



Summer Camps

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The Osteogenesis Imperfecta Foundation, Inc. is the only voluntary national health organization dedicated to helping people cope with the problems associated with osteogenesis imperfecta. The Foundation's mission is to improve the quality of life for people affected by OI through research to find treatments and a cure, education, awareness, and mutual support.

It's the middle of winter so naturally you may be thinking about summer weather, and the opportunities for fun, adventure and a change in scenery that a summer camp provides.

A little planning now will make it possible for some of those day dreams to come true.

Set some goals

Summer can be the time to expand horizons and make new friends. Besides having fun, this is the time to think about:

- Learning a new skill
- Enjoying a favorite hobby or special interest
- Participating in a sport
- Preparing for a future career
- Traveling

Types of Summer Camps/Summer Experiences

When the word "camp" comes up many children and adults think about traditional, outdoor living, sleep over type camps. But there are actually many different types of camps and summer experiences that can help you achieve your goals. An increasing number of traditional residential camps are accessible to children and adults with disabilities, along with day camps, summer classes, adapted athletic teams and tours. Here are a few categories to think about.

- Learning about the outdoors
- Theater/performing arts
- Art
- Music
- Special interests such as computers, science, fashion design or cooking
- Hobbies such as chess, short wave radio, scrap-booking, bird watching or gardening
- Sports
- Cheerleading
- Sailing or boating
- Career related jobs, or internships

Health and Safety

If possible, visit the camp site or class facility before signing up. Make sure that the buildings and grounds are fully accessible and meet your needs. Verify the organization's safety program. Find out what happens in an emergency and if a registered nurse is in residence. Investigate the Hospital that the camp refers injuries to. Learn about the age, training and experience of the counselors. Review the list of daily activities to make sure they are safe for your type of OI. Parents should discuss their child's OI related needs with the program director.

Other considerations

Cost and transportation are two major issues when putting together a plan for the summer. Scholarships may be available to camps or classes.

"Surgery" Camp

Surgery is often on the summer agenda for children with OI. Parents advise that when a child can't go to a summer "camp," it is worth the effort to bring some special experiences home to the child. This can be the time to learn a new skill like knitting or chess or web site design. Many of the same resources that offer summer experiences also have information about trained volunteer instructors who can visit your home.

Resources

American Camping Association. www.acacamps.org

Publishes *Parents' Guide to Accredited Camps*. This organization certifies camps and maintains a searchable database of accessible camps that can be customized by disability, age, and state.

Easter Seal Camps. www.easterseals.com (see "services")

Nationwide camping and recreational programs for children and adults with disabilities.

National Center on Accessibility. www.ncpad.org/get/discover

Publishes *Discover Camp: Considerations for Sending Your Child with a Disability to Camp for the First Time*. A comprehensive guide to matching a camp to your child's individual needs and interests and a database of accessible camps.

OI Foundation: Summer Camp Information. www.oif.org/SummerCamp

Suggestions for finding a program that is a good match for the child's interests and safely accommodates the child's OI related medical needs.

Other sources of Information include: Local Recreation Departments and swim teams, YMCA, Church youth groups, Museums and art galleries, Colleges including community colleges, Theaters and performing arts societies, Hobby shops, Zoos, State and National Parks, Public Libraries, School counselors, or Hospital based Social Service or Occupational therapy departments.

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For more information about osteogenesis imperfecta contact:



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