

## **Camp Abilities Washington Frequently Asked Questions**

- What is the cost for my child to attend Camp Abilities Washington?
  - Thanks to our partnership with the Washington Department of Services for the Blind and other generous donors, Washington campers are able to attend Camp Abilities Washington at no-cost to their families.
- Can my child attend Camp Abilities Washington if we live out of state?
  - Unfortunately, no. Camp Abilities Washington is only for students living in Washington State receiving vision services. NWABA does have, however, Camp Abilities Oregon for Oregon Regional Vision students.
- Is this an overnight camp?
  - Yes! Campers arrive Sunday afternoon and stay on campus in the dormitories until Friday afternoon. Parents will drop their child off on Sunday afternoon and return on Friday morning to join us for closing ceremonies and pick their child up.
- What staff will be working with my camper?
  - We hire a variety of professionals and pre-professionals in the physical activity, visual impairments, and teaching fields from across the United States. Our staff has exceptional experience teaching sports, physical activity, and Expanded Core Curriculum skills through the modality of sports to youth with visual impairments. Additionally, we host two to three Paralympians who are medalists in their respective sports to mentor the campers throughout the week.
- What background checks must staff complete?
  - All of our staff must complete a Voluntary Disclosure Statement, a comprehensive background check, and we check for all of our staff in the National Sex Offender Registry. Additionally, we check a minimum of three professional references for our staff.
- What is the ratio of campers to counselors?
  - One counselor will work directly with and supervise two campers throughout the week for a 2:1 direct supervision ratio. There are a myriad of other adults working with campers at activities and throughout the day at camp. With 40 campers and approximately 60 adults, including NWABA staff, nurses, sport specialists, counselors, and others, there ratio frequently is closer to 1:1 and never greater than 2:1.
- With whom will my camper be rooming?
  - Campers live in a single dormitory room with a 3-5 suitemates of the same gender and a similar, if not the same, age. During the registration process, campers have the opportunity to request a roommate. We will do our best to honor these requests, but cannot promise to honor every request. Counselors will sleep across the hall in a separate room. Males and females are on separate floors and campers of the opposite sex are not allow on the other gender's floor.

- Can families come to see any of the camp activities?
  - On the last day of camp, Friday, we invite all of the parents to come and see our Exhibition Sports Day! Families will join us on Friday morning to see their camper participate in a sport that they have been practicing throughout the week. Families will have the opportunity to cheer on their camper and other campers as they compete in a camp-wide sport, such as goalball, 5-a-side soccer, swimming, and many other sports. The sport exhibited will rotate every year. Afterwards, we will eat lunch together and do our closing ceremonies where our staff will share highlights of our week together before saying our goodbyes.
- What sports will my child be doing?
  - Campers participate in over 12 sports, including goalball, 5-a-side soccer, tandem biking, track and field, beep baseball, judo, paddleboarding, kayaking, beep kickball, and many others. Campers will also have the opportunity to participate in camp-wide games and choice activities. Additionally, campers will receive small group and one-on-one orientation and mobility lessons to increase their skills in a new and applicable environment. Campers also will engage in direct and indirect lessons based on the Expanded Core Curriculum.
- Can my child bring any food to camp?
  - Three healthy meals per day and many healthy snacks are provided throughout the day and we work with the dining hall to accommodate dietary needs. Campers can bring non-perishable snacks to keep in their dorm room, however we do ask that these be healthy as one thing that we encourage throughout the week is developing healthy eating skills.
- Are cellphones allowed at camp?
  - We discourage campers from bringing their cell phones to camp. Should you choose to send your child to camp with a cell phone or other electronic device, know that we are not responsible for any lost or damaged items and campers will only be allowed to use electronics in their dorm rooms before bed or during rest time. Campers are allowed to call home starting Tuesday night and a phone will be available for their use if they do not have one at camp with them.
- What happens if my child becomes homesick?
  - For many campers, this camp will be their first experience sleeping away from home, particularly for an extended period of time and in an unfamiliar environment. Together, our co-camp directors have over 20 combined years of experience working at various overnight camps and are very experienced in caring for campers with homesickness. We view this as a great experience to work with campers, building a relationship with them, to help them work through their homesickness. We find that keeping campers engaged in camp activities helps them to best acclimate to camp. We find that the overwhelming majority of campers turn the corner in the first few days of camp.

- Can I send my child a care package or letter at camp?
  - Yes, you can! We will send out the camp mailing address about one week before camp starts. We will distribute any camper mail we receive either during rest period or before bed. Since camp is only six days long, we would suggest you leave any packages or letters with your child's counselor to be given on a certain day to ensure that they will receive the mail while at camp.
- Is there nursing staff at camp?
  - Yes, there is always at least one RN at camp on duty at all times. Our nurses administer all of the campers' medications, both prescription and non-prescription, including injections. When filling out the health forms, parents and guardians will have the opportunity to note which non-prescription medications their camper is able to take based on a list of those available at camp. Our nurses will also be available to take care of any emergency or smaller incidents.
- I want to share my child's accomplishments and abilities with their teachers, IEP and 504 teams when they leave camp. How can I do that?
  - Our biggest desire for our campers is that they take the skills they have learned at camp home to their schools and communities and continue to put into practice what they have learned. Therefore, our counselors, sport specialists, and O&M specialists will complete an assessment on your camper that outlines what they accomplished and how they accomplished it. We will send families and the campers teacher of the visually impaired a copy of the assessment after camp. This way, teachers, educational teams, and coaches can employ the teaching methods and adaptations used during camp to ensure physical activity is accessible for our campers, regardless of the activity or location. We also have a Sports Adaptations program, which provides adaptive equipment available for lending, adaptations videos, and PE consultations to help make PE and physical activity more accessible for our campers when they leave camp.