



Children's Association for Maximum Potential
2019 Fact Sheet

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January 2020

Children's Association for Maximum Potential (CAMP)

For Immediate Release:

Since 1979, **Children's Association for Maximum Potential** (known as Camp CAMP) has provided safe and fun-filled recreational experiences for individuals with special needs. The mission of CAMP is to strengthen and inspire individuals with special needs – and those who care for them – through recreation, respite and education.

Too often individuals with special needs, or those who are considered medically fragile, don't have "typical" childhood experiences like swinging, sliding, friends to play with, or the joy of being unconditionally accepted. Due to the severity of their disabilities, many individuals are not eligible to attend other camps, or participate in other agency programs offered within the special needs community. That is, until CAMP steps in.

CAMP is a place where individuals can...

- ...ride a horse, even if they can't walk
- ...float the slow river, even if they have serious respiratory issues
- ...make friends, even if they can't speak
- ...hold a slick snake or a fuzzy chinchilla, even if they can't see
- ...simply "be themselves", without fear of being judged or bullied

Year-round, CAMP programs alleviate medical, physical, developmental, social, and intellectual barriers for more than 1,600 campers by adapting activities to allow full participation. CAMP serves individuals (aged 5 – 50) with mild to severe disabilities from diagnosis with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Intellectual Disability, Down syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, Traumatic Brain Injury, Spina Bifida, visual impairment, and/or hearing impairment.

CAMP accepts most agency funding and strives to ensure that no camper is excluded based on disability or ability to pay.

And CAMP is so much more than.....well.....summer camp. CAMP also offers many programs during the school year (September through May) in its facility at Lackland AFB including Respite Weekends, Parents Night Out, Teen and Adult Day Adventures, TADA Life Skills Programs, and Family Retreats, to offer fun and safe enrichment activities for children with special needs, and their siblings, while their parents receive respite from child care responsibilities.

INTERESTING FACTS in 2019:

- 1,668 Campers were served through year-round programs during 2019
- 115,551 hours donated throughout the year by 818 teen and young adult volunteers

- 29 Respite events hosted through the school year while parents and caregivers got much needed rest
- 743 CEUs earned by healthcare volunteers throughout the summer
- 137 summer health care volunteers administered 28,946 doses of scheduled camper medications
- 97% of families agree that CAMP is helpful to their family's wellbeing.
- 90% of caregivers agreed school-year events relieved stress

School Year Programs:

1. **PNO (Parents Night Out)** provides respite care for children aged 6 months to 13 years one Friday evening per month in our facility at Lackland AFB. Children with special needs and their typical siblings are eligible to attend and every child with a special need is provided 1:1 support through trained volunteers. PNO affords families who have one or more children, including foster child placements, the ability to receive full childcare for 4 hours. A Nurse is present throughout the event, not only in case of minor bumps or scrapes, but to safely administer medications and monitor children who require additional medical care. Activities are designed to meet age-appropriate, developmental goals, then modified to include everyone regardless of ability.
2. **TADA (Teen and Adult Day Adventure)** programming offers monthly socialization opportunities for individuals with special needs, starting at age 14 years. Events are community-based and typically occur on Saturdays at various venues throughout San Antonio area. An average of 20+ participants meet around the city where they are paired one-to-one with volunteers uniquely trained in caring for those with challenges, for an afternoon or evening of fun at destinations including sporting events, amusement parks, malls, movies, museums and other places attractive to teens and young to middle-aged adults. CAMP gladly accepts donated tickets or event sponsors to ensure that the cost is not a barrier to participate.
3. **Respite Weekends** are designed much like our summer programs with participants enjoying the same type of activities. This monthly program begins on a Saturday morning and concludes late Sunday afternoon. It allows a short respite for caregivers and fosters year-long relationships among campers.
4. **Family Retreats** provide families the opportunity to take a break from their everyday routines, reconnect with one another, and connect with other families who face similar challenges. Over a weekend during the school year, meals and snacks are prepared for family members, while activities are facilitated by skilled CAMP staff and volunteers. Each family will have one or more "Family Pals"-- a volunteer assigned to host and guide them throughout the weekend.

Summer CAMP:

CAMP offers 9 weeks of camping each summer for individuals (aged 5 – 50) with mild to severe disabilities at its 55-acre camping facility on the Guadalupe River near Center Point. It is a certified Texas Youth CAMP and accredited by the American Camp Association. In 2020, the six-day camps begin May 24 and run through August 7.

Summer CAMP facilities were expanded in 2019 to include a new Health Care Center, new Camper Cabin, and Arts & Crafts Pavilion.

Campers are assigned counselors at a **1 to 1 camper-to-counselor** ratio, which is imperative to ensuring the safety of our campers. The provision of medical support is central to CAMP's goal of providing the best possible camping experience in a medically safe environment.

Summer camp activities include canoeing, swimming, horseback riding, arts and crafts, archery, outdoor cooking, recreational music, nature programming, paintball target range, petting zoo, dances, karaoke and more.

POPULATIONS SERVED:

Campers are not the only populations served and nurtured by CAMP. We proudly serve these four populations:

- Siblings of campers (aged 5-13) - Non-disabled siblings of our campers are included in all programs, giving their caregivers a complete break from their childcare duties. It also allows campers and siblings to enjoy a fun week of activities together
- Caregivers of campers – not only do they enjoy a break while children are at camp, they can get respite time during the school year programs
- Volunteers – more than 500 teen and young adult volunteers each summer (starting at age 15), many of whom make career decisions based on their time at CAMP
- Health Care Volunteers - More than 100 medical volunteers (Physicians, Residents, Medical Students, Registered Nurses, Licensed Vocational Nurses, Nursing Students, Respiratory Therapists, Physical Therapist, Physical Therapy students, Pharmacists, Pharmacy Technicians, etc.) provide the medical support for our campers each summer, often while earning continuing education credits. Without CAMP's extensive HCV staff, campers with severe medical needs - such as repertory issues, seizure disorders, and severe cerebral palsy – would not be able to participate at CAMP