



Camp Mak-A-Dream
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Frequently Asked Questions About Siblings Camp

What is Siblings Camp? Camp Mak-A-Dream is a place where kids and teens can have a fantastic time, meet new friends and just be themselves. Siblings Camp is a unique Camp experience for kids and teens that have or have lost a brother, sister or parent with cancer. Camp offers an opportunity for these young people to connect with peers who may be facing similar challenges.

Who attends Siblings Camp? Participants come from all over the United States and Canada. There are generally 40 – 60 participants per session, about 40% of which have previously attended Camp.

What kind of medical support exists at Camp? Our modern health center is staffed with volunteer nurses and doctors during Camp. They review medical information about each Camper so that they are able to provide the best possible care. Our medical staff is able to provide advanced treatment at any time. The role of the medical staff is non-intrusive to the daily activities at Camp.

What are the facilities like at Gold Creek Lodge, home of Camp Mak-A-Dream? Gold Creek Lodge is located in a small ranching community 65 miles east of Missoula. Although the Lodge is nestled at the foot of the Flint Mountains amongst incredible Montana scenery, it is not a rustic camp. Facilities include modern cabins, an art studio, health center and main lodge, as well as a swimming pool, hot tub, ropes course and climbing wall.

Where will I sleep? Participants stay in one of four large cabins (two male and two female). Each cabin sleeps up to 20 people comfortably. Cabin counselors sleep in the cabins with Campers. There is also a common area with a fireplace and kitchenette and two handicapped-accessible bathrooms with showers.

What do we eat? Everyone at Camp eats together in the main lodge for each meal. Large round tables create a community atmosphere. Food is abundant and nutritious and is served in family style servings. A variety of snacks is also available in the cabins. For staff and participants who require vegetarian or other dietary alternatives, we ask you to let us know and we will do our best to accommodate any special needs.

What activities are offered at Camp? Camp offers many opportunities for outdoor recreation. Swimming, field sports, ropes course and climbing wall, hiking, fishing, horseback riding and archery are some of the activities offered. Campers also enjoy spending time in the art studio working on projects ranging from tie-dye to pottery and from weaving to jewelry making. During the evening, we plan special events such as pool parties and dances designed to enhance community and friendship. We also hold evening *Cabin Chats*, special time set-aside for participants to talk and share with one another. *Cabin Chat* is a great way to wind down from the day and reflect on the time shared, friendships formed and challenges faced.

Will I have an opportunity to see much of Montana, off Camp property? We usually spend at least one day participating in an off campus activity. We may mine for sapphires and attend a live theatre performance in historic Philipsburg or visit nearby Deer Lodge to tour a nineteenth century prison and ranch.

Do the Campers get a chance to talk about cancer? During *Cabin Chat*, Campers have the opportunity (if they choose) to share in a safe and supportive environment, their feelings and thoughts about living with cancer. We also believe, however, that Camp Mak-A-Dream is a place where Campers can get away from cancer for a short while and experience new friendships, opportunities and challenges.

Who makes up the Camp Mak-A-Dream staff? Our first priority at Camp Mak-A-Dream is the safety and well-being of each Camper. A large number of qualified applicants apply each year to work at Camp Mak-A-Dream. This group is comprised of people from all walks of life—teachers, retirees, counselors, social workers, students, nurses, homemakers and doctors, to name just a few. Qualified staff members and volunteers assist in every area of Camp—from meal preparation, to running program activities. Staff members are available 24 hours a day to offer encouragement and support. Their role is to provide a safe, comfortable setting, in which participants can make the most of their time at Camp. All prospective staff members participate in an extensive application and interview process to ensure the safety and care of our participants.

What is the Camper-to-staff ratio? To ensure that each Camper has a safe, fun and enriching experience, the ratio of Camper to staff is generally **4:1** at Siblings Camp. In some situations, Campers may need one-on-one supervision. If we have a clear idea of those specific needs before the child or teen reaches Camp, we can prepare for appropriate staff assistance.

How much does it cost to attend Camp Mak-A-Dream? Once you arrive, Camp is completely cost free. You will, however, need to provide your own way to Missoula, Montana. United, Delta, Northwest, and Alaska airlines fly into Missoula. We suggest booking a ticket as soon as you are confirmed, as travel to Montana can be expensive.

How do I apply? Applications are available on our Web site at www.campdream.org, or call our office at (406) 549-5987 to have one sent to you. We encourage you to submit your application as soon as possible. The confirmation process begins in April for the summer sessions. Applications are processed in the order received, with consideration given to the applicant's current stage of therapy and whether or not the participant has previously attended Camp. All applications are reviewed by our selection committee to determine the applicant's eligibility. Applicants who have attended Camp Mak-A-Dream three or more times will be put on a waiting list. Anyone selected from the waiting list will be notified at least 30 days prior to the Camp session.