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MAKE HAPPY MEMORIES

Camp Catch-A-Rainbow: Free Pediatric Oncology Camp YMCA STORER CAMPS

Who We Are

YMCA Storer Camps in Jackson, MI offers multiple programs to enrich the lives of children who are being treated for cancer or who are in remission from cancer. These camps are operated at no-cost to the campers and funded through generous donations. Camp Catch-A-Rainbow (CCAR) programs allow children who have had a cancer diagnosis to have a “normal” camping experience complete with swimming, sports, horseback riding, boating, new friendships, and much more! Pediatric oncology professionals are available 24 hours a day to monitor each child’s special needs. The medical staff administer general medications and chemotherapy as needed, take blood counts and coordinate special dietary considerations.



The Need and Who We Serve

Caring for a child with cancer can be profoundly distressing to parents and siblings. Families battling a chronic disease need overall emotional and financial support. Prolonged changes in employment and financial challenges may also exacerbate parental psychological distress. Providing a “no-cost” resident camp experience offers a respite for these families, and Camp Catch-A-Rainbow meets the needs medically of these children and financially for their parents.

Camp Catch-A-Rainbow is open to children ages 4-17 to take part in the “happiest week of summer camp.” Families are also invited to join us for Family Weekend in October. Though we primarily serve children from Michigan, Indiana and Ohio, campers from across the country are welcomed.

We currently partner with Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital in Grand Rapids, MI and Bronson Methodist Hospital in Kalamazoo, MI to bring those on treatment to camp. We also work closely with Henry Ford Allegiance Health in Jackson, MI to provide medical supplies and testing while children are at camp.



Camp Catch-A-Rainbow Summer Programs

Camp Catch-A-Rainbow offers three different programs during the summer which all run during the same week.

Overnight Camp

A one-week program for children ages 7-15. Volunteers and YMCA staff serve as counselors and program leaders; all volunteers and staff are at least 18 years old and background checked. Along with traditional summer camp activities, campers will enjoy special programs such as an afternoon carnival, DJ dance party and visits by special guests.



Young Campers Day

A one-day program for children ages 4-6. All the excitement of overnight camp trimmed down into one day. Campers have the opportunity to do arts and crafts, ride a pony, go swimming and more. At the end of the day, all campers are given a certificate of accomplishment and their entire family is invited to join the overnight campers for dinner.

Leader-in-Training

A one-week program for children ages 16 & 17. Participants will gain leadership skills through a planned curriculum and shadowing staff and volunteers. There are also opportunities to develop and implement program activities for the younger campers. All participants must apply to be in the program and are accepted after an interview.

Camp Catch-A-Rainbow Family Camp

Camp Catch-A-Rainbow Family Camp is a time of family togetherness in an environment which excludes the day-to-day pressures and schedules of life. Family Camp offers parents and siblings the opportunities experienced by our Camp Catch-A-Rainbow campers during the summer, in a condensed time frame. Just like our summer programs, Family Camp is free of charge!

2020 Schedule

Overnight Camp & Leader-in-Training: Sunday, August 2nd - Friday, August 7th

Young Campers Day: Sunday, August 2nd

Family Camp: October 2020 (Dates TBD)

Camp Leadership

Camp Catch-A-Rainbow is overseen by Jesse Wells, Senior Program Director - Summer Camps and Derek Bycraft, Alumni Director, both YMCA Storer Camps employees. A volunteer planning committee assists in program development and delivery during the week. A medical planning committee annually reviews all medical procedures at camp and are signed off by a licensed pediatric doctor.