



## Frequently Asked Questions for Parents & Caregivers

### **What do campers get out of their experiences at Camp High Hopes?**

At camp everyone is has the opportunity to experience new challenges and reach heights they never expected. Through individualized adaptation, encouragement, and a culture of challenge by choice, each camper experiences camp in their own unique way, setting their own goals and often achieving more than expected. Whether climbing, swimming, canoeing, or playing a game, campers build self-esteem, social skills, and reinforce skills learned in school and other programs.

The camp experience is second to none... you can go to school for a year and never really know a classmate. However, when you spend morning, noon, and night for a week with someone they can form a closeness not found in any other environment. As an added bonus, the bonds formed between counselors and campers create lifelong friendships.

### **Who attends Camp High Hopes' programs and respites?**

Most of our campers come from Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Minnesota. There is a mix of people at camp at any given time; however, everyone who attends has a special need, disability, or chronic illness. No matter a person's age or diagnosis, odds are there is a program for everyone. While we strive to adapt to the needs of all potential campers, our resources are limited, and Camp High Hopes may not be able to provide for all specialized services, at this time. Please contact the Program Director or Assistant Program Director for more details.

### **How do you decide if someone is eligible to come to Camp?**

All applications are reviewed by the program and medical team. Individuals of any age that are living with a diagnosed disability, chronic illness, or medical condition are eligible to register for camp. Individuals requiring hospitalization or who are a significant danger to themselves or others are not eligible to register for camp. Decisions are also based on the individual's inability to attend another camp, the severity of the individual's medical problems, and other pertinent factors. Please contact the Program Director or Assistant Program Director for more details.

### **What do campers do at camp on a typical day? Is it fun?**

Camp is nothing but fun and memories filled with new friends and new experiences. To give you an overview, here's a brief narrative about what a campers and see and do in a day at Camp High Hopes. For a more detailed sample schedule, please see our Camper Handbook.



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Overall, we see camp as a break from a camper's normal routine, so we take it easy and start our day around 7:30 in the morning so we are up early enough to enjoy the day, but not so early that we aren't getting a chance to sleep-in, even a little. In the morning breakfast is served at 8 or 8:30 depending on the program, followed by 2-3 different activity periods set aside for such activities as Arts & Crafts, Creative dramatics, Recreation and Games, or perhaps a little canoeing or fishing at the lake! For morning and afternoon activities, campers travel about with their cabin suite group for 6-8 individuals to maximize camper engagement and socialization.

Lunch is at 12:00 with rest hour following to relax and recharge before afternoon activities. Once rested, campers head back out in their groups for such activities as swimming, archery, nature education, or games in the tipi. Dinner, with desert, is served at 5:30pm sharp, so don't be late! After supper we get the whole camp together for an evening activity, could be a campfire, scavenger hunt, dance, talent show, or other special event, you just never know with the creativity of our program staff. Sadly, all camp days must come to end. Campers head back to cabins around 8:30 to get ready for bed and rest, with lights out by 10pm, all depending on the age group and needs. But don't fret, rest is important, so each camper is ready for the next day of fun-filled activities.

### **So what's the food like?**

On a typical day, campers are served breakfast, lunch, and dinner in Meadowlark Lodge, provided by Hy-Vee Catering. If campers have allergies or cannot eat certain foods because of diet needs or religious reasons, just let us know and we will do our best to accommodate. Some camper's with highly specialized diets or specific food likes/dislikes, may be asked to bring supplementary food to camp to help ensure there will always be something tasty to keep each camper fueled for the day's activities.

### **What happens in the Fall, Winter, and Spring? Is Camp High Hopes closed?**

Not at all! While we may be the busiest during the summer months Camp High Hopes offers quality programs throughout the year for both youth and adults with disabilities.

### **How are counselors hired and trained?**

Counselors are chosen from many applicants for their experience, enthusiasm and empathy. All our staff: counselors, nurses, activity leaders, lifeguards, and even our management team, undergo a strict screening process including personal interviews, reference checks, criminal record check, and sex offender registry check. Our staff members complete intensive training in areas including: personal care, safety, disability awareness, behavior management, cultural awareness, and emergency preparedness. Activity leaders receive additional training in their program area to ensure camper safety and proper implementation.



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### **Is camp a safe place?**

Camp High Hopes takes great strides in providing quality programming to our campers, making safety a top priority. Beyond our screening processes and training for staff: our nurses, medical center staff, and activity leaders maintain current licenses and certifications appropriate to their area of work, such as an RN license or Lifeguarding certificate. As an added element of safety, all staff are CPR and First Aid certified, making them ready to respond to any emergency.

When it comes to the oversight of our programs, our Program Director is a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist, ensuring programs are properly adapted to camper's abilities, conducted in a safe manner, and equipment is properly maintained and routinely checked.

Camp High Hopes incorporates an established emergency action plan for prompt response to an emergency. In the event of a storm, our cabin and lodge are equipped with storm shelters. To prevent intruder entry to the camp, our main road is gated at Correctionville Rd and all of our buildings feature keycard controlled access with doors that are locked 24 hours a day, allowing only campers and staff to enter. Due to our location within city limits Camp High Hopes receives fire, police, and ambulance support directly from Sioux City, IA.

To keep our staff on their toes and at the top of their game, in-service trainings and drills are conducted with staff to ensure proper response to both emergency and non-emergency situations.

### **What is the staff to camper ratio?**

Our ratio of counselors to campers is adjusted based on the needs of our campers. Our minimum ration for any program is 1:3, while 1:1 assistance can be arranged as needed or found in specific 1:1 programs.

### **Where do campers stay?**

Campers attending any of our overnight programs enjoy a slumbering sleep in one of our two cabins, Berkshire or Hampshire Cabin. Designed with accessibility in mind, Berkshire and Hampshire are divided into 2 suites, each sleeping 10 people (up to 10 campers and 4 staff in an adjoining room). Each suite has its own, fully accessible restroom with roll-in showers to ensure everyone's needs are met. Keeping health and safety in mind, both Cabins are climate controlled with air conditioning and heat, new-sturdy extra-long twin beds, and an electric hospital bed per suite. For camper safety, our cabins feature keycard-controlled access to prevent intruders from accessing the building day or night. While our counselors need their rest too, supervision is never a concern as our counselors sleep in the cabin with our campers to ensure safety and care throughout the night.



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### **What if a camper is homesick or a parent wants to visit?**

Adjusting to a new environment can be a challenge for any camper; however, our counselors are well-trained in addressing camper homesickness. To best aid campers in experiencing all the joys of camp, our experience has taught us that allowing campers to call home or family and friends to visit increases homesickness. This experience has led to our policy that campers do not call home and at this time we do not have scheduled family and friends visits. Campers are encouraged to write home or make a card in arts and crafts to talk about their experiences, just as caregivers and families are asked to write a letter or send a card. To check in on a camper during program, you may call our office at 712-224-2267.

### **How are medications and medical care managed at camp?**

The Osprey Health Center is managed by our Health Care Director Kendra Hoffman, LPN under the direction of our Volunteer Medical Director Dr. Thomas Wente. The Health Center staff consists of an on-duty nurse during the day, a nurse on-call overnight, and health center assistants to provide routine scheduled medical care to campers as established by their primary physician or specialist. On arrival day, caregivers will have the opportunity to sit down with our Health Center Staff to review all medications and medical care needs to ensure proper care is provided.

### **Do campers need to bring their own medical supplies and medications?**

Yes, campers need to bring their own routine/prescribed medications and supplies, such as IVs, IMs, Nebulizers, catheters, briefs, syringes, pumps, tubing, and other types of treatments and supplies to camp. Be certain to bring enough supplies for the length of your program plus 1 day, just in case. Campers needing oxygen during the day or overnight arrangements must be made prior to coming to Camp by you and your oxygen supplier. CHH has PRN/Over-the-Counter medication available in our health center as outlined on our Camper Health History form.

### **What happens if a camper becomes ill at Camp?**

Campers who become ill at camp are evaluated by our Health Center Staff. Minor medical problems and illness (minor cuts, ear infections, sore throats, vomiting, sprains, etc) can be managed at Camp. Campers who are ill may remain on site for up to 24 hours in our recovery room. Campers remaining ill after this time period must return home for their well-being and the well-being of other campers. If emergency medical care is required, 911 will be notified and campers will be transported to a local hospital for further care. Camper's caregivers are promptly notified of any significant issues and a camper's primary physician may be contacted for assistance as well. All care providers must sign a release for treatment while a camper is at camp.



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### Map of Camp High Hopes

