

Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times

Summer Camp



PARENT'S GUIDE

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Website:

www.rmhcsc.org/camp



American Camp
Association Accredited



A program of Ronald McDonald House Charities®
of Southern California



Member of
Children's Oncology
Camping Association

WELCOME TO

CAMP RONALD McDONALD FOR GOOD TIMES!

We are excited you have chosen Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times to provide your child with a camp experience. Since 1982, Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times has been creating fun-filled, medically-supported camp experiences for children with cancer and their families. Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times is a recognized leader in providing activities and experiences that positively impact the lives of its campers.

Whether you have a new camper or a returning camper, this "**Parent's Guide**" will help prepare you and your child for their camp experience and guide you through every aspect of our camp program. We have tried to answer your questions before your child attends a camp session. If you have any additional questions, please call or email us using the numbers and address on the cover of this guide.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and staff, we welcome you to the Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times experience.

Visit your child's camp session on our Website!

Parents, family members, and friends can visit our website or follow Camp on social media to view photos from their child's session while they are still at camp.

Here's how!

1. "Like" **Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times** on Facebook
2. "Follow" Camp on Instagram **@campronaldmcdonald**
3. Log on www.rmhcsc.org/camp
 - Click on the "Camp Photos" under Need to Know -> For Families
 - Click on the dates of your child's session
 - Click on any picture to see a larger image



New photos and videos will be continuously added to social media and the website. Make sure you are following along!

Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times Summer Camp – Parent’s Guide

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Our Mission and Outcomes

At Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times, we strive to give children with cancer and their families a positive outdoor camping experience that provides opportunities for each child, regardless of their diagnosis, treatment, or family position, to have a chance to broaden their experiences and help them feel good about themselves.

At each session, we design programs and train staff to create a camp experience that:

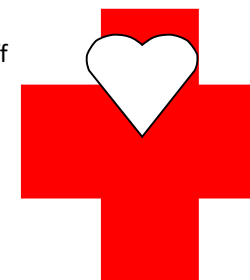
- Is safe for each camper physically and emotionally and provides the essential medical support each camper may need,
- Is a place where each camper will make new friends and can be a good friend to others,
- Is a place where each camper can feel good about themselves by discovering talents and interests,
- Is a place to develop healthy independence by learning skills and how good it feels to care for yourself,
- Is a place where each camper feels they belong by finding others with similar challenges and hopes.

Camp is like no other activity. A place to explore, laugh, dream, and have FUN! But don’t take our word for it. Ask any of the hundreds of former campers what a wonderful experience Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times can be.

Your Child’s Medical Care While at Camp

Doctors and Nurses

Each session is staffed with an expert medical staff team. This team supervises your child’s health and administers medical care and daily medications. They are available 24 hours a day on-site to handle your child’s medical needs. For sessions serving oncology patients, the medical staff includes a pediatric oncology doctor and a team of registered nurses.



....MORE MEDICAL CARE INFORMATION

Med Shed

Camp is equipped with a state-of-the-art health care center, or “The Med Shed.” The Med Shed provides areas and equipment to support your child’s health needs while at camp, including an Examination Room, Resting and Sleeping Areas, a Medication Dispensary, and a Catheter Care Cabin. Should additional support be needed, transportation can be made to nearby Loma Linda University Medical Center or the patient’s home hospital.

Medications

We ask campers to bring all medications and catheter care supplies they will need during their stay at camp. All medicines should be in their original bottles. Please include any additional care instructions to help us provide your child with a happy and healthy stay. At Drop-off Day Registration, a Camp Staff member and Nurse will check and collect all medications you send for your child. Our Nurses will review your instructions for administering your child’s medication and care. Medications are dispensed daily at camp, usually at meals or according to instructions.



Medical History and Release Forms

By now, you have signed up for a camp session and received our multiple-page application. Our Medical staff carefully reviews all information before the session to ensure we have all the necessary equipment and support for your child’s needs. Therefore, we need all applications with current medical information at least **TWO WEEKS before your session**. If we need any additional information, we will contact you immediately.

Medical Procedure Communication

Should a medical emergency occur or your child needs a non-routine medical procedure, our medical staff will assess the situation and decide the most appropriate course of action. We will call you to inform you of the situation and the steps we intend to take.

Privacy of Personal Health Information

To protect the privacy of our campers (patients, siblings, and parents), our volunteers, and our employees, Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times has adopted guidelines that restrict the disclosure of personal health information to those responsible for medical treatment and care. This includes doctors, nurses, and camp health personnel. Limited health information may be given to your camper’s counselors to enable them to support your child’s health care needs best.

LOCATION

Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times operates a pine-tree-filled 60-acre private campsite in the San Jacinto Mountains, just a few miles from the scenic town of Idyllwild. The facilities are designed specifically for our campers to enjoy the magic and beauty of this wondrous hideaway while being only minutes away from comprehensive medical facilities and services.

CAMP ACTIVITIES

Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times offers a wide variety of different activities that are fun, safe, and challenging to allow campers to explore their creativity, discover new skills, and refine existing talents. At Camp, we take pride in our ability to include every camper in all the fun!

Adventure Course Your child can learn communication skills and develop self-esteem at our Courage Course. Specially trained counselors guide campers through exciting programs that may include our team “spider’s web,” “tire traverse,” or climbing our 50-foot Alpine Tower.

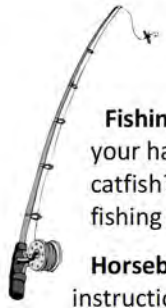
Archery Hitting the target is only one goal for our program. Patience and success are experiences our campers will enjoy after our trained archery counselor reviews safety information and demonstrates equipment.



Arts and Crafts Your child can explore their creativity and make beautiful keepsakes, which will remind them of the camping experience for years to come. Arts & Crafts may include pottery, painting, and nature crafts.

Campfire Various nights throughout the week, your child will be a “star” and be entertained in skits, songs, and silliness around our campfire circle.

Cooking Making soups, bread, smoothies, pizza, or ice cream...campers try their hand at making treats and snacks...instead of buying them off the shelf.



MORE CAMP ACTIVITIES....

Fishing: What would camp be without sitting by the pond, pole in your hand, waiting for a nibble from a wide-mouth bass, pike, or catfish? Activity Counselors assist campers at our catch-and-release fishing program on Camp's Jackson Pond.

Horseback Riding *Giddy-Up!* Campers can experience riding instruction and a western trail ride. Trained and experienced in therapeutic and recreational riding, our riding staff assists each camper in having the safest and best horseback experience.

Nature One of the beautiful things about camp is the wonder and beauty of nature. Campers will be able to see nature firsthand through pond exploration, hikes, and more.

Swimming The pool is cool! Our pool sanitation and temperature levels are closely monitored to provide a safe water experience for all our campers, even those with central lines. A certified lifeguard supervises as Camp staff plays and splashes with campers every afternoon.

Outpost Overnights What could be more fun than sleeping out under the stars after a dinner cookout and sharing stories around a campfire? Our Outpost Village includes four platform shelters and a campfire ring under a beautiful star-filled sky.

Sports & Games Basketball, Soccer, Softball, Volleyball, Relay Games, and more. Playing outside in the clean mountain air, laughing with new friends, and including every camper in on the fun: this is what Camp Sports and Games is all about.

Wilderness Outdoor Leadership Program (WOLP) Our Wilderness Outdoor Leadership Program serves campers ages 16-18. This program aims to provide older campers valuable experience through specially created activities to help each camper develop practical leadership skills and experience in a fun, supportive camp environment. Activities include team building and communication skills, the planning and execution of an overnight backpack trip, and the organization and presentation of the camp session's final appreciation campfire.

TRANSPORTATION

Camp Departure Locations: When registering your child, you can indicate from which location you would like us to pick up your child. Directions to the pick-up location, times when you should plan to arrive at the location, and safety rules will be mailed to you with your confirmation.

Only the BEST! For the safety and comfort of your child, we use luxury coach buses. Our buses have trained and certified drivers, air conditioning, and on-board bathrooms. Our Camp Staff will host each bus. Each Bus Leader has emergency supplies, contact information, and procedures to ensure the safest possible trip for your child's initial experience at their camp session.

Sending your child to camp can be an anxious experience...but do not worry! We will help you and your child all along the way. Camp Staff will be available to help tag and load your child's luggage when you arrive at a pick-up location. Our Camp Staff will assist you in camp check-in. We will need a minute of your time to ensure we have all the required paperwork and to check and collect all medications. When the campers arrive, it will be time to load the buses. Once on board, our trained staff will discuss bus safety expectations with the campers. The fun begins as our Camp Staff supervises and accompanies your child on the ride to camp. **Don't forget to hug and kiss your child goodbye...because it is off to camp!**

Pick-Up Day: Return-from-Camp-day can be very exciting. We have established a few procedures to make it easier for you. We ask parents to arrive at the Pick-up location by the time designated on your "Transportation Information" flyer. You will be contacted by phone if there are any changes to the published bus schedule.

Once the busses arrive, campers and luggage will be unloaded. Campers may only be released to a parent or other adult previously identified by the child's parent or guardian. We ask that all campers be "signed out" from our camp roster for your child's safety.

Once your child is released to your custody and care, we ask that you ensure all luggage is picked up. Your child's medications will be packed into their luggage. Your child's Camp Staff will give refrigerated medication to you.

MAIL

Campers, regardless of their age, look forward to receiving mail from family and friends. So please send your child some mail: it'll make their day!

Campers love to hear how much you miss them and that you hope they are having a good experience. *Please wait for your camper to get home to share the less happy news, like their goldfish died.*

Here's how: Two or three days BEFORE YOUR CHILD LEAVES FOR CAMP, mail a letter or package. Mailing an item a few days before your child leaves for Camp is the best way to ensure that it gets delivered before your child leaves Camp. **Mail can be sent to:**

(Your Child's First and last Name)
Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times
PO Box 35
Mountain Center, CA 92561-0035



Please **DO NOT** send candy, gum, or food. We provide ample meals and snacks at camp. Food and candy cannot be kept in the camper cabins as they may invite unwanted visitors (squirrels, mice, and ants.) Campers love to receive comic books, magazines, puzzle books, and personalized letters from you.

Email messages can be sent to your child via our Camper mailbox at cedwards@rmhcsc.org. We will print out your email and deliver it to your child at lunch. We do not have the facilities to allow campers to return emails.

Your child can also send mail to you. You can provide them with a pad, pen, and envelopes with your home address pre-written on them and stamps.

TELEPHONE USE

One of our goals at camp is to help campers experience a feeling of independence. To this end, we do not invite campers to call home. Therefore, we would appreciate you talking with your child before camp, encouraging them to write letters home, and to expect letters from you. This also includes talking with your child about keeping their cell phone off the entire session of Camp.

If there is an emergency and you need to speak with the Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times staff, we can be contacted at (951) 659-4609.

CAMPER BEHAVIOR

Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times believes in the value of each child who attends our programs. Being a child means growing up. Growing up means exploring limits and consequences.

We recognize that growing up means:

- A child has the occasional need to test the limits.
- A child cannot always manage self-control.
- A child tends to support the values of their peer group.
- A child has the right to make mistakes
- A child has the right to be respected as an individual, regardless of unattractive attributes.



Occasionally, a child who participates in our programs may be unruly, aggressive, or otherwise poorly behaved.

At Camp, we understand our responsibility to provide a wholesome and safe environment for your child to grow and have fun. We believe discipline is a principle that helps individuals balance selfish interests with the welfare of others around them. Appropriate discipline provides guidance for campers to grow into sensitive and responsible adults.

Therefore, we have taken the following steps to provide appropriate guidance for your child:

Camper behavior expectations while at camp:

Behavior Expectation Agreement – As part of your camper application, you will receive a Camper Expectation Form. Talk with your child about the fun and responsibility of living and playing with 6-9 others in a cabin living arrangement. We strongly suggest that you review these rules, expectations, and consequences with your child and ask that you and your child sign this agreement form and return it with your application.

Partnering with Parents

Soliciting parental guidance in significant disciplinary actions: Should a camper's behavior become a major issue, as the parent, you can expect a call from the camp staff. We will explain the situation and ask the parent for suggestions on the best approach to handle the situation.

Parental support with violations of camper expectations: In the rare case that a camper violates the camper expectation agreement, the parent will be contacted. In some situations, a camper's behavior may require the parent to drive to camp and remove their child from a camp session, and an additional behavior contract should the child return to a future camp session. In any case, the camp and parent partnership is essential to help the child understand the consequences of their actions.

....MORE ON CAMPER BEHAVIOR

Training our staff:

Our staff members' interactions with your camper can assist the camper in making positive choices and demonstrating positive behavior. Living and playing with nine to eleven other people can be scary. Many campers wonder: How will this work? Will I be liked? Will my feelings be respected? We specifically train our staff in techniques to support individual feelings and create a positive environment for the individual and the group.

Cabin and camp rules are established - Early in your child's camp experience, your child's cabin counselors will spend time with their cabin to define appropriate behavior and establish cabin living rules. These rules are posted and begin a foundation to foster camper respect and cabin order.

Limit idle time: At camp, we have many activities to engage and involve your child's interests and energy. Staff is also provided and trained in using "hip pocket" games and activities to keep your child engaged in positive, fun play.

Appropriate Supervision: The care and safety of your child is our most important responsibility. Cabin Staff is trained, supervised, and held accountable for your child's constant and appropriate supervision. We cannot be your child's parent, but we can care for them at camp as if we were.

How to listen and what to listen for: We train each staff member to spend quality time with each camper to discover their likes and dislikes. Getting to know your child individually helps develop trust and rapport and promotes communication. A calming and sensitive discussion will frequently help alleviate fears and any problems.

Being a positive role model: Staff behavior must role model the behavior they hope to see in their campers. Staff behavior sets the tone for acceptable camper behavior.

Discipline Intervention: The best way to handle discipline problems is to know what to do and what NOT TO DO should they occur. Staff training includes positive intervention skills like conflict resolution techniques that promote communication and respect. In addition, training includes staff interventions that are not acceptable:

Discipline DON'Ts:

- Physical punishments or verbal abuse (name calling, cursing and abusive language, making threats, etc.) are unacceptable.
- Docking campers from meals as punishment is not acceptable.

WHAT TO BRING

Use this suggested "What-To-Bring" ✓ list to help your child pack for a fun week. Please mark your child's full name on ALL clothing, personal items, and luggage.

Clothing:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Underwear -7 pairs | <input type="checkbox"/> Jacket |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Socks - 8 pairs | <input type="checkbox"/> Sweatshirts/Sweaters- 2
(1 long-sleeved item needed for evening wear) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pajamas - 2 pairs | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimsuit – at least one |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shorts - 3-4 pairs | <input type="checkbox"/> Athletic Shoes or Boots - 2 pair
<i>Must be closed-toed for safety</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pants/Jeans - 3-4 Pairs
(one pair of long pants is needed for evening wear.) | <input type="checkbox"/> one pair of Sandals/Thongs
(optional for pool/shower use only) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shirts/Blouses - 6 | |

Please do not bring clothes with beer or drug logos, cuss words, suggestive phrases, or tight or overly loose clothes. When packing, remember that Camp is a rustic outdoor environment.

Bedding and personal Supplies:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping bag OR 2 sheets and 2 blankets | <input type="checkbox"/> Laundry bag or extra pillowcase |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pillow & pillowcase | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Towels – 2 | |

Personal Hygiene Items:

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soap | <input type="checkbox"/> Comb/Brush | <input type="checkbox"/> Toothbrush |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shampoo | <input type="checkbox"/> Toothpaste | <input type="checkbox"/> Sun Blocking Hat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 "Chapstick" Lip Balm | | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen |

Optional Fun Stuff:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight & batteries | <input type="checkbox"/> Daypack |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Camera & extra film | <input type="checkbox"/> Musical instrument |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water bottle or canteen | <input type="checkbox"/> Other? |

Medicines and Special Foods

Please bring medications in original bottles. If you send meds in a daily pill container, send extras of each med in the container labeled by the Pharmacy that provided them. Do not pack medicines in luggage; bring them separately.

What NOT to bring:

Camp will provide all supplies needed for any activity. Please DO NOT bring personal sports equipment, animals or pets, cell phones, laptops, portable gaming systems, knives, incendiary devices (lighters, matches, etc.), valuable jewelry, expensive cameras or radios, alcohol, non-prescription drugs, or tobacco products. Camp is not responsible for loss or damage.

HELP YOUR CHILD HAVE FUN AT CAMP!

As a parent, your child will look to you for support and guidance as your camper prepares for their camp experience. Your actions and feelings about camp can encourage or hinder your child's camp adventure. To help you prepare your child for their camp experience, we have assembled some helpful hints:

- Talk to them about their upcoming camp experience. Share some of the information included in this guide.
- Talk to them about the fun of being in a cabin with 6-9 friends for a week of fun.
- Send your child mail.
- Let them know you will miss them...But they should have fun.
- Help them pack...make sure to pack their "favorites." Their teddy bear, favorite outfit, a small album of family photos...any of these help campers take "a little bit of home" to camp with them.
- Tell them to write regularly and report about what they are doing at camp and new friends they have made.
- Let them know YOU are excited to have them "grow up" and go to camp.
- Let them know you will plan a special dinner when they come home to hear about their camp adventures.

Don't:

- Promise them you will call or ask them to call home regularly. Allow them and yourself a new growing experience.

WHAT YOU CAN DO WHILE YOUR CHILD IS AWAY

Camp is also a time that parents can appreciate. Take advantage of the time your child is away and in good hands to refocus or concentrate on other things like:

- Send mail to your camper
- Spend time with your other children
- Have friends over for dinner
- Sleep in late
- Go out for a nice dinner
- Take a long relaxing bath
- Read that book you have not had time for

Don't:

- Worry!** Your child will have fun...and so should you!

EVALUATIONS

After your child's return from Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times, you will receive a session wrap-up email with a link to an evaluation form. It is extremely helpful to us for you and your child to complete this and return it to the camp office. We are constantly trying to improve our programs and service to ensure your child's experience at Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times is the BEST!

OUR PROGRAM STAFF

Chad Edwards, Camp Director, began as a volunteer in 2002 and joined our staff in 2005. Chad is responsible for developing and coordinating the camp program to provide care, support, and memories that will last your camper a lifetime. In addition, Chad supports and supervises our volunteer camp directors and counselors.

cedwards@rmhcsc.org

Shannon Edwards, Program Director, joined the Camp team in 2010. Shannon is responsible for our Wilderness Outdoor Leadership Program, serving campers aged 16 – high school graduates. In addition, Shannon supports our year-round teen programs and all other camp programs.

Shedwards@rmhcsc.org

Wally Quijano, Family Relations & Recruitment Manager. Wally is responsible for getting kids and families to Camp! Wally works tirelessly to recruit families and get them signed up for Camp. Wally will be working with families every step of the way to help them get to their camp session.

wquijano@rmhcsc.org

Volunteer Camp Counseling Staff are at least 19 years of age and carefully selected through written application, background check, written references, and personal interviews. Volunteers are chosen because of their ability to work with children, maturity, experience, and enthusiasm for your child's camp experience. All volunteers must attend a required one-day orientation and two-day on-site training just before their assigned session. At Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times, we are proud to have a caring, committed, close-knit family of volunteers who love giving their time and energy to ensure your child has a fun, safe, and memorable camp experience.

How you can get more involved

Many of our families, parents, and community members ask how to become more involved with Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times. Below are a few ways individuals can become partners in helping young cancer patients and their families have an unforgettable camp experience.

In-Kind Support – Camp always looks for goods and services to care for our campers. Examples include printing services, paper, film, bus services, program supplies, computer maintenance, new holiday toys, building materials, and more. You may have precisely what we need. Call the office (310) 268-8488

Work Weekends: Join us to spruce up camp in preparation for our campers. Work weekends are held multiple times a year. Contact the Campsite at (951) 659-4609

Annual Giving – Help “sponsor a camper” to ensure no camper is left waiting for a magical week of adventure, fun, and friendship. Contact the Camp office at (310) 268-8488.

Special Events – Our calendar offers opportunities to help staff various fundraising events, including our annual Walk for Kids and Heroes for Healing Gala. Contact the Camp office (310) 268-8488

Planned Giving –You can help ensure Camp is here as long as there are children with cancer through a bequest in your will or other tax-saving plans. Contact the Camp office at (310) 268-8488 for more information and guidance.

DO YOU HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

Would you like more information or want to contact us? Just call us at (310)268-8488 or visit our Web Site at www.rmhcsc.org/camp



Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times®
A program of Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Southern California