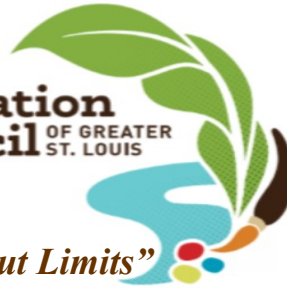




**Recreation
Council** OF GREATER
ST. LOUIS



"Leisure Without Limits"



Tips on Finding a Recreation Program or Summer Camp that is Right for YOU.

A guide to assist individuals with developmental disabilities, and their families, find recreational activities in St. Louis City, St. Louis County, and St. Charles County areas.

**For more information, call the Recreation Council office in your County
See our website for the most up-to-date information**

**St. Louis City Residents
St. Louis County Residents
St. Charles County Residents**

**(314) 726-6044 x105
(314) 726-6044 x103
(636) 477-7704**

www.recreationcouncil.org

Tips on Finding a Recreation Program Just Right for YOU

Each one of us is unique! Therefore, the Recreation Council encourages individuals of all abilities, when choosing a leisure/recreation program or activity, to gather as much information about that program or activity as possible. Keep in mind your specific support needs and interests, too. It is helpful before contacting program staff, that you make a list of questions to ask. Be certain to give as much information about your own support needs, if applicable, in order that the program staff can address needs, if applicable, in order that the program staff can address your needs in advance to make your experience a successful one.

Here are some questions you might consider asking in addition to your own set of individualized questions:

- What can this program offer me as a participant?
- What is the philosophy of your organization? How long has the organization been in existence?
- How long has the program/activity been offered?
- When is the program/activity offered? What happens if I miss a session?
- What is the cost of the program/activity/Are there scholarships available, if needed?
- Is transportation provided or is the facility on a bus route?
- How are special needs or accommodations handled? (personal care, challenging behaviors, interpreters, etc)
- Is the program/activity site accessible?
- What is the ratio of program staff to participants?
- What credentials, certifications, etc. do program staff hold?
- Does the program/activity staff receive training on the needs of persons with disabilities?
- Do I need my own equipment in order to participate in the program/activity?
- What should I wear or bring with me to this program?
- How, when and where do I register for this program/activity? Who helps me with the registration process?
- Is your program accredited and/or monitored for safety & programmatic standards?
- If applicable, are references available? If not, ask other family members or participants if they are aware of the program and its reputation?

Questions To Ask The Camp Director

(modified information from the American Camp Association)
When you are looking for a camp, every item you can think to ask about is important. Before you talk with a director, make a list of questions. Ask questions specific to your or your son/daughter's specific interests and support needs! If possible, try to visit the camp when it is in operation before you make your final selection. This will give you and/or your son/daughter the opportunity to observe the programs and philosophy of the camp in action. Here are some important items to consider when you meet with the camp staff.

- What is the background of the Director?*
- What is the camp's philosophy?*
- What is the ratio of counselors to campers?*
- Is there transportation provided by the camp?*
- What are the counselors' ages?*
- What training do the counselors receive?*
- What kind of background checks are done on camp staff?*
- What type of assistance do the counselors provide?*
- Are references available?*
- What percentage of the staff return each year?*
- Is the Camp accredited by the American Camp Association?*
- How are special needs handled?*
- What percentage of campers return each year?*

You can find a complete list of ACA Accredited Camps in the Guide to Accredited Camps. Call 1-800-428-CAMP Also check out ACA's website at: www.acacamps.org

The Recreation Council has available various articles on preparing for and attending camp. Call (314) 726-6044.



Funded through the Saint Louis Office for DD Resources, Productive Living Board for St. Louis County Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, and the Developmental Disabilities Resource Board of St. Charles County

