

Helping All Kids Have Great Summer Experiences!



What do summer program staff need to know about your child in order for your child to have a successful experience?

All parents need to share important information about their children, such as:

What new things do your children want to learn and try?

What are your children's interests and talents?

What do your children love to do that might make their camp experience successful?

Have there been changes in their lives that might impact their social and emotional needs?

What things may cause your children to be uncomfortable or unhappy?

Some parents are reluctant to share too much information for fear it will have negative repercussions for their child (for example, they may wonder if the program will still take their child or if they're setting their child up for failure). But good camps and programs want and need to know as much as possible. They want to know your children's strengths and talents as well as what kinds of support they need to be successful. — *the more information they have, the better.*

Parents should help educate staff by spending time with them and answering and asking questions before dropping off their child. This can be critical. For example, if your child will be attending a mainstream camp or summer program, you'll want to make sure that everything is accessible for your child, and that the staff understands your child's needs. Again, good summer program staff will be more than willing to learn about your children. If staff members do not appear to listen or care about your concerns, then this may not be the best fit for your child.

Here is a list of seven areas of interest or talent your child may have. Use this list as a start for sharing information with camp and summer program staff.

My child loves:

Art: drawing, painting, music, singing, playing an instrument

Athletics: running, jumping, throwing, sports, swimming, dancing

Numbers: adding, subtracting, counting, working with numbers

Mechanics: taking things apart, fixing things, making/building things

Outdoors: plants, animals, camping, fishing, hunting, hiking, boating

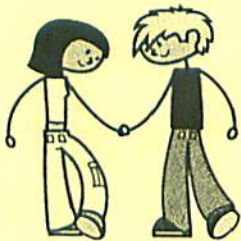
Social settings: talking, laughing, playing with others, being with people

Words: reading, writing, rhyming, being read to, making up stories

Other: _____



Here is a list of things that may be concerning or upsetting to your child especially if this is a first time experience with a summer camp or program. What settings may cause your child concerns:



Chaotic or noisy settings

Being in new places for the first time

Meeting new people for the first time

Physical contact such as hugs or being accidentally bumped into

Unexpected transitions to a new activity

Other: _____



Most summer camps and programs have paperwork you can fill out to share information, including information about dietary and medical needs. And regardless of whether your child is going to a day or residential camp, you should give the staff a list of emergency phone numbers and email addresses, and make sure they know how to reach you at all times during your child's camp stay.

If your child takes **any medication**, include the phone number of your doctor, in the event the prescription is lost and needs to be refilled by camp staff. Check whether the camp infirmary stocks your child's medication, too. If it doesn't, make sure you send extra medicine in case of an emergency.

For more information or resources contact:

THE
Arcadia
INSTITUTE

Allison Hammond, Community Participation Coordinator
Sara Burhans, Community Participation Assistant
269-387-7423