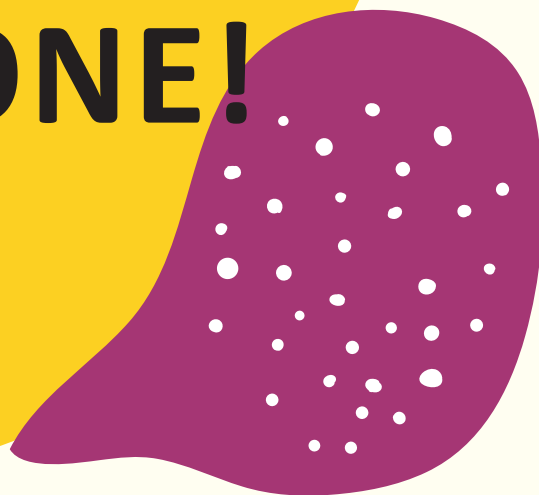




# A CAMP FOR EVERYONE!



Companion Guide



# WHAT IS INCLUSION?

**Inclusion means that all campers are included in camp activities.**

This includes campers with special needs, whether or not they have been diagnosed. Inclusion is also about ensuring that camp is a positive experience for all participants. We want these campers to enjoy camp as much as everyone else, and that applies to all the activities presented at camp.



# Inclusion at camp means:

**1**

## **All campers practice 60 minutes of physical activity per day.**

Young people find it hard to practice 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per day: just imagine how difficult it can be for a young person dealing with several obstacles (physical, cognitive, social, etc.). Such obstacles can make the practice of a physical activity even more difficult.

**2**

## **Ensuring that all campers enjoy satisfying 20-minute meals periods.**

Our objective is to foster a calm and pleasant atmosphere where everyone has a place.

**3**

## **Recognizing each camper's strengths**

In order to build self-esteem among campers, it's important to recognize their achievements by highlighting their abilities, strengths and qualities. Just as important is accepting their differences and recognizing the value of diversity.


**4**

## **Making camp a positive experience for each camper**

That positive experience is brought about when each camper participates fully in camp activities, has fun, and feels respected within the group.

Our intention is to ensure that campers with special needs reap all the benefits that summer camp can offer.





# I apply the following four principles at camp:

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## Attitude

- **Adopt a positive and respectful attitude.**
- **Use positive vocabulary.**
- **Emphasize the strengths and successes of each camper.**
- **Avoid discrimination in any form.**

Example: Excluding a camper because he or she has special needs, or favouring a camper for whom success comes easier.

Let's not forget that the counselor acts as a role model. Hence the importance of adopting a positive attitude that sets an example to the group. This helps create a positive atmosphere within the group and builds a sense of belonging among the campers.

Our intention is to transmit this attitude to the campers so that they, too, are not subject to discrimination in any form.

## Communication

- **Give clear and simple instructions and ensure that they are correctly understood.**
- **Provide the instructions in several steps.**
- **Demonstrate how to carry out the instructions.**
- **Ask the campers to repeat the instructions to make sure they understand.**

It's important to remember that some campers may have more difficulty concentrating on the instructions or even understanding them. In other words, accept that the instructions may be poorly understood at times. In this case, the counselor can repeat the instructions, speaking slowly, adding visual supports, or acting out the instructions.

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## Adaptation

- **Adapt the activities to each camper's needs.**
- **Adapt the activities to make them more accessible.**

### Ideas for adapting activities:

- **Change the material.**  
Example: larger or lighter object
- **Simplify the activity.**  
Examples: Remove rules and stages, reduce the size of the field.
- **Always start with the basics, regardless of the age group.**
- **Divide the campers into pairs to help those who are experiencing difficulty.**

If counselors are unsure of how to include a camper with special needs in an activity, they should not be afraid to ask the camper directly. Each camper knows best what works for him or her, and each knows better than anyone what he or she can and can't do. The camper can even suggest alternatives to the counselor.

**\* For ideas on adapting activities, see the PEP ton jeu application.**

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## Accessibility

- **Make sure all the campers have access to the activity sites.**

Examples: Access ramps, wheelchair elevators, reasonable distance between the activity sites.

Camp managers are responsible for physical accessibility. The counselor's role is simply to know what the campers' needs are and plan their activities accordingly. Thus, the counselor can avoid situations where the camper is unable to get to or participate in an activity.



## Tips and suggestions:



- **Enjoyment above all else! Make sure that all the campers enjoy the activities.**
- **Keep it simple, whenever possible.**
- **Divide my games into stations; this gives campers a chance to practice the different skills needed to perform an activity.**
- **Make sure that the parents and my supervisor inform you about any limitations and needs that the campers may have.**
- **Parents often have proven tools that work with their child, and those tools may be put to good use at camp.**
- **Know when campers are being excluded, and act quickly to integrate them.**

## Try to avoid:



- **Infantilizing**

It's important not to infantilize, which means treating a camper as though he or she is younger than his or her actual age.

- **Focusing on special needs**

Leave that information to the discretion of the camper with a functional limitation. In some cases, the camper will want to explain the situation to others, while in others the camper will want to keep the information to themselves. Speak to the camper about it to find out what his or her wishes are in this regard.

- **Always assigning the same role to campers with special needs**

It's important to vary the campers' roles and responsibilities in activities.



## And remember:

- **Adapted activities can benefit more than one camper, in some cases, even campers without special needs.**

So, while an adapted activity can be geared to a particular individual, it can also be of benefit to others.

Example: A young person living with autism spectrum disorder may find comfort in a specific daily routine. But a stable routine can also be of comfort to campers without special needs. The camper experience is thus improved in this way.





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