Summer 2020 Camps and Programs

Compiled by Marci Wheeler, MSW
Indiana Resource Center for Autism

Please note that this directory has been compiled and posted as a service to the community. The Indiana Resource Center for Autism (IRCA) does not endorse any particular activity or organization on this list. Camps listed specifically serve persons with disabilities and/or include this population in their program. Some solely serve children and/or adults on the autism spectrum. Parents are advised to investigate the opportunities presented below to determine the appropriateness of each activity for their family member.

More and more families are checking their local YMCA, Parks and Recreation department, and even private gyms, recreational facilities and local Girl Scout councils and finding that programs have been, or are being, developed for children and/or adults with disabilities. For example, there are martial arts programs available in some communities for individuals with special needs, and there are martial arts programs that include people on the autism spectrum.

Some programs have an “inclusion coordinator” or other staff designated to support children and/or adults with disabilities. Within this listing, you will notice a few programs offered by these types of organizations around Indiana. You are encouraged to check with various organizations in your community to inquire about their specialized programs and/or supports within existing programs to accommodate children and adults with disabilities, including individuals on the autism spectrum.

Additionally, Special Olympics Indiana might be an option for your family members who have an interest in playing a variety of sports. Special Olympics Indiana provides year-round sports training and athletic competition in over twenty Olympic-type sports for children and adults with disabilities in communities across Indiana. To find out more about Special Olympics Indiana programs, and/or opportunities to get involved in your area, check out their website at https://soindiana.org/ or call 800-742-0612.

Another avenue for locating and pursuing summer camps and programs might be found at your local college or children’s museum. Though not designed specifically for children or teens with ASD, some may offer programs which focus on a special interest and/or special talent that matches well with your family member.

Additionally, while all attempts were made to make this list as comprehensive as possible, there may be other programs and/or camps in your area. In the event you know of an opportunity not appearing on this list, please send the details to IRCA via Marci Wheeler at mwheeler@indiana.edu or at 812-855-6508 and we will be happy to add it.
CAMPS

Cedar Lake (Lake County)
SpringHill Day Camp
Faith Church Cedar Lake
6729 W 133rd Avenue, Cedar Lake, IN 46303
Location: Faith Church Cedar Lake, Cedar Lake, IN 46303
Dates: June 22-26, 2020 9 am-4 pm
Cost: Early Bird price of $199 if register February 14-28, 2020 (financial aid available)
Contact: 219-374-6309 or info@springhillexperiences.com
Website: https://www.wearefaith.org/cedarlake/ or https://www.springhillexperiences.com/daycamplocations
SpringHill Day Camp at Faith Church is a faith-based camp for children K-5th grade. Please contact for availability of counselors trained for special needs. Activities vary, but usually include small group Bible teaching, arts and crafts, rock climbing, and water activities.

Crown Point (Lake County)
Dream Summer Camp
Chasing Dreams
8380 Louisiana St, Merrillville, IN 46410
Location: Camp Connect 7007 E. 117th Ave. Crown Point, IN 46307
Dates: June 5-7, 2020 Cost: Free
Contact: Denise Babjak at 219-299-9049, or email denise@chasingdreams.org
Website: https://www.chasingdreams.org/
Dream Summer Camp is an overnight camp for children and young adults with special needs and a parent. It will be 3 days and 2 nights for ages 5-50+. There will be active and quiet activity choices.

Dyer (Lake County)
SpringHill Day Camp
Faith Church 100 81st Avenue, Dyer, IN 46311
Location: Faith Church, Dyer, IN
Dates: July 8-10, 2020, 9 am-4 pm
Cost: Early Bird price of $199 if register February 14-28, 2020 (financial aid available)
Contact: 219-864-0300, ext. 180
Website: https://www.wearefaith.org/dyercampus/ or https://www.springhillexperiences.com/daycamplocations
SpringHill Day Camp at Faith Church is an inclusion-based camp for children K-5th grade. When requested, children with special needs receive a one-on-one counselor. Activities vary, but usually include arts and crafts, rock climbing, and water activities.

Hobart (Lake County)
Summer School
Center for Possibilities
22 Tyler Avenue, Hobart, IN 46342
Location: 22 Tyler Avenue, Hobart IN
Dates: Starts June 1, 2020 (Holiday week-no camp June 29- July 3rd) resumes on July 6- July 30; Monday through Thursday
Cost: $40 per week
Contact: Cherish at 219-962-5751, or email sboender@centerforpossibilities.org
Website: https://centerforpossibilities.org/
Summer program offered for children ages 2-6 if there are openings (current students given priority).
Merrillville (Lake County)
All Pieces Fit Day Camp
All Pieces Fit 8438 Indiana Street Merrillville, IN 46410
Location: All Pieces Fit, Merrillville, IN
Dates: TBA: Monday-Friday 10 am-2 pm
Cost: Accepting Medicaid, primary insurance and private pay options are available
Contact: Brittany or Outreach Team at 219-525-4572 Ext. 103
Website: https://www.allpiecesfit.com/
Program for children with autism ages 4-17 years. Sensory-based activities focused on content that supports play skills, social skills and activities that focus on fine and gross motor skills. Volunteers trained in basic ABA principles and a 2:1 camper to volunteer ratio. Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) and Registered Behavior Technicians (RBTs) on site.

Chesterton (Porter County)
SpringHill Day Camp
Liberty Bible Church
824 N Calumet Avenue, Chesterton, IN 46304
Location: Liberty Bible Church, Chesterton, IN
Dates: June 8-12, 2020, 9 am-4 pm
Cost: Early Bird price of $199 if register February 14-28, 2020 (financial aid available)
Contact: 219-926-3038 or info@lbchurch.org
Website: https://www.findliberty.net/ or https://www.springhillexperiences.com/daycamplocations SpringHill Day Camp at Liberty Bible Church is a faith-based camp that include small group Bible teaching, high-energy large group sessions, and adventure activities such as archery, bungee trampoline, camp songs, climbing wall, crafts & more. Camper ages and week length may vary by location.

Rolling Prairie (La Porte County)
Camp Sharing Meadows
Share Foundation with the Handicapped PO Box 400, Rolling Prairie, IN 46371
Location: St. Timothy Center (main camp building), 6357 N 300 E, La Porte, IN
Dates: June 7-12, June 14-19, June 21-26, June 28- July 3, July 5-10 and July 12-17, 2020; Registration opens March 2, 2020
Cost: $350 per week
Contact: Emily Barsic at 219-778-2585, or email camp@sharefoundation.org
Website: https://www.campsharingmeadows.org/
Sharing Meadows is a camp for adults 18+ with different disabilities. Activities swimming, campfires, DJ dances, picnics, fishing, boating, celebrations with God, value sessions, arts/crafts, treasure hunts, games like chair volleyball, bean bag tournaments, and more.
ONGOING SUMMER ACTIVITIES

La Porte (La Porte County)
Special Abilities Martial Arts
Eldridge’s ATA Martial Arts 1700 Lincoln Way, Suite 5. La Porte, IN 46350
Location: Eldridge’s Martial Arts Academy, La Porte, IN
Dates: Ongoing
Contact: James Eldridge at 219-325-0302
Website: https://eldridgeata.com/

The amount of concentration and physical coordination it takes to master taekwondo makes this the perfect activity for people with special challenges. Eldridge’s ATA Martial Arts helps individuals with learning disabilities, ADHD, and Autism Spectrum Disorders.

SENSORY FRIENDLY MOVIES

AMC Entertainment® and the Autism Society have teamed up to bring families impacted by autism spectrum disorders, a special opportunity to enjoy their favorite films in a safe and accepting environment on a monthly basis. With Sensory Friendly Films, the movie auditoriums will have their lights brought up and the sound turned down. In addition to the locations listed below, check with your local AMC Theatre for sensory friendly movies. Check for your local AMC Theater on the AMC website https://www.amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films or check the list below to contact your local theater here in Indiana.

Merrillville (Lake County)
AMC Showplace Hobart 12
2590 Southlake Mall Drive
Merrillville, IN 46410
219-755-0377

Schererville (Lake County)
AMC Showplace Schererville 12
1400 Eagle Ridge Drive
Schererville, IN 46375
219-322-9264

Michigan City (La Porte County)
AMC Showplace Michigan City 14
100 Meijer Drive
Michigan City, IN 46360
219-872-5203
THERAPEUTIC RIDING

Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.) [https://www.pathintl.org/], formally known as the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA), was founded in 1969 to promote safe and effective therapeutic horseback riding throughout the United States and Canada. Though PATH Int. began with a focus on horseback riding as a form of physical and mental therapy, the organization has since developed a multitude of different equine-related activities for therapeutic purposes, collectively known as equine-assisted activities and therapies (or EAAT).

Please inquire about programs available at each Center. Some of the activities that these riding Centers might offer include: Grooming & Tacking, Ground Work, Hippotherapy, Therapeutic Riding, Mobile Community Programs, Vocational Training, Competition (Special Olympic, Paralympics), Recreational Riding, and 4-H, Camps (Summer, Day, or Other).

Exceptional Equestrians Unlimited, Inc.
PO Box 53, Hobart, IN 46342
(barn location: 5699 East 73rd Avenue, Merrillville, IN 46410)
219-945-0726
pmellow@frontier.com
http://www.eeunwi.org/

Reins of Life, Inc.
9375 West 300 North
Michigan City, IN 46360
219-874-7519
staff@reinsoflife.org
https://www.reinsoflife.org/

Check out the following resources from the American Camp Association:
Follow the link at [https://www.acacamps.org/].
This website includes a variety of helpful information including the following services and links:
Find A Camp Database: [http://find.acacamps.org/]
Preparing for Camp: [https://www.acacamps.org/campers-families/planning-camp/preparing-camp]

For additional helpful information on camps, visit the IRCA website at [https://www.iidc.indiana.edu/pages/Making-Camps-Accessible-for-All] for an article on “Making Camps Accessible for All.”