

Camp Inspire Summer Camp for Children with Autism

Recreation and Parks has been offering specialized therapeutic summer camps for children for over 30 years. The combination of our dedicated, qualified and professional staff and innovated and specialized programs gives our campers a summer filled with fun activities the development of positive peer friendships and a continuation of therapeutic learning experiences. The camp is made possible by a partnership between St. Mary's County Recreation and Parks and St. Mary's County Public Schools Department of Special Education.

Camp Inspire is a four-week, co-ed, day camp designed specifically for children and young adults for children 4-18 years old, diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Our program is intended to develop your child's strengths and hidden abilities. We offer unique programs for recreational activities, academic and social development. Activities may include, adapted PE, occupational therapy, art therapy, social stories, field trips and much more. No personal care provided.

All activities are instructional in nature and administered by a professional specialized staff. All activities are designed to stimulate the children's awareness and interest while building upon positive relationships with others.

It is our belief that your child with Autism will build upon their camp experience and develop a greater appreciation for recreational activities, along with developing social and academic skills. Camp will provide for a safe, nurturing and dynamic learning environment that incorporates fun, fit and fundamentals of learning. Camp will help to improve cognitive, affective and psychomotor development through social skills and group interaction. Being surrounded by individuals with similar needs along with their non-disabled peers will foster friendships, self-esteem and confidence, promoting personal growth and independence.

A staff ratio of one camp instructor to every four campers will be provided. Every effort will be made to provide one-on-one staffing for campers who need closer supervision. We also have peer tutor and volunteers that will be assisting us through-out camp.

SPECIAL REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Registration for Special Needs Camps must be done in person or by mail. A completed registration form must be completed and submitted with payment. Online registration is not available.

Criteria to attend: Child ages 6 through 20 must be toilet trained or must have an accompanying adult to assist with toileting. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) or their adult designee: Must be available by telephone during camp hours; Provide lunch & snacks (if on a special diet), change of clothing, swim apparel; Provide transportation to and from camp.

Camp Schedule

Monday – Thursday, no camp on July 4th. Camp times at 9:30 am to 3:00 pm

Cost

\$ 600.00 for the summer; peer assistance at no charge. For those that qualify, scholarships and payment plans are available to assist families in the expense. Families who are registered with the Department of Social Service Respite Program qualify for respite care to pay the registration fee. Occasionally some non-profit agencies will sponsor a child for camp. All third-party payments must be approved prior to registration.

[SCHOLARSHIP FORM](#)

Daily Schedule & Field Trips

Sample Daily Activities:

- Sensory Integration activities
- Cooperative Games and motor activities
- Art Therapy
- Socialization
- Chess

Life Enrichment Field Trips Past examples

- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Swimming
- Crabbing
- Fishing
- Library
- Pizza Hot Line

Program Registration

Applications can be obtained from Recreation and Parks below. Online registration is not available.

[REGISTRATION FORM](#)

Peer Assistant

The peer assistance is a program designed to benefit both the campers with Autism and the peer assistant. Being a peer assistant allows you to provide campers diagnosed with Autism extra attention, encouragement, and feedback they may need to experience success.

On completion of Camp Inspires program, a peer assistance will:

1. Be able to describe what it means to be a peer assistance of a camper with Autism.
2. Have developed an understanding of related terminology, such as:
 - a. verbal cue
 - b. modeling
 - c. physical assistance
 - d. feedback (general and specific)
 - e. task analysis
 - f. Have gained a greater understanding of a person diagnosed with Autism.

Peer Assistant Expectations:

In order for peer assistants to participate in the Camp Inspire program they must meet several qualifications and hold positive characteristics. A good candidate for the peer assistant program is an individual who is:

1. Able to participate in Camp Inspire working with a child or young adults diagnosed with Autism
2. Capable of handling the responsibilities of working one-on-one with our campers
3. Able to communicate well and be able to follow the instructor's directions
4. Able to assist with any camper if needed
5. 7 years of age and older

Peer Assistant Characteristics

Reliable and helpful, demonstrates a positive attitude, Is prepared for camp, Starts camp on time, Completes assignments, Has a good rapport with peers, Seeks guidance if needed, Allows peers to demonstrate independence, Shows responsibility, Gives clear instructions.

PEER ASSISTANT APPLICATION & AGREEMENT

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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