesting!

**Ages:** 6-12

**Objective:** Bring everyone together for relaxing games that also serve as great icebreakers.

**Organization:** Lay the parachute out flat on the ground with children circled around its edges, each holding on to the chute or having a buddy hold on to it next to them.

**Equipment:** Beach balls, puffballs, rubber chickens, or rubber or beanbag animals (*Tip: You can use some of the fidgets discussed on page 56. Fidgets are toys that provide an easy way for children to keep their hands busy and receive sensory stimulation that helps them feel calm.*)



**How to Play:**

Try out these different games:

- **Ripples:** Have the campers make small and big waves by shaking soft and hard.
- **Giant Mushroom:** Take three steps in and lift the parachute up high in the air. Let go and let it glide down around everyone.
- **Circle Moving:** Have the campers move around in a circle by walking, skipping, hopping, galloping, etc.
- **Popcorn:** Have the campers make waves and pop balls in the air like popcorn.
- **Merry-Go-Round:** Use a larger ball and have the campers cooperate to get it to move around the parachute.
- **Parachute Volleyball:** Divide into two teams and try to pop balls off the other team's side.
- **Jell-O:** Make a Giant Mushroom as described above, but instead of letting go of the parachute, have campers pull it down behind their backs, sit down underneath, and tuck the parachute under them. Then have them rock back and forth to jiggle like Jell-O.
- **Switch:** Yell out characteristics like “has a brother” or “likes chocolate ice cream.” Campers that fit the category run under the parachute and switch places as the rest of the group does Giant Mushroom.
- **Underwater:** Have several campers at a time lie under the parachute as the rest of the group makes waves over them.

## INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

- **Cat and Mouse:** Everybody sits on the ground and holds the chute flat at their lap. One child crawls underneath as the mouse. Another child crawls on the top as the cat trying to chase the mouse. They have 60 seconds to catch the mouse. The campers sitting around the edges must move the chute up and down to try and hide the mouse. Rotate the campers quickly so all those who want to get the opportunity to chase or be chased.

Activities used with permission from the National Inclusion Project's Let's ALL Play Manual, 2011

## INCLUSIVE POOL ACTIVITIES

Campers *love* the pool. There are many ways to make the pool more inclusive, and even therapeutic, for children. For some children, going from the pool deck into the pool means opening up a whole new world of freedom. The sense of accomplishment you may have felt when you “graduated” to the deep end is amplified for children with mobility limitations. Some children may not walk, but they can swim.



Something as simple as getting into the pool can be seen as a challenge—but it does not have to be. If your pool has a ramp, a donated manual wheelchair can be used to wheel campers into the pool.<sup>8</sup>

See page [38](#) for information about ADA accessibility requirement for pools. Try these inclusive pool activities with your campers:

### *The Old Song and Dance!*<sup>9</sup>

Using music and dance is an especially good way to be inclusive. Incorporate songs like “Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes” or “Hokey Pokey” into your pool activities so that campers can dance, sing, and move around in the water. That way, they can choose how they want to participate. Games like “Simon Says” or “Red Light, Green Light” that require movement are easier and more inclusive in the pool for campers with limited mobility.

### *Hula-hoops*

Hula-hoops provide a great base for several different pool games. They can be used as “baskets” for beach balls or obstacles through which to swim.

### *Make-believe Games<sup>10</sup>*

Use your imagination to come up with creative make-believe games for the pool. Be sure you are adapting them for all age levels and abilities:

Tractor: Pretend you are a tractor: walk and talk like a tractor! See how hard you can blow your “horn” (bubbles) or “plow” your way through the water.

Washing Up: Ask your campers to mimic washing their faces or hair in the pool. This can help with easing pool or water anxiety.

Animal Games: Uh oh, there’s a crocodile in the pool! Scissor your arms together like snapping jaws and see how many campers you can “eat.” Hop and jump like bunnies or kangaroos through the water. What other animals can you think of?

Cleaning the Yard: Scatter pool toys like beach balls, torpedoes, noodles, and kickboards around the pool and see how many your campers can collect. Use some toys that float and others that sink to accommodate a range of swimming abilities, and use both large and small items to accommodate different motor abilities.

Water Aerobics: Try stretching your arms and legs, doing jumping jacks, or yoga poses in the water. Maybe your campers can come up with a synchronized swimming routine all together or in groups.

As you get to know your campers and their abilities in the water, the possibilities become endless. Never stop creating new activities, and have your campers make some up also!

*Keep everyone in.* In games with elimination, give campers who have been eliminated an activity so they are not just sitting on the sidelines. Or, better yet, switch up the rules to the game so there is little to no elimination involved. See page [49](#) for some inclusive games you can play to pass the time and avoid leaving people out.

*Respect “challenge by choice.”* Campers may be ready to accept some challenges and not others. Children grow and develop over time, and may decide at some point that they are ready to accept a challenge. That choice should come from them. Encourage your campers to participate, but remember that the challenge your camper decides not to take this summer may be one they decide to take sometime in the future.

*All campers can get antsy during downtimes.* Having unplanned time in your schedule is the perfect opportunity for your campers to get to know each other and relax. Try activities like reading a book and acting out the story, doing jigsaw puzzles, or playing board games during these downtimes. Counselors should always have short games, songs, or fidgets (see page [56](#)) on hand for active campers and for unexpected changes or wait times throughout the day.

## INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

Transitioning from activity to activity can also be very difficult for some campers. Help ease transitions by giving frequent reminders about upcoming events. See page [56](#) for more information about how to ease transitions.

When leading outdoor activities, remember that heat can be a trigger for many medical conditions including seizures. If possible, have a shady area nearby and options for a less strenuous activity if you notice your camper getting tired.

If you still cannot find a way to accommodate one of your campers, enlist help. Ask your camper or their parents how they usually do things or ask staff and other campers for help in figuring out a way to make things work. Make inclusion a group effort!



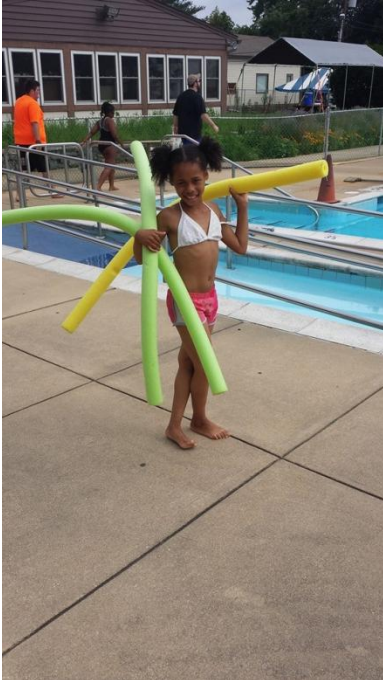
### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR INCLUSIVE ACTIVITIES

#### *Milk Cartons:*<sup>14</sup>

The National Inclusion Project suggests using milk cartons as alternatives to balls in common ball games. Milk cartons are easier to manipulate and work well for children with mobility limitations. Create milk carton “balls” by stuffing cardboard or plastic milk cartons with newspaper and using two pieces of duct tape to secure the top down. Kick the milk cartons around on a blacktop to wear down the sides to make catching and throwing easier.

#### *Streamer Ribbons:*<sup>15</sup>

For more relaxed activities before lunchtime or downtime, consider using streamer ribbons. These can be made with crepe paper, cut up plastic trash bags, nylon, or lightweight fabric. Sticks can be made from dowels, plastic tubes, paper towel rolls, or canning jar rims. Streamer ribbon games are easily adaptable for children of all abilities. Allow children free time to creatively experiment with ribbons. Ask your campers to make their streamers swirl like a tornado, spell their name, or slither like a snake. Try playing music and letting your campers move and create to the music. Have them form small groups and create a routine. Or, make up a story and ask your campers to use their streamers to choreograph the words.



#### *Flotation Devices:*

Flotation devices, like noodles, wings, and inner tubes, are a great resource to help with stability and buoyancy in the water. Campers with limited mobility or strength can greatly expand their abilities in the pool with the use of this equipment.<sup>16</sup>

However, be careful that these devices don’t instill a false sense of confidence. They are not life preservers. If the goal is to improve swimming skills, introduce various flotation devices or gradually deflate them as time goes on so that your camper needs to use more and more of their own skills to swim on their own.

***Safety first!*** Be aware of any tears or leaks in the devices that may result from constant use and thus cause injury.

### **Fidgets:**<sup>11</sup>

Having “fidgets” on hand can be really helpful for lulls in activities. Campers should always be engaged in some sort of activity, and these can provide campers with something to do with their hands while waiting in line or going to their next activity. They also provide sensory stimulation that can have a calming effect—this sensory stimulation can be visual, tactile, auditory, olfactory, or gustatory (taste-centered). Some examples of fidgets include:

- putty or Play-Dough
- stress balls
- spinning tops
- small beanbags
- magnifying glasses
- mini Etch-a-Sketch
- kaleidoscopes
- pipe cleaners
- chewing gum

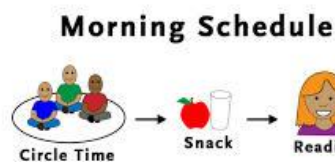
Make your own fidgets by putting some shampoo in a bag for squeezing or throwing some glitter in a water bottle for visual stimulation. In a pinch, sometimes a tight squeeze is all you need!

### **Picture Schedules:**

Picture schedules are an easy, inexpensive, and effective way to make activities more inclusive. They can be especially helpful for children who:

- have trouble with transitions
- have visual learning styles or memories

All children like to be “in the know” about the day’s plans. Go over the day’s schedule with your campers in the morning and remind them throughout the day about the sequence of that day’s activities. Be sure to use short sentences and to point to the schedule to accommodate everyone’s needs. For example, in the following schedule, you would point to each picture and say:



“Right now, we are at circle time. Next, we are going to snack. After snack, we will read a book.”

Source: Bamford (2011), learnnc.org<sup>12</sup>

Warning campers when an activity is almost over may make transitions easier. This could mean giving a ten and then a five minute warning before the end of an activity and reminding them of the next activity, or saying something like “When this song is over, we are leaving the pool and going to lunch.”

The *rules* for different activities can be presented visually and stated at the start of each activity. This can minimize behavioral issues and assist campers with understanding what behavior is expected of them at different activities. If possible, do not include specific times on the schedule, in case things change.<sup>13</sup>

Finally, switch up your activities to prevent cliques from forming between old and new campers and to keep your campers from getting bored of the same activities day after day, year after year.

### ***A Final Note About Inclusive Activities: Bullying***

Some children may tease or neglect children with disabilities who do not participate in camp activities in the same way they do. Counselors should set a good example by de-emphasizing scoring and athletic talent while emphasizing teamwork, good sportsmanship, and individual accomplishments. Some non-visible disabilities like learning or cognitive disabilities may be misinterpreted. If this happens, calmly explain that all people have different ways of learning and participating, and those differences should be respected. Awards for good sportsmanship can help to encourage children themselves to promote inclusion. Make sure everyone involved understands that the goal of all activities is for *everyone* to have fun and to be included *together*, not to win the most points or hit the ball the hardest. See pages [28 to 29](#) for tips on talking to children about disabilities.



### CHAPTER VI: SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS

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Your camp most likely has policies in place to address special dietary needs. These should emphasize careful reading of labels, communicating with parents about allergies and food intolerances, and procedures to follow in the event of anaphylactic shock.

When your campers sit around the table together, everyone should be able to enjoy their meal safely. **Anticipate** any issues and plan for them before they arise. If you have a camper who is allergic to gluten and you know you are having chocolate cake for dessert, talk to the kitchen staff about finding a gluten-free option so that your camper feels included.

Special diets may include ketogenic, high/low calorie, high/low fat, or the dysphagia diet for disabilities such as epilepsy, diabetes, or spina bifida. Consult your camper's parents for help with the specifics of their child's diet.

#### FOOD ALLERGIES

A child might describe allergic symptoms in many ways. They may say:

- This food is too spicy.
- My tongue is hot (or burning).
- It feels like something is poking my tongue.
- My tongue (or mouth) is tingling.
- My tongue (or mouth) itches.
- My mouth feels funny.
- There is a frog in my throat.
- There is something stuck in my throat.
- My lips feel tight.
- My throat feels thick.
- It feels like there is a bump on the back of my tongue.<sup>1</sup>

Some children may have different ways of communicating. Be sure to monitor all of your campers closely for signs of distress.

### PRADER-WILLI AND PICA

Prader-Willi is a genetic condition that causes insatiable appetite. When working with children with Prader-Willi, it is important to be consistent with dietary rules and to keep foods out of sight. Some children with Prader-Willi syndrome may have signs of pica as well.<sup>2</sup>

Pica (pronounced *pie-ka*) is an eating disorder in which people crave and eat non-food items like dirt or paper. Some items, such as glass or art supplies, can cause choking or infection. Keep campers with pica away from any items they are at risk of consuming which may be harmful.<sup>3</sup>

### EATING ASSISTANCE

If your camper requires eating assistance, help them the way you would help yourself. Assisting someone with eating can be done safely if done correctly; be sure to ask your camper and their parents or caregivers about what works for them. Wait for your camper to finish swallowing before offering the next bite, and give them the opportunity to drink throughout their meal.

They may require different kinds of assistance:

- Describing the food on the plate for campers with visual disabilities;
- Cutting up food into bite-sized pieces;
- Feeding, being careful not to place food in their mouth too quickly;
- Assisting your camper with lifting his or her drink or fork to their mouth;
- Hand-over-hand guiding for unsteady hands



Do not give your camper any more assistance than he or she needs. Your camper may have to feed themselves with their hands or get a little bit messy. Allowing them their independence is more important than preventing a big mess! Also, ask about assistive devices like special utensils or bibs that your camper usually uses to eat. These may be available for free at a local Goodwill or from DATI; see contact information [in Appendix C](#).

Remember to ask parents and campers *how* you can assist them. *Bon appétit!*

### CHAPTER VII: ASSISTIVE DEVICES AND PERSONAL CARE

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Assistive devices include braces, prostheses, wheelchairs, ileostomy bags, colostomy bags, feeding tubes, and shunts that keep people safe and allow them the freedom to move about and live in the world with limited worries about medical issues. These devices are very expensive and are customized for the individuals who use them. This section gives a general overview of assistive devices, but the best practice is to communicate with your camper and their parents or caregivers about how they typically care for these devices to ensure your camper's safety and comfort.

Think about assistive devices as an extension of their user's body. Just as you might use your mouth to eat, for example, some people use feeding tubes. Treat medical devices as you would that person's body. Handling someone's wheelchair without their permission is akin to picking someone up and moving them from one seat to the other!

Children with extensive healthcare needs are able to attend camp, just like everyone else. Children who have devices like ports, catheters, feeding tubes, and colostomy or ileostomy bags may bring a nurse or aide along with them to camp who will be responsible for these devices.

Information about handling other types of assistive devices is listed here:

#### BRACES

Braces are expensive, custom-made mechanical devices applied to the body to assist or to restrict movement. A specialist makes them with a prescription from a doctor. Braces are to be worn when and as the physician directs. Children are typically more active at camp and often engage in new activities. This can lead to chafing around the area of the braces. If you notice a chafed area on your camper's skin, take them to the camp nurse or your camp director for help.

Sometimes, children may see camp as a chance to have a "vacation" away from their braces. This is not the case. If a child normally wears braces all or most of the time, they should wear the braces at camp, unless otherwise advised by a parent, caregiver, or nurse.<sup>1</sup>

Ask your camper how they usually apply their braces—they will give you the most helpful information. Campers and their parents or caregivers can also explain how to remove and clean the braces. Be sure to ask plenty of questions—the more detailed the instructions, the better.

**Important notes about braces:** Keep braces away from water and sand, which can cause damage. Avoid direct sunlight, which can cause braces to lose their shape.<sup>2</sup> If you notice any need for repair or cleaning, ask your camper, their parents or caregivers, camp nurse, or camp director for assistance. Ask your camper and their parents or caregivers whether they would like you to clean the braces, and, if so, *how* you can do it effectively without causing damage.

### PROSTHESES

Prostheses are devices that are made to replace a part of the body. These can include dentures, prosthetic eyes, arms, and legs. In addition to prevention of breakage, daily cleanliness of both the prosthesis and the area of the child that it touches are extremely important.<sup>3</sup>

### WHEELCHAIRS

Wheelchairs are very expensive devices and should be handled with care. They are an extension of their users' bodies. Treat them as such.

There are dozens of different types of wheelchairs, each with their own special features. This section provides general information about handling wheelchairs, but check with your camper and their parents or caregivers for the best advice on handling that camper's particular wheelchair. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the charging routine, reset, disengage, and power buttons (for power wheelchairs), footrests, and brakes.

**Every child in a wheelchair should be secured with a seat belt.** This averts injury and adds to the child's feeling of security. *To maximize safety, do not let other campers push your camper's wheelchair.*



**Manual Wheelchairs:** Ask your camp director for hands-on training for wheelchair handling. A parent, nurse, physical or occupational therapist, or other experienced professional can provide this training. Hands-on training is often the best way to see what works and does not work when pushing a wheelchair. This way, you will not find yourself stuck when it comes to working with someone who actually uses a wheelchair. Staff can practice by pushing each other up and down inclines and working together to find ways to safely get over curbs.

Your training should cover these points:<sup>4</sup>

1. **Etiquette:** speak to the child who uses the chair first. Do not walk up behind the chair and just start pushing. Does the child want or need your assistance? If so, how would they like you to assist?
2. **Communication:** always ask permission before going backwards or going over a big curb or bump. Give your camper a warning so they will not be startled by any bumps.
3. **Adjustment:** is the child's seating position comfortable? Assist the child to a more comfortable position. Some disabilities may cause children to slump to one side throughout the day, and your camper may require assistance with adjusting him or herself.
4. **Safety:** before moving, check to see if the child's seat belt is fastened, *then* release the brakes. Wheelchairs, especially manual wheelchairs, are *not designed to move quickly*. Pushing a manual wheelchair and running at the same time is *never* recommended. When going downhill on an inclined surface, turn manual wheelchairs around and guide them backward to prevent the child from slipping forward out of the chair.
5. **Knowing your strength:** when going up or down hills, do not be embarrassed to ask for assistance. *If you are straining, you do not have control over the situation.*
6. **Taking your time:** *never run when pushing a wheelchair.* The smallest uneven surface can tip the chair over and cause an injury. **Speed means danger.**
7. **Locking the brakes:** when you arrive at your destination, lock the brakes. If you are transferring your camper out of their wheelchair, lock the brakes. *Never walk away without putting on the brakes.*
8. **Footrests:** ask a parent, nurse, therapist, or other professional to review different types of footrests campers can have. Sometimes they need to be adjusted with straps, sometimes they swing outwards, and sometimes they can be removed. Familiarizing yourself with different types of footrests is very important, because they can get in the way when assisting your camper if you do not remove or adjust them.

**Power Wheelchairs:** Today, many children who use wheelchairs use power wheelchairs that are powered electronically and controlled with buttons. Power wheelchairs grant people more freedom and independence. Proper etiquette is just as important with power wheelchairs. If your camper requires assistance with turning their wheelchair on or off, always ask permission first.

There are added safety concerns with power wheelchairs. Some added tips for handling power wheelchairs include:<sup>5</sup>

- **Learn how to disengage a power wheelchair and put it in free wheel:** power wheelchairs only move smoothly if they are: a) turned on or b) put in free wheel. If the battery on your camper's wheelchair is running low, charge it. If the battery dies, *put it in free wheel*. This makes the wheelchair easy to push. Familiarize yourself with the wheelchair and ask your camper or their parents or caregivers how to disengage the chair in the event of an emergency.
- **Locate the power button:** power wheelchairs should always be **turned off near water**. Remind your campers to turn their wheelchairs off near water, and ask permission if they require your assistance.
- **Locate the reset button:** a chair can become immovable if it turns off for some reason and will not turn back on. Some wheelchairs have reset buttons that can help in these situations.
- **Learn how to charge the wheelchair:** power wheelchairs will need to be charged overnight. This is a part of your camper's daily routine and he or she will most likely do this independently or remind you to assist them. Ask your camper, their family, or their caregivers to provide specific instructions on how and when to charge the wheelchair. Remind them to send the charger with the camper to camp. Children are often more active at camp than they are otherwise, and wheelchairs may lose power more quickly at camp than they would typically.

Never leave a wheelchair in the rain. This can damage the chair and be hazardous for the camper.

Remember that these devices are designed for that individual camper. Though this section provides a general overview of assistive devices, it should not replace a thorough conversation with your camper and their parents or caregivers about the proper handling and maintenance of their particular assistive device or devices.

### PERSONAL CARE

Your camp will have a policy determining who is responsible for providing personal care. Personal care involves what a person needs to do to take care of themselves in daily life: brushing their teeth, going to the bathroom, bathing, dressing, eating, and moving from place to place. A person with a disability may require assistance with some or all of these tasks. Think about how you would like someone to care for you if you were unable to care for yourself—respect for your camper is very important. You can assist someone with his or her personal needs while still retaining your camper's dignity.



Respect includes your camper's privacy. They may require assistance getting on and off of the toilet, but may not want you to stay in the room with them while they are using the bathroom. It also means using respectful language. Older children and teenagers with incontinence may dislike using the term "diaper"—using words like "Depends" or "incontinence aid" is more respectful.

Safety and respect are the two most important things to remember when providing personal care. You can avoid getting yourself or your camper hurt by asking them questions about every step of the process. Your camper has someone assisting them with these needs everyday, and can tell you about their usual routine and what does and does not work for them. Your camper may need to be lifted and transferred differently depending on their size, personal preferences, ability to hold weight, and disability.

Providing personal care involves assisting your camper with very private, intimate parts of their life. The possibility of sexual harassment claims is higher in these situations than in others. For this reason, and for safety reasons, it is recommended that you bring another counselor with you when providing personal care. **Staff should never turn their back on a child.** One hand should be on your camper at all times when you are providing personal care. Make sure you have your supplies ready before assisting your camper.

When providing personal care, **gloves** should always be used. Check with your camper for any latex or other allergies that may interfere with this practice; latex-free gloves are available for those with allergies.

See page [59](#) for specific information about assisting campers with eating and special dietary needs.

### CHAPTER VIII: UNDERSTANDING BEHAVIORS

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Behavior is one of the most common forms of communication we all use. Sometimes, it can be challenging to interpret what your camper is trying to tell you. Some responses are obvious—like giving a camper a chance to rest if they feel groggy. Other times, it can be more challenging to try to find an appropriate response. There are general practices that are good to follow when managing behaviors in *any* camper, but the best practice is to get to know your camper to find out what works best for them. Always communicate with your campers directly so you can work together to have a fun and inclusive camp experience. The earlier your camp takes steps to learn proactive techniques for understanding behaviors, the better. Ask your camp administrators for information they may have received from meetings with parents, caregivers, or caseworkers *before* camp began. The more knowledge you have about your individual campers, the better.

*Support positive behavior rather than reacting to misbehavior.*

#### PREVENTION

Most children are happy to be at camp and will be motivated to follow your directions. At the same time, any child can misbehave. Patience, adaptability, and a focus on positive behavior will help to prevent these behaviors from happening. Your camp's behavior policy most likely already follows these principles, and will work for children both with and without disabilities. The goal is for all children to feel safe and included, and to *prevent* challenging behaviors from happening at all. The following tips can help prevent challenging behaviors from occurring:

#### 1. Set clear rules.

Staff *and* campers should be aware of the behavior expected of them in different activities and settings. Remind your campers of the rules for a certain environment *while* you are in that environment. Focus on what campers *should* do rather than what they *should not* do using frequent reminders and simple words. For example, you can say, "Now we are at the swimming pool. This is where we walk slowly and respect each other's space in the pool". It may be necessary to emphasize that camp rules may be different from the rules at home, school, or even at a different camp. Visual representations of rules, like a sign with pictures illustrating good behavior, can help to accommodate a range of abilities and learning styles.

### 2. *Be consistent.*

When a child is misbehaving, it is tempting to bribe them with an exciting reward if they behave. However, most children live in the present.<sup>2</sup> For some children with disabilities, this can be especially true. Children who are misbehaving are often frustrated and angry, and may have trouble understanding far-off consequences.

The best practice is to be clear *and consistent* with your rules. If you stick to agreed-upon rewards, the rules will be easier for everyone to understand.

### 3. *Focus on positive behavior.*

Let your campers know how they *should* behave, not just what to avoid. Look for examples of your camper behaving well and *reward* them!<sup>3</sup>

### 4. *Use positive language.*

Say “let’s do this” instead of “do not do that” when redirecting a child to a new activity. Many children respond best to simple, positive language. Positive **body language** is also very important. If your camper misbehaves, meet them at eye level, use a calm voice, and emphasize that you are cooperating *with* them to change the behavior.<sup>4</sup>

***Use the “fair-pair rule”:  
every time a negative  
behavior is observed,  
teach a positive behavior  
in its place.***

*Martella, Nelson, Marchand-  
Martella, & O’Reilly, 2012<sup>1</sup>*

### 5. *Anticipate triggers.*

It is much more effective to manage challenging behaviors before they occur. Communicating with parents can help you to identify triggers in individual children and to find possible solutions. Once you know a child’s triggers, take steps to avoid those triggers or to prepare your camper for them as soon as possible.

Triggers can include anything from loud noises to exhaustion. Respond to these triggers by preparing your camper for possible conflicts, having fidgets (see page [56](#)) or headphones on hand, and giving your camper the option of moving to a different setting or of participating in an alternate activity or in an alternate way. Fidgets provide sensory stimulation that has a calming effect.

Some children with disabilities may grow frustrated with difficulties in communicating their needs. It is important to find an effective way of communicating, either verbally or non-verbally, so that you can prepare for and respond to those needs. Sometimes a simple solution like taking your camper to the bathroom or reminding them that snack time will be soon is all you need to prevent a challenging behavior from occurring.<sup>5</sup>

### 6. Understand the behavior.

All behavior speaks.<sup>6</sup> What is your camper trying to tell you? Children communicate in different ways. Some of those ways may be socially inappropriate. Pay close attention to things that may trigger behavior: does your camper spit whenever you feed them a certain food? Maybe they just do not like it, and do not know how to tell you! The more you get to know your camper, the more you will learn their language and be able to assist them with finding more effective ways of communicating. Campers and their parents and caregivers can also clue you in on what specific behaviors mean.

***“All behavior speaks.”***

*Gary Allison, Assistant Professor of Special Education, University of Delaware<sup>7</sup>*

### 7. Pick your battles.

Summer camp is a place for kids to have fun and let loose in a safe environment. Keep the mission of your camp in mind and ask yourself: Are the campers safe? Are they having fun? If the answer to both of these questions is yes, then let it go.

### 8. Consider special circumstances.

The brain determines behavior. Many disabilities have behavioral symptoms, and many medications have behavioral side effects. Misbehavior is usually a sign of emotional distress or discomfort, and these issues should be addressed, regardless of the child’s abilities. The simple solutions listed above will work for misbehaviors in children both with and without disabilities.

#### ***Myths & Facts***

*About behavior and people with disabilities*

***MYTH: People with mental illnesses are to blame for violent crimes.***  
***FACT: People with mental illnesses are more likely to be victims than perpetrators of violent crime.<sup>7</sup>***

***MYTH: Most people with intellectual disabilities are violent.***

***FACT: 85-90% of people with an intellectual disability do not show any challenging behavior.<sup>8</sup>***

***Self-soothing behaviors*** are a common behavioral symptom of autism spectrum disorders marked by repetitive movements of the body. They can include hand flapping, rocking, and jumping. These are self-regulatory behaviors that children adaptively use for comfort and sensory stimulation. Some self-soothing behaviors are used as forms of communication. Most self-soothing behaviors should not be discouraged, because they are helpful to the child. If you notice maladaptive self-soothing behaviors, such as head banging or biting, redirect your camper and provide alternate forms of sensory stimulation using toys or games.<sup>9</sup>

Verbally praise your campers for using self-soothing behaviors that are safe and appropriate. For example, if your camper is taking deep breaths, say, “Great job taking deep breaths to calm down!”

## UNDERSTANDING BEHAVIORS

If a child has a severe social-emotional disorder or exhibits many behavioral symptoms, focus on one or two at a time so as not to overwhelm yourself and the child.

The goal of inclusion is for all children to feel safe and included. If a camper is putting themselves or others in danger, ask for help.

### DE-ESCALATION

Ideally, proactive strategies will be used and challenging behaviors will be prevented from happening at all. If you know your camper's triggers, you can take steps to avoid those triggers by making accommodations in the environment or preparing your camper for possible conflicts.

If you notice your camper getting agitated, try redirecting them with an alternate activity or setting. Walking away from the group for a minute with a staff member may be all a child needs. A **quiet room** where campers can go with a counselor or other camp staff member if they feel frustrated is also a great resource. The quiet room can be a room or a corner with limited distractions. Beanbag chairs and fidgets should be available in the quiet room for their calming effect ([see page 56](#)). Campers may even voluntarily go to the quiet room or agree to go there if they know it is available.<sup>10</sup> **A counselor or adult should always be with your camper.**

It is important to remain calm and patient. Express this through both your verbal and body language. Use **short, simple sentences** to explain what *positive* behavior you would like to see. Refrain from making threats.<sup>11</sup>

If necessary, ask for help from another staff member. You may have to step away from a situation and let someone else take over if your frustration is making things worse for both you and the camper.

### AFTER THE INCIDENT

Once your camper is calm and safe, do not force them to explain the behavior, apologize, or speak at all about the incident until they are ready. Many children do not like to talk when they are angry, and your primary goal is for everyone to be safe.<sup>12</sup> Work *with* your camper to reach this goal and to find ways to prevent the behavior from happening again.

Focus on your camper's positive behavior and calmly remind them of the rules. Explain the consequences to your camper *after* they have had a chance to explain their side of

## UNDERSTANDING BEHAVIORS

the story, and have them involved as much as possible. Make sure there are consequences, but do not dwell on the incident. Ask questions like:

- What do you usually do when this happens?
- What could be a healthier response to the “triggering situation”?
- What can we do today so that tomorrow can be better?
- Why do you think that happened?
- What can we do differently so it will not happen again?
- What can we do to help you next time?<sup>13</sup>

All children can misbehave. These misbehaviors are easily manageable with the proper techniques. Emphasize and model positive behavior, and your campers will follow suit.



## APPENDICES

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### APPENDIX A: COMMON DISABILITIES

This appendix has been included to give you general information about common disabilities as it relates to camp inclusion. As you work toward inclusion, knowing a little bit about different disabilities is not necessary, but it might be helpful. It is always best to educate yourself as much as possible, so long as the things you learn do not get in the way of getting to know your campers as people first. As you get to know your campers, you will find that knowing their personalities, likes, and dislikes, is far more valuable than general information about the disability they may have.

Remember that *people are people first*. Children with disabilities like to swim, laugh, and play, just like other kids. Get to know your camper the same way you would anyone else. You may be surprised to learn how much you have in common!



### AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

Autism is called a spectrum disorder because the symptoms and severity of autism vary widely. Some forms of autism are popularly referred to as Asperger's syndrome, though this terminology is no longer used officially.

Autism spectrum disorder is primarily a social communication disorder.<sup>1</sup> Your campers with autism, like all campers, may communicate in a variety of ways. See pages [23 to 25](#) for examples of different ways of communicating with your campers.

As with all children, those who have autism spectrum disorders are happier and more comfortable when they know what to expect, know their schedule, and have adults who can be flexible with them when appropriate.<sup>2</sup>

Confidentiality is always important when it comes to your camper's diagnosis. See page [21](#) for information about medical privacy laws and how they may apply to your camp.

The following chart lists behaviors you may notice in children with autism and suggestions about how you might respond. These behaviors are not specific to autism, and the suggestions can be used for all campers.

*Communication with your camper, their parents, and their caregivers is vital to getting to know your camper and their individual needs. Every child is different, and the best way to know how to provide your camper with a positive camp experience is to ask them plenty of questions and get to know them as a person first.*

## COMMON DISABILITIES

Behavior <sup>3</sup>	Example	Suggested Responses
Trouble initiating and maintaining conversations	Alex tends to hang back at camp activities and keep to himself. You want him to work on his social skills, but he only seems to be interested in his Pokémon cards, which he takes with him <i>everywhere!</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage Alex to participate in camp activities by finding ways to make them more fun for him; maybe the teams can be split into different Pokémon characters.</li> <li>Reward Alex's efforts at connecting with his fellow campers, and help facilitate conversation by pointing out the interests he shares with other campers.</li> <li>Provide "hands-on" activities to do together, which can be more successful than those requiring verbal communication.</li> </ul>
Trouble making and maintaining eye contact	Leila is really starting to come out of her shell and make friends at camp, but she still will not make eye contact with anybody. The other campers do not understand why she will not look directly at them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not force Leila to make eye contact—instead, let her know how proud you are that she is making friends and getting out of her comfort zone.</li> <li>If the other campers make fun of Leila or ask you why she will not look at them, do not brush those questions away. Instead, explain that she has trouble with this, but has many strengths and similarities with the other campers as well. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For more information on talking to children about disabilities, see page <a href="#">28</a>. Remember to <i>never</i> disclose a child's medical diagnosis without permission from the family.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## COMMON DISABILITIES

Behavior <sup>3</sup>	Example	Suggested Responses
Lack of or limited facial expressions	You cannot tell if Josh even <i>likes</i> camp—you have not seen him smile once since he has been here, and you do not know how to answer his parents when they ask if he is having a good time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remember that this is a symptom that is sometimes associated with children who have autism. Lack of facial expression may have no reflection on what a child is feeling.</li> <li>Be honest with Josh's parents. Do not be afraid to acknowledge your difficulty in knowing how Josh feels.</li> <li>As you get to know Josh better, you will find other ways that Josh may communicate his happiness—through certain sounds, body movements, or sayings.</li> </ul>
Difficulty adjusting behavior to various social contexts	It seems like field day was designed for Marco, who loves to run around, jump, and cheer—but running around and screaming in the mess hall is problematic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remind Marco what expectations are for behavior during meals and that there are different expectations for behavior for different activities. For example, say something like, "Now we are going to the mess hall for lunch. In the mess hall, we sit quietly and eat our lunch." Frequent reminders are best.</li> <li>Consider the possibility that Marco's behavior is a response to something in the environment, like the crowded room. Maybe eating lunch outside or in a smaller room with fewer people is a better option—but remember to keep Marco included and to <i>never</i> put a child in a room alone.</li> </ul>

## COMMON DISABILITIES

Behavior <sup>3</sup>	Example	Suggested Responses
Repetitive movements, speech, or use of objects*	<p>Ava repeats the word “bathroom” persistently. It is the only word she says, so you are not sure when she really needs to use the bathroom.</p> <p>Every time somebody says something within Tyrell’s earshot, he repeats it. You are trying to teach your campers about the plants around you on your hike today, but Tyrell keeps interrupting to repeat what you have just said.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk to Ava’s parents about what this means; repeated words or phrases may signal happiness, irritation, or something else your camper is trying to communicate with you that does not match what they are saying. Maybe she says “bathroom” with a different tone or expression when she actually means it, or maybe she has a different signal for “bathroom” altogether.</li> <li>• If all else fails, take Ava to the bathroom on a regular schedule and keep track of her normal habits.</li> <li>• Keep a sense of humor (but laugh <i>with</i> Tyrell, not <i>at</i> him). If you get frustrated with Tyrell’s interruptions, your campers will, too.</li> <li>• Pick your battles. Recognize this as one of Tyrell’s personality traits to which you will have to become accustomed. Be flexible!</li> </ul>

## COMMON DISABILITIES

Behavior <sup>3</sup>	Example	Suggested Responses
Sharp, intense interests	All Peter wants to talk about is insects! He runs around collecting them even when the campers are supposed to be doing something else, he talks about them <i>constantly</i> , and he lists detailed insect facts that other campers are not interested in.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask Peter's parents if there are any techniques they use to redirect Peter's attention. He may be on a treatment plan with specific protocol that needs to be followed.</li> <li>• Try saying this: "Peter, it is great that you can teach us so much about insects, but right now we are playing soccer. We can talk about insects for two more minutes, and then we will play soccer."</li> <li>• Try redirecting Peter by walking him over to the field and handing him a soccer ball.</li> <li>• Give Peter opportunities to show off his expertise: host a "show and tell" where he can bring his insect collection and tell the other kids all about it so that everyone can appreciate his unique strength.</li> <li>• You can also use talking about insects as a reward: For example, say something like "After we play soccer, you and I can talk about insects for two minutes."<sup>4</sup></li> </ul>

## COMMON DISABILITIES

Behavior <sup>3</sup>	Example	Suggested Responses
Difficulty with changes in routine	You arrive at lunch one day, and notice that a blue chair has replaced the red chair where Saad usually sits. When he sees the new chair, he bursts into tears and starts banging his head on the wall.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If possible, find Saad the red chair and give it to him.</li> <li>• Give Saad frequent reminders about possible changes in routine, using a calm voice and short sentences.</li> <li>• Try to prevent situations like this from happening by anticipating things that may go wrong. Coming to camp in itself can be a difficult transition, so behaviors like this may be exaggerated. By remaining calm, patient, and empathetic, you can ease your camper's anxiety more quickly and easily.</li> <li>• Take Saad outside where he will be away from the wall, redirect him to a different activity, or give him a fidget to keep his hands occupied. See page <a href="#">56</a> for examples of fidgets that can be used for sensory stimulation and redirection.</li> </ul>

## COMMON DISABILITIES

Behavior <sup>3</sup>	Example	Suggested Responses
Hyper- or hypo-reactivity to sensory input or unusual interest in sensory aspects of the environment	<p>When Selena's mom drops her off, she tells you that Selena gets very startled and disturbed by loud noises, but does not give you any more information. You know you have a campfire today and the singing around the fire will get pretty loud.</p> <p>Lights fascinate Mohammed. Whenever you are inside, he stares at the overhead light and sometimes he flickers the light switch on and off. The whole camp will be watching a movie tonight, and it's going to be dark. You are worried that Mohammed may be uncomfortable if he does not get enough visual stimulation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you are aware that your camper has any sort of sensory sensitivity, you yourself should be hyperaware of the sensory environment and ask your camper and their parents or caregivers plenty of questions about how to prepare for possible triggers.</li> <li>Warn your campers of any potential triggers, and give them an option for an "out." You could say something like, "We are going to the campfire today to sing camp songs! It is going to be fun, but it can get loud. The rec room will be quiet. We can go there whenever you want if the campfire gets too loud."</li> <li>All of your campers will appreciate being given this option, not just Selena.</li> <li>If you are already in a situation where a sensory trigger is present, you can still provide a positive distraction. Ask your camper if they want to come along with you to another location or move to a different part of the room if they seem agitated.</li> <li>Fidgets (see page <a href="#">56</a>) can also help a lot; you could try giving Mohammed a water bottle filled with water and glitter to give him some extra visual stimulation during the movie.</li> </ul>

## COMMON DISABILITIES

The preceding chart provides some general tips, but autism spectrum disorder is specific to the child. Your best bet for knowing how to give your camper the best experience possible is to ask your camper, their parents, and their caregivers for guidance.

First and foremost, all people are people first. People with autism spectrum disorders are more like everyone else than different from them. Everyone is a unique individual and although there are some common characteristics for people with autism spectrum disorders, those do not define who the person is on the inside. The key to developing a successful relationship is spending time together and learning more about one another, just like you would do with anyone else.

### *Questions to ask children with autism spectrum disorders and their parents or caregivers:*

- What would you like to get/would you like to see your child get out of summer camp?
- What are your/your child's likes and dislikes?
- Do you/does your child have any obsessive interests?
- How do your parents or caregivers/you usually respond when you/your child begin(s) intensely talking about your/their interests?
- Do you/does your child tend to wander from the group?\*
- With what might you/your child require assistance?
- How do you/does your child prefer to communicate?
- Are there any triggers I should be aware of, sensory or otherwise?
- How can I make you/your child most comfortable in our program?
- Do you/does your child have trouble with transitions? If so, how can I make these transitions easier for you/him or her?
- How can I contact your parents or caregivers/you if I need help?

\**Self-soothing behavior* refers to behaviors children will engage in in order to regulate their sensory environment.<sup>5</sup> You may have noticed children flicking their hands next to their face or jumping up and down. These behaviors have a calming effect that helps to regulate the sensory environment. Self-soothing behavior is healthy and adaptive; attempting to stop these behaviors may intensify them. If you notice self-soothing behaviors that seem harmful, such as head banging or biting, try to redirect your camper to give them a more positive outlet for their frustration. Fidgets provide sensory stimulation that has a calming effect, and can be very helpful ([see page 56](#)).<sup>6</sup>

\*\*Wandering is a symptom that is often associated with autism. Children who wander do so to get to something desirable, like a pool or a park, or to escape something unpleasant like a loud noise or crowded room.<sup>7</sup> The dangers of wandering can be lessened by open communication with parents. Parents can provide information about typical triggers for wandering and identify desirable destinations.

### CEREBRAL PALSY

Cerebral palsy is caused by an injury to the parts of the brain that are in charge of the muscles. The injury happens very early in a child's life or even before birth. Because the brain controls everything in our bodies and we have muscles everywhere, cerebral palsy can manifest itself in many ways and varies from mild to severe. People with cerebral palsy do not have control over whichever muscles have been affected in their particular case. However, like with all disabilities, it is important to remember that everybody with cerebral palsy is different and that there is a wide spectrum of symptoms.<sup>8</sup>

*Communication with your camper, their parents, and their caregivers is vital to getting to know your camper and their individual needs. Every child is different, and the best way to know how to provide your camper with a positive camp experience is to ask them plenty of questions and get to know them as a person first.*

People with cerebral palsy may have trouble walking, speaking clearly, learning, hearing, or seeing. They may need assistance with eating, going to the bathroom, or getting dressed. They may have high or low muscle tone that may make them appear stiff or weak. Some may use a wheelchair, leg braces, or a cane. Others may have very mild forms and have very few symptoms at all.

Campers with cerebral palsy can participate in the same camp activities as everyone else. Some children with cerebral palsy might require some assistance when engaging in certain activities. Activities like swimming and horseback riding can be *good* for children with cerebral palsy because they help to strengthen the muscles. See the section on inclusive activities on pages [44 to 57](#) for ideas on adapting activities for children with special mobility needs.

Because children with cerebral palsy often require assistance with some daily life activities, what they *are* able to do for themselves is very important. Maximize your camper's independence so they feel confident and included at camp. That means letting your camper tie their own shoes, even if it means it will take them a longer time to get ready.

Some people with cerebral palsy, like many people, have a sensitive startle reflex; they may stiffen up when exposed to cold water or loud sounds—be sensitive to these needs and make your camper aware of any changes in the environment to help ease their discomfort. If your camper does not seem to get scared off by anything, this can be a

## COMMON DISABILITIES

good thing. Encourage your camper to spread their wings and push their bodies—as long as they are being safe, of course!

First and foremost, all people are people first. People with cerebral palsy are more like everyone else than different. Everyone is a unique individual and although there are some common characteristics for people with cerebral palsy, those do not define who the person is on the inside. The key to developing a successful relationship is spending time together and learning more about one another, just like you would do with anyone else.

### *Questions to ask children with cerebral palsy and their parents or caregivers:*

- With what might you/your child require assistance?
- *How* do people usually assist with dressing/feeding/transferring etc. you/your child?
- Are there any exercises or stretches I should do with you/your child on a regular basis?
- Do you/does your child use any special equipment?

Confidentiality is always important when it comes to your camper's diagnosis. See page [21](#) for information about medical privacy laws and how they may apply to your camp.



### DOWN SYNDROME

Down syndrome is a genetic disorder. It can be diagnosed shortly after birth or even during pregnancy. Your *genes* are what give you brown or blonde hair or your mother's smile. Genes are strung together on 23 pairs of chromosomes. People with Down syndrome have genetic traits passed on from their parents just like everyone else. They also have one extra chromosome.<sup>9</sup>

*Communication with your camper, their parents, and their caregivers is vital to getting to know your camper and their individual needs. Every child is different, and the best way to know how to provide your camper with a positive camp experience is to ask them plenty of questions and get to know them as a person first.*

First and foremost, all people are people first. People with Down syndrome are more like everyone else than different. Everyone is a unique individual and although there are some common characteristics for people with Down syndrome, those do not define who the person is on the inside. The key to developing a successful relationship is spending time together and learning more about one another, just like you would do with anyone else. Find out what your camper's interests are, and you may be surprised to find how much you have in common!

As with all disabilities, it is important to remember that everybody with Down syndrome is different, and that there is a wide spectrum of symptoms. Some people with Down syndrome may have heart, vision, or hearing complications that affect the ways they can participate in different camp activities.<sup>10</sup> For safety's sake, it is important to ask parents about activity restrictions based on healthcare needs. Fortunately, it is easy to make activities more inclusive for a wide range of abilities and needs. See pages [44 to 57](#) for tips on making camp activities more inclusive.

*Did you know? The proper term is Down, not Down's, syndrome.*

People with Down syndrome can accomplish the same things as anyone else. It just might take a little longer to get it done. Be patient with your campers and take your time communicating with each other. Ask your camper about how you can help them have a positive camp experience. They may benefit from short breaks during activities or other supports you may use with other campers as well.

Children with Down syndrome may have trouble speaking clearly. Give your campers the time they need to express what it is they want to say. If you are having trouble

## COMMON DISABILITIES

understanding your camper, it is okay to ask them to repeat themselves, slow down, or try communicating in a different way (for example, by acting or writing).

It can be frustrating when people have trouble understanding you. That is why it is important to take your time and find effective ways of communicating with any of your campers.

### *Questions to ask children with Down syndrome and their parents or caregivers:*

- Do you/does your child have an IEP form to which I could refer?
- Are you/is your child on any type of special diet?
- Should I be concerned about including you/your child in any activities?
- What are some things to keep in mind when working with you/your child?
- What motivates you/your child?
- How do you/does your child react to change?

Confidentiality is always important when it comes to your camper's diagnosis. See page [21](#) for information about medical privacy laws and how they may apply to your camp.

For more information, check out "Just Like You-Down Syndrome" on YouTube: [goo.gl/c6wjyn](http://goo.gl/c6wjyn)



### INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

*Communication with your camper, their parents, and their caregivers is vital to getting to know your camper and their individual needs. Every child is different, and the best way to know how to provide your camper with a positive camp experience is to ask them plenty of questions and get to know them as a person first.*

An intellectual disability is a diagnosis that refers to symptoms including limitations in cognitive functioning and in skills that allow a person to take care of him or herself. Intellectual disabilities are separate from mental illnesses, and are *not* contagious.<sup>11</sup>

First and foremost, all people are people first. People with intellectual disabilities are more like everyone else than different. Everyone is a unique individual and although there are some common characteristics for people with

intellectual disabilities, those do not define who the person is on the inside. The key to developing a successful relationship is spending time together and learning more about one another, just like you would do with anyone else. Although people with intellectual disabilities may require assistance with some activities, they are usually capable of much more than people think. Maximize your camper's independence by *focusing on their abilities* and encouraging them to do as much for themselves as they can.

When working with people with intellectual disabilities, patience and respect are key. You may need to speak in short, simple sentences or give one direction at a time to make things easier to understand. People with intellectual disabilities should always be spoken to with the same level of respect you would give to anyone else in their age range or position. Refer to people older than you as "Mr." or "Mrs." if you would normally, regardless of their cognitive abilities.<sup>12</sup>



## COMMON DISABILITIES

People with intellectual disabilities may require assistance with daily activities such as eating, dressing, going to the bathroom, and showering. You may also want to facilitate socialization by encouraging interaction with other children. Sometimes, people with intellectual disabilities do not communicate verbally. Find other ways to communicate by using sign language, writing things down, or using facial expressions.<sup>13</sup> Some children with intellectual disabilities like to use communication boards and picture directions. See pages [23 to 25](#) for examples of different ways of communicating with your campers.

### *Questions to ask children with intellectual disabilities and their parents or caregivers:*

- What are your/your child's likes and dislikes?
- How do you/does your child prefer to communicate?
- With what might you/your child require assistance?
- *How* do people usually assist with dressing/feeding/bathing etc. you/your child?

Confidentiality is always important when it comes to your camper's diagnosis. See page [21](#) for information about medical privacy laws and how they may apply to your camp.



### LEARNING DISABILITIES

Learning disabilities are very common—as many as one in five people in the United States has a learning disability.<sup>14</sup>

First and foremost, all people are people first. People with learning disabilities are more like everyone else than different. Everyone is a unique individual and although there are some common characteristics for people with learning disabilities, those do not define who the person is on the inside. The key to developing a successful relationship is spending time together and learning more about one another, just like you would do with anyone else.

There is a wide range of learning disabilities. A learning disability occurs when there is a step missing in the learning process and certain skills are affected. These skills may be in reading, writing, listening, speaking, reasoning, or doing math.<sup>15</sup>

People with learning disabilities can have above average intelligence. They learn differently than others. People with learning disabilities are not “stupid” or “lazy.” Many celebrities, including Tim Tebow, Richard Branson, Whoopi Goldberg, and Cher, to name a few, have learning disabilities.<sup>15</sup>

*Communication with your camper, their parents, and their caregivers is vital to getting to know your camper and their individual needs. Every child is different, and the best way to know how to provide your camper with a positive camp experience is to ask them plenty of questions and get to know them as a person first.*

A variety of **supports** may be used to help accommodate children with learning disabilities. They may require more time for certain activities or alternate explanations. All children have different learning styles: they may learn best through visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, nature-related, or rhythmic supports. Design your activities and instructions so that they can be understood through a variety of means. **Picture schedules** can be helpful for some children with learning disabilities. For more information about picture schedules and how to use them, see page [56](#).

## COMMON DISABILITIES

### *Questions to ask children with learning disabilities and their parents or caregivers:*

- What helps you/your child learn?
- What accommodations can help you/your child have a positive experience? (These accommodations may be listed in an IEP that can be included with the camp registration. Examples of accommodations include assistive technology or explaining directions in a different way.)

Confidentiality is always important when it comes to your camper's diagnosis. See page [21](#) for information about medical privacy laws and how they may apply to your camp.



### MENTAL ILLNESSES

Mental illness is an umbrella term that includes a wide range of disorders that affect a person's thoughts, emotions, and behaviors necessary for social interaction and daily functioning. Like all disabilities, there is a wide range of symptoms, making each child's mental illness unique to them.

*Communication with your camper, their parents, and their caregivers is vital to getting to know your camper and their individual needs. Every child is different, and the best way to know how to provide your camper with a positive camp experience is to ask them plenty of questions and get to know them as a person first.*

There is a lot of stigma and misunderstanding about mental illness. They are medical conditions just like any of the other disabilities listed here. Although mental illnesses play a role in daily life, first and foremost, all people are people first. People with mental illnesses are more like everyone else than different. Everyone is a unique individual and although there are some common characteristics for people with mental illnesses, those do not define who the person is on the inside. The key to developing a successful relationship is spending time together and learning more about one another, just like you would do with anyone else.

Confidentiality is always important when it comes to your camper's diagnosis. See page [21](#) for information about medical privacy laws and how they may apply to your camp.

Pages [89 to 94](#) list some of the most common mental illnesses and strategies for working effectively with the children who have them and their families.



### ATTENTION-DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER (ADHD):

You most likely have some campers who are more active than others. Children with ADHD may be more active and benefit more from providing different ways of presenting rules for camp activities. Be sure to provide plenty of opportunities for active sports and games. These activities can be helpful to release excess energy, both for children with and without ADHD.<sup>17</sup>

*Communication with your camper, their parents, and their caregivers is vital to getting to know your camper and their individual needs. Every child is different, and the best way to know how to provide your camper with a positive camp experience is to ask them plenty of questions and get to know them as a person first.*

**Picture schedules** may be especially beneficial for children with ADHD, who may have trouble understanding or concentrating on verbal directions.<sup>18</sup> Try working with your camper to make up picture schedules together. See page [56](#) for an example of a picture schedule and methods of using them.

First and foremost, all people are people first. People with ADHD are more like everyone else than different. Everyone is a unique individual and although there are some common characteristics for people with ADHD, those do not define who the person is on the inside. The key to developing a successful relationship is spending time together and learning more about one another, just like you would do with anyone else.



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#### **Questions to ask children with ADHD and their parents or caregivers:**

- What are your/your child's likes and dislikes?
- What helps you/your child to learn?

### DEPRESSION

A common misconception is that depression is a temporary emotional state that people can easily overcome. This is not true. Depression has both psychological and physical symptoms that interfere with daily life. It is different from the sadness we all feel from time to time.<sup>18</sup>

*Depression ≠ sadness*

*Communication with your camper, their parents, and their caregivers is vital to getting to know your camper and their individual needs. Every child is different, and the best way to know how to provide your camper with a positive camp experience is to ask them plenty of questions and get to know them as a person first.*

Children with depression may seem irritable, sensitive to rejection, or have trouble enjoying camp activities other children enjoy.<sup>19</sup> Encourage, but do not force, your campers to participate in camp activities and interact with other campers. Help campers develop healthy coping strategies, like going for walks and doing arts and crafts, for negative emotions. Be patient and supportive of all of your campers, and get to know them as individuals to learn what works for them.

First and foremost, all people are people first. People with depression are more like everyone else than different. Everyone is a unique individual and although there are some common characteristics for people with depression, those do not define who the person is on the inside. The key to developing a successful relationship is spending time together and learning more about one another, just like you would do with anyone else.

#### *Questions to ask children with depression and their parents or caregivers:*

- What are some warning signs and triggers for inappropriate or troubling behavior?
- What adaptive coping strategies do you use to support yourself/your child if you/they get upset?

Confidentiality is always important when it comes to your camper's diagnosis. See page [21](#) for information about medical privacy laws and how they may apply to your camp.

### OPPOSITIONAL DEFIANT DISORDER (ODD)

It is not unusual for children to act out every now and then to assert their independence. Children diagnosed with ODD exhibit frequent and intense uncooperative behaviors. These might include outbursts in inappropriate settings such as school or camp.<sup>19</sup>

*Communication with your camper, their parents, and their caregivers is vital to getting to know your camper and their individual needs. Every child is different, and the best way to know how to provide your camper with a positive camp experience is to ask them plenty of questions and get to know them as a person first.*

The strategies for managing behavior in children with ODD are the same as those for children without ODD. See pages [65 to 69](#) for positive strategies for understanding behaviors. Remember to model good behavior, ask for help if you need it, and set reasonable expectations and rules. Look for and reward positive behaviors as often as possible, and speak to your camper and their parents or caregivers about strategies that work for them.

First and foremost, all people are people first. People with ODD are more like everyone else than different. Everyone is a unique individual and although there are some common characteristics for people with ODD, those do not define who the person is on the inside. The key to developing a successful relationship is spending time together and learning more about one another, just like you would do with anyone else.

#### *Questions to ask children with ODD and their parents or caregivers:*

- What are your/your child's likes and dislikes?
- What adaptive coping strategies do you use to support yourself/your child if you/they get upset?

Confidentiality is always important when it comes to your camper's diagnosis. See page [21](#) for information about medical privacy laws and how they may apply to your camp.

### SELECTIVE MUTISM

Selective mutism is a relatively rare anxiety disorder in which children either do not talk, or do not speak loudly and clearly enough to be heard in social situations that cause symptoms of extreme anxiety. They may use sign language, though this can still produce anxiety and be hard for some children.<sup>21</sup>

First and foremost, all people are people first. People with selective mutism are more like everyone else than different. Everyone is a unique individual and although there are some common characteristics for people with selective mutism, those do not define who the person is on the inside. The key to developing a successful relationship is spending time together and learning more about one another, just like you would do with anyone else.

*Communication with your camper, their parents, and their caregivers is vital to getting to know your camper and their individual needs. Every child is different, and the best way to know how to provide your camper with a positive camp experience is to ask them plenty of questions and get to know them as a person first.*

Selective mutism is an anxiety disorder with physical symptoms. Children diagnosed with selective mutism are *not* refusing to speak because they are stubborn, rude, or oppositional. For some children with selective mutism, eye contact can be very difficult. Like all children, children with selective mutism want to communicate and establish social connections with adults and peers but they are not *able* to speak in these situations because of anxiety and fear.<sup>22</sup>

You can help to ease anxiety in children with selective mutism by acknowledging their fears, by reducing pressure to communicate and interact, and by praising efforts to communicate verbally and non-verbally. Transitions between activities can produce added anxiety in all children. Be sure to always provide plenty of reminders about transitions and to keep your campers in the know about the day's activities.

You can give a child diagnosed with selective mutism the option to sit in the back of the room, which allows them to be part of the group and alleviates pressure to make eye contact, communicate, or interact directly.<sup>23</sup> Identify and validate ways in which your camper already communicates and interacts instead of focusing on communication and social skill deficits. **Focus on ability!** Any attempts your camper makes at speaking or communicating should be rewarded.

## COMMON DISABILITIES

Talk to your camper and their parents about ways you can communicate with them. You might want to carry a pen and paper or a small notebook to write things down or make passes for your camper to carry with them that will allow them to let you know when they need to go to the bathroom or are getting hungry.

Camp can be frightening for all children who find themselves in an unfamiliar situation with unfamiliar children. If your camper seems to get along well with another child or counselor, try to get them together as much as possible. Anything you can do to ease anxiety in any of your campers will make the camp experience better for both of you.

“Curing” a child with selective mutism or “making them speak” is not a counselor’s goal; your job as a counselor is to make sure they are safe and having fun!

### *Questions to ask children with selective mutism and their parents or caregivers:*

- In what situations is it particularly hard for you/your child to feel comfortable?
- How can I ease this discomfort?
- How do you/does your child prefer to communicate?
- Do you/does your child have any anxiety when it comes to eating or going to the bathroom around other people?
- (For parents and caregivers): What should I know about your child that they might not tell me—allergies, favorite foods, likes and dislikes, friends?

Confidentiality is always important when it comes to your camper’s diagnosis. See page [21](#) for information about medical privacy laws and how they may apply to your camp.



### SUPPORTING SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL NEEDS AND ENCOURAGING MENTAL HEALTH

The strategies listed both in this section and on pages [65 to 69](#), including rewarding social behavior, encouraging adaptive coping strategies like going for a walk or talking through a stressful situation, waiting until a child has calmed down to discuss a behavioral issue, modeling good behavior, and being patient and flexible, can be used to support children with a variety of social and emotional needs. Especially if it is their first time, camp can be a bit overwhelming for some children. Even if your camper has not been officially diagnosed with a mental illness, we all have mental health needs and can benefit from these strategies. Let your campers know that you support their mental health needs by practicing these strategies and promoting a positive, inclusive environment. For some children with troubling home lives, camp can be a lifesaver.

#### *Questions to ask children and their parents or caregivers to encourage mental health:*

- How can you tell when you/your child are/is feeling angry/happy/excited/sad/etc.?
- What can you/your child do to help calm yourself/himself or herself down if you/they start to feel upset?
- What makes you/your child feel happy?

Emphasize that your campers should feel free to talk to you about anything. Be open about how you regulate your emotions, and model healthy coping strategies that work for you. If a child shares that they are feeling homesick, provide them with an opportunity to express what it is they miss about home to help them articulate their feelings. Then, redirect them with a camp activity to remind them they are in a safe, fun place. Some children may become worried that their parents or caregivers are not coming back. Reassure your campers that their parents or caregivers will be back soon and are happy that they are having a good time.

Some campers may tell you personal information. Maintain your camper's trust by keeping private information private. Allow them to speak to you openly without asking leading questions. If you suspect that a child is being abused or is in need of assistance you are unable to provide, ask your camp director for help.

### SENSORY DISABILITIES

Children diagnosed with a sensory disability vary in the extent to which their sensory abilities are limited. Some children labeled “blind” may still have limited vision or the ability to distinguish between dark and light. Children labeled “Deaf” may not necessarily be unable to speak, and may be able to understand certain tones or “feel” the beats to music.<sup>24</sup> When working with children with sensory disabilities, remember to:

*Communication with your camper, their parents, and their caregivers is vital to getting to know your camper and their individual needs. Every child is different, and the best way to know how to provide your camper with a positive camp experience is to ask them plenty of questions and get to know them as a person first.*

- focus on ability! We have five senses—sight, smell, hearing, taste, and touch. Try to maximize the number of senses you are stimulating in all of your camp activities. This makes activities inclusive for children with limited sensory abilities, different learning styles, and differences in sensory processing.
- avoid making assumptions about their abilities. Children with sensory disabilities can be very adaptive and heighten their other senses to make up for the lost or limited sense. Do not assume that you can say whatever you want around a child who is Deaf—they may be very adept at reading your lips or body language and pick up on messages not intended for them.

**Focus on ability!** Imagine how your life would be different if you had a sensory disability. How would you want people to treat you? Including children with sensory disabilities means including them in their sensory environment—even if a child cannot see, for example, they can get the “feel” for an activity by using auditory, tactile, or even gustatory (taste-centered) accommodations. Your camper with a visual disability may not be able to see the beautiful garnish and decorations on your freshly baked cake, but they can certainly taste its deliciousness!

First and foremost, all people are people first. People with sensory disabilities are more like everyone else than different. Everyone is a unique individual and although there are some common characteristics for people with sensory disabilities, those do not define who the person is on the inside. The key to developing a successful relationship is spending time together and learning more about one another, just like you would do with anyone else.

Confidentiality is always important when it comes to your camper’s diagnosis. See page [21](#) for information about medical privacy laws and how they may apply to your camp.

### DEAFNESS AND HEARING DISABILITIES

Hearing loss can occur in frequency, loudness, or both.

*Frequency, or pitch, refers to the highness or lowness of a sound. Think of the keys on a piano. The notes go from low to high, or increase in frequency, as you move from right to left. Because women tend to have “higher” voices than men, some people who are deaf may have more trouble hearing women over men, or vice-versa. Speaking more loudly to a person who is Deaf or who has a hearing disability will not necessarily help them to understand you.*<sup>25</sup>

**Deaf≠Without hearing**

#### **Working with children who are Deaf or have hearing disabilities:**

Children with hearing disabilities might ask you to repeat things and might not speak clearly.<sup>26</sup> Take your time and be creative when communicating with your campers, and do not be afraid to ask them to repeat themselves or slow down if you are having trouble understanding them.

***Communication with your camper, their parents, and their caregivers is vital to getting to know your camper and their individual needs. Every child is different, and the best way to know how to provide your camper with a positive camp experience is to ask them plenty of questions and get to know them as a person first.***

First and foremost, all people are people first. People with hearing disabilities are more like everyone else than different. Everyone is a unique individual and although there are some common characteristics for people with hearing disabilities, those do not define who the person is on the inside. The key to developing a successful relationship is spending time together and learning more about one another, just like you would do with anyone else.

Some children with hearing disabilities lip-read. If this is the case, avoid holding things in front of your mouth or turning your back when speaking. If a child comes to camp with an interpreter, speak directly to the child, not to their interpreter.<sup>27</sup> Take turns speaking. This helps to avoid overwhelming your camper and their interpreter and eases communication. This is proper etiquette that journalists also use when interviewing people who speak a foreign language and use a translator. If other campers ask about a child’s hearing disability, answer questions honestly and encourage them to also follow these practices.

Remember to always treat your campers with respect and sensitivity. Children with hearing disabilities may be more easily startled than other children. Never sneak up on or scare any of your campers in any way.

## COMMON DISABILITIES

### *Questions to ask children with hearing disabilities and their parents or caregivers:*

- How do you/does your child prefer to communicate? (e.g., ASL, English, lip-reading)
- How can I communicate with you/your child in a way you/they will understand?
- What accommodations can I provide to help make the environment more inclusive for you/your child? (This information may be contained in an IEP that parents can provide along with their camp registration. Examples of accommodations include amplification systems, sign language interpreters, changes in seating arrangements, movie captions, or notetakers)

Confidentiality is always important when it comes to your camper's diagnosis. See page [21](#) for information about medical privacy laws and how they may apply to your camp.



### BLINDNESS AND VISUAL DISABILITIES

“Visual disability” refers to some form of visual loss. People who are considered “legally blind” may be able to detect lights, shapes, colors, and objects. You or someone you know may use glasses to correct for near- or far-sightedness or astigmatism. These are all forms of visual disability. There are many different factors involved in vision, such as:

*Blind≠Without sight*

- light,
- shapes,
- colors,
- distance,
- depth, and
- periphery.

Because there are so many factors, there are many different types of visual disability.<sup>28</sup>

#### *Working with children who are blind or have visual disabilities:*

Much of our learning and playing is centered on vision. If your camper has a visual disability, you may have to be creative to find alternate ways for them to participate in certain activities. See page [44](#) for suggestions on how to make activities more inclusive for children with visual and other disabilities.

*Communication with your camper, their parents, and their caregivers is vital to getting to know your camper and their individual needs. Every child is different, and the best way to know how to provide your camper with a positive camp experience is to ask them plenty of questions and get to know them as a person first.*

Include your camper in their sensory environment as much as possible by describing the things you can sense around you, and be sensitive to their needs. Always identify yourself when approaching someone who is blind or who has a visual disability, and give as much detail as possible about the environment. Do not sneak up on someone who is blind or surprise him or her by speaking without identifying yourself. Pay attention to the directions you give if you provide them with guiding assistance. Saying something like “The pool is over there,” for example, is not as effective as “The pool is five steps over to your right.”

## COMMON DISABILITIES

First and foremost, all people are people first. People with visual disabilities are more like everyone else than different. Everyone is a unique individual and although there are some common characteristics for people with visual disabilities, those do not define who the person is on the inside. The key to developing a successful relationship is spending time together and learning more about one another, just like you would do with anyone else.

### *Questions to ask campers with visual disabilities and their parents or caregivers:*

- What are your/your child's likes, dislikes, and fears?
- What sorts of accommodations can I provide to make the environment more inclusive for you/your child? (This information may be contained in an IEP that can be provided with the camp registration. Examples of accommodations include assistive technologies and Braille print.)
- How do you/does your child usually move around? Will I need to guide you/them? If so, how do you/they like to be guided?

Confidentiality is always important when it comes to your camper's diagnosis. See page [21](#) for information about medical privacy laws and how they may apply to your camp.



## APPENDIX B: SAMPLE REGISTRATION FORM

Consider using the following sample camp registration form as an updated version or supplement to your existing registration. The registration documents should also include a physical form with recent information and an authorization for emergency medical treatment.



The following sample registration form was developed using information from forms used by UCP's Camp Manito and Camp Lenape, Easter Seals' Camp Fairlee Manor, and the Delaware State Parks.

**CAMPER INFORMATION**

Camper's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Nickname: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ (street)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (city, state)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (zip)

**PRIMARY CONTACT INFORMATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to Camper: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (home): \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (street)  
Phone (work): \_\_\_\_\_ (city, state)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (zip)  
Phone (cell): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to Camper: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (home): \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (street)  
Phone (work): \_\_\_\_\_ (city, state)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (zip)  
Phone (cell): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship to Camper: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (home): \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (street)  
Phone (work): \_\_\_\_\_ (city, state)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (zip)  
Phone (cell): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Who has permission to pick up your child?**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Relationship</i>	<i>Phone Number</i>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**Does your child have a state caseworker? If so, please provide:**

Caseworker Name: \_\_\_\_\_

State Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**MEDICAL INFORMATION**

Primary Physician's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Health Insurance: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Member ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Insured: \_\_\_\_\_

**IMMUNIZATIONS**

<i>Month/Year</i>	<i>Immunization</i>
_____	DTP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis)
_____	OPV (Polio Oral)/IPV (Polio Injected)
_____	HIB (Hemophilus Influenza)
_____	MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)

**Will your child need to take any medications while at camp?** ☐Yes ☐No

If so, please list here:

<i>Medication</i>	<i>Rx #</i>	<i>Dosage</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Route</i>	<i>Doctor</i>	<i>Phone</i>

**Please list any side effects of which we should be aware:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**My child has permission to receive (please check here):**☐Tylenol☐Motrin☐Advil☐Benadryl

Please initial here: \_\_\_\_\_

**In the last 12 months, has your child experienced any of the following?**

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent ear infections              | <input type="checkbox"/> Diabetes    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diagnosis of heart defect or disease | <input type="checkbox"/> Chicken pox |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bleeding/clotting disorder           | <input type="checkbox"/> Measles     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Urinary tract infection              | <input type="checkbox"/> Asthma      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Respiratory problems                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Pneumonia   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seizures                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Hay fever   |

Notes:

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**Does your child have any allergies?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please specify:

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**Does your child have any dietary restrictions (other than allergies)?**

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please specify:

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**Does your child have any vision, hearing, mobility, healthcare, or behavioral needs of which we should be aware? Please describe here:**

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## COMMUNICATION

**How does your child prefer to communicate?**

- ☐ Speaks clearly
  - ☐ Uses sign language
  - ☐ Speaks but may be difficult to understand
  - ☐ Uses communication board
  - ☐ Gestures
  - ☐ Other (explain: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Language(s) spoken/understood: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

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## CAMPER'S DAILY LIFE

**With whom does your child live?**

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**What are your child's favorite activities to do at camp or at home?**

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**Please list any of your child's dislikes or fears of which we should be aware.**

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**Has your child previously attended a summer camp?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

**If yes, was it a positive experience?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

Explain:

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**Does your child follow directions:** ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Occasionally

Explain:

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**Does your child require assistance with daily tasks such as eating, going to the bathroom, dressing, showering, or moving from place to place?** ☐Yes ☐No

**If yes, will a caregiver be assisting your child at camp to assist with these tasks?**

☐Yes ☐No

If no, please describe the assistance needed. Our camp will work with you to find a way for this assistance to be provided for your child.

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**Does your child use any assistive devices? (e.g., wheelchair, braces, catheter, communication board)** ☐Yes ☐No

Please describe the proper maintenance and handling of the device(s):

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*If your child is bringing a power wheelchair, please be sure to bring the charger with you to camp.*

#### **ACTIVITIES**

**Does your child have any restrictions to activities of which we should be aware?**

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#### **BEHAVIOR**

**Are there certain behaviors that your child is working on at school/home that should be encouraged while at camp? Please explain.**

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**What motivators (e.g., toys, activities, foods) will be strong reinforcers for your child?**

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**Please list any triggers that might agitate your child. (e.g., loud noises, odd textures, etc.)**

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**Does your child have any behaviors of which the camp staff should be aware?**

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**What is the best way to assist your child if he/she gets overwhelmed or upset?**

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**Does your child have a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) or Individualized Education Program (IEP) at school?** ☐Yes ☐No

*If yes, please attach a copy with the application.*

**Additional comments**

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Camp \_\_\_\_\_ is committed to open and honest communication with parents to ensure the best experience for all of our campers. We encourage you to visit our facility and call us at \_\_\_\_\_ with any additional questions, concerns, or information about your child you think would be helpful for us to know.

## APPENDIX C: RESOURCE DIRECTORY

### ADA Information Line

(800) 514-0301 (voice)

(800) 514-0383 (TTY)

[www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov)

- For information about the federal ADA law and how it may apply to your camp

### American Camp Association

(800) 428-2267

(765) 342-8465

[www.acacamps.org](http://www.acacamps.org)

- Research-based tips on running a successful camp program

### American Lung Association of the Mid-Atlantic

(302) 737-6414

[www.lunginfo.org](http://www.lunginfo.org)

- Offers a summer camp for children with asthma in Delaware every year

### The Arc of Delaware

(302) 996-9400 (voice)

(800) 232-5460 (TTY/TDD)

[www.thearcofdelaware.org](http://www.thearcofdelaware.org)

- Resources for learning more about intellectual and developmental disabilities

### Autism Delaware

(302) 224-6020

[www.delautism.org](http://www.delautism.org)

- For information about autism and supports for people with autism in Delaware

### Camp For All

(979) 289-5046

[www.campforall.org](http://www.campforall.org)

- Inclusive camp in Burton, Texas with years of experience serving children with various disabilities and special healthcare needs

### Camp Lenape

(302) 335-5626

[www.ucpde.org/summer-camps](http://www.ucpde.org/summer-camps)

- Inclusive camp in Felton, Delaware run by UCP

### Camp Manito

(302) 764-2400

[www.ucpde.org/summer-camps](http://www.ucpde.org/summer-camps)

- Inclusive camp in Wilmington, Delaware run by UCP

### Delaware Assistive Technology Institute (DATI)

(302) 739-6885

[www.dati.org](http://www.dati.org)

- Loan program for assistive technology in Delaware

### Delaware Association for the Education of Young Children (DAEYC)

(302) 764-1501

[www.daeyc.org](http://www.daeyc.org)

- Promote the rights and needs of young children in Delaware

### Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC)

(302) 739-3333

[www.ddc.delaware.gov](http://www.ddc.delaware.gov)

- State government organization advocating for people with disabilities in Delaware

## RESOURCE DIRECTORY

### **Delaware Family Voices**

Toll-free: (877) 235-3588

Local: (302) 669-3030

[www.delawarefamilytofamily.org](http://www.delawarefamilytofamily.org)

- State organization supporting families of children with disabilities

### **Dover Lions Club**

(302) 677-1729

[www.e-clubhouse.org/sites/dover\\_de](http://www.e-clubhouse.org/sites/dover_de)

- Local volunteer organization with a history of supporting programs for children with disabilities

### **Down Syndrome Association of Delaware**

(302) 995-1004

[www.dsadelaware.org](http://www.dsadelaware.org)

- State organization providing support for families of children with Down syndrome

### **Easter Seals Camp Fairlee Manor**

(410) 778-0566

[goo.gl/EBDqec](http://goo.gl/EBDqec)

- Camp in Chestertown, Maryland for children and adults with disabilities

### **Easter Seals Delaware & Maryland's Easter Shore**

(302) 324-4444

[www.easterseals.com/de](http://www.easterseals.com/de)

- Local branch of a national disability organization

### **Epilepsy Foundation of Delaware**

(302) 999-9313

[www.efde.org](http://www.efde.org)

- For educational resources on epilepsy and seizure first-aid

### **Family Support and Healthcare Alliance Delaware (SHADE)**

(855) 755-7423

[www.familyshade.org](http://www.familyshade.org)

- State organization connecting families of children with disabilities to community services

### **Hearts, Hands, and Horses 4-H Club**

(302) 740-4798

[www.wellspringfarm.us.com](http://www.wellspringfarm.us.com)

- Therapeutic horseback riding program

### **Kids Included Together, Inc.**

(858) 225-5680

[www.kitonline.org](http://www.kitonline.org)

- National inclusion organization with educational resources on inclusion

### **Kiwanis Club of Wilmington, Delaware**

(302) 656-1475

[www.kiwaniswilmingtonde.org](http://www.kiwaniswilmingtonde.org)

- Local volunteer organization with a history of supporting programs for children with disabilities

### **Mary Campbell Center**

(302) 762-6025

[www.marycampbellcenter.org](http://www.marycampbellcenter.org)

- Recreation center for people with disabilities

### **Mid-Atlantic ADA Center**

(800) 949-4232

[www.adainfo.org](http://www.adainfo.org)

- For information on federal and state ADA laws and how they may apply to your camp

## RESOURCE DIRECTORY

### National Alliance on Mental Illness in Delaware

(302) 427-0787

[www.namidelaware.org](http://www.namidelaware.org)

- Educational resources on a variety of mental illnesses and supports in Delaware

### National Inclusion Project

(919) 314-5540

[www.inclusionproject.org](http://www.inclusionproject.org)

- Inclusion organization with an inclusive recreation initiative

### Parents And Children Together at Tech (PACTT) Program

(302) 856-1760

[www.ucpde.org](http://www.ucpde.org)

- Inclusive childcare program at Sussex Technical High School in Georgetown, Delaware run by UCP

### Playcore

(877) 762-7563

[www.playcore.com](http://www.playcore.com)

- Provide funding and donations supporting inclusive recreation

### Rotary Club of Wilmington

(302) 655-6025

[www.rotarywilmington.org](http://www.rotarywilmington.org)

- Local volunteer organization with a history of supporting programs for children with disabilities

### Special Olympics Delaware

(302) 831-4653

[www.sode.org](http://www.sode.org)

- Sports programs for people with disabilities

### TASH

(202) 540-9020

[www.tash.org](http://www.tash.org)

- Advocacy organization promoting the rights of people with disabilities worldwide

### United Cerebral Palsy of Delaware, Inc.

(302) 764-2400

[www.ucpde.org](http://www.ucpde.org)

- Local affiliate of a national organization providing services for people with disabilities in Delaware

### University of Delaware Center for Disabilities Studies

(302) 831-6972 (voice)

(302) 831-4689 (TDD)

[www.udel.edu/cds](http://www.udel.edu/cds)

- Research center providing services to people with disabilities in Delaware and their families

### Yes U Can

(302) 286-1399

[www.yesucanusa.org](http://www.yesucanusa.org)

- Provide physical fitness opportunities to people with disabilities in Delaware

## APPENDIX D: ACCESSIBILITY CONSULTANTS

### ***Universal Designers and Consultants, Inc.***

Mr. John P.S. Salmen, AIA  
8757 Georgia Ave., Ste. 430  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
Tel: 301-270-2470 V/TTY  
Web: <http://www.udconsultants.com/>

### ***Penza Bailey Architects***

Mr. Jeffrey A. Penza, AIA  
401 Woodbourne Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21212  
Tel: 410-435-6677  
Web: [www.penzabailey.com](http://www.penzabailey.com)

### ***Eastlake, Derry and Associates, LLC***

Mr. Mark Derry  
737 Powell Avenue  
Morgantown, WV 26505  
Tel: 304-296-3510  
Email: [ADAMarkD@aol.com](mailto:ADAMarkD@aol.com)  
Web: [www.adaderry.com](http://www.adaderry.com)

### ***H.R. Gray***

Curb Ramp Consulting  
Columbus, OH (Corporate Office)  
3770 Ridge Mill Drive  
Columbus, OH 43026  
Phone: 614-487-1335  
Email: [hrgray@hrgray.com](mailto:hrgray@hrgray.com)  
Web: [www.hrgray.com](http://www.hrgray.com)

### ***Evan Terry Associates, P.C.***

Mr. James Terry  
One Perimeter Park, S.  
Suite 200S  
Birmingham, AL 35243  
Tel: 205-972-9100  
Web: [www.evanterry.com](http://www.evanterry.com)

### ***Hecker Design, Ltd.***

Mr. Bill Hecker, AIA  
3568 Hampshire Drive  
Birmingham, AL 35223  
Tel: 205-298-1900 V/TTY  
Email: [Bill@HeckerDesign.info](mailto:Bill@HeckerDesign.info)  
Web: [www.heckerdesign.info](http://www.heckerdesign.info)

### ***Mark J. Mazz, AIA***

4016 Jefferson St.  
Hyattsville, MD 20781  
Tel: 301-440-4276  
Email: [mark.j.mazz@verizon.net](mailto:mark.j.mazz@verizon.net)  
Web: [www.markjmazz.com](http://www.markjmazz.com)

### ***Steven Winter Associates***

1616 H Street NW, Suite 900  
Washington, DC 20006  
Phone: 202-628-6100 (main)  
Email: [clients@swinter.com](mailto:clients@swinter.com)  
Web: [www.swinter.com](http://www.swinter.com)

Provided by:

#### **Mid-Atlantic ADA Center**

401 N. Washington St, Suite 450  
Rockville, MD 20850  
Toll-free: 1-800-949-4232 V/TTY (DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WV)  
Local: 301-217-0124 V/TTY  
Email: [adainfo@transcen.org](mailto:adainfo@transcen.org)  
Web: [www.adainfo.org](http://www.adainfo.org)

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## IMAGES

Photos used in this manual are of campers and counselors from United Cerebral Palsy of Delaware, Inc.'s Camp Manito, Camp Lenape, and Parents And Children Together At Tech program. Photos on pages [6](#) are of campers from the author's time as a counselor at Easter Seals' Camp Fairlee Manor. Thank you to these campers and families for allowing us to use these photos.

Photo on back cover courtesy of the University of Montana Wilderness Institute.

## FURTHER READING

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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