

Camp Kaleidoscope

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Camp Kaleidoscope?

Duke Children's Hospital operates a residential camping program, in conjunction with The Pines of Carolina Girl Scout Council, for children and adolescents treated at Duke for chronic illnesses and other health problems. Each camper attends for a one week session.

Where is Camp Kaleidoscope located?

Camp Kaleidoscope is located at Camp Graham, a Pines of Carolina Girl Scout Council facility on Kerr Lake in Henderson, NC.

Who gets to attend?

Campers are recommended by their medical teams at Duke. Parents or legal guardians can also initiate the process by asking one of their child's medical providers to make a recommendation. The program director and medical director then assess each child's ability to enjoy the experience and effectively participate in camp activities. Children between the ages of 7 and 16 are eligible to attend Camp Kaleidoscope.

How is the camp organized?

The Kaleidoscope campsite at Camp Graham has seven cabins. Each cabin has bed space for five campers, so our capacity is 35 campers per week. Currently, we rent the campsite for three consecutive weeks and can serve up to 105 campers. Each week is set up for children of different age groups. In addition, we provide seven former campers who are at least 17 years old the opportunity to serve as assistant counselors.

Who serves as counselors?

All of the cabin counselors (at least one living in each cabin) are professionals, students, or volunteers associated with Duke University Hospital. Cabin counselors include physicians, nurses, physician associates, physical therapists, occupational therapists, respiratory therapists, social workers, child life specialists, hospital volunteers, and medical students. Camp Graham also hires a staff of counselors who serve as lifeguards and instructors at the waterfront. The staff to camper ration is typically one staff member for every two to three campers.

Are there children other than Kaleidoscope campers at Camp Graham during those weeks?

Yes! We occupy only one of the four available campsites each week. The other three are usually filled with members of various Girl Scout Troops or individual girls from North Carolina and the surrounding area. In fact, our campers eat meals and engage in many activities with campers from the other units.

How do the children get to Camp Graham?

Families bring the campers to Duke (Lenox Baker Children's Hospital) at the beginning of their camp week (Sunday). After every camper has checked in with his or her counselor and each parent or guardian has reviewed their child's medical regimen with the counselor and/or physician, campers and staff board a bus which takes them to Camp Graham. A bus then returns to the same location on the following Friday.

What activities are available for the campers?

A wide variety of activities such as swimming, sailing, canoeing, arts and crafts, fishing, hiking, group games, and sports are part of each day's schedule.

What happens if campers get homesick?

Homesickness is a normal part of camp, and anxiety is a normal feeling for parents whose children are temporarily away from them. Our staff is very experienced at dealing with those periods of time when children may be sad about being away from home. Like other camps, parents and guardians are not permitted to visit or have telephone contact with their children during their week at camp. Letter writing in both directions is encouraged but not required. Our staff is equipped to manage minor issues such as scrapes, bruises, non-severe illness or normal homesickness, however, the family will be contacted immediately if a major health or behavioral problem occurs.

How much does Camp Kaleidoscope cost?

There is no fee charged for campers to attend Camp Kaleidoscope. All program costs are supported with donations from Duke University Hospital and other private organizations.

For additional information, please contact:

Camp Kaleidoscope

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