



# YOUR GUIDE TO PLANNING AN INCLUSIVE SUMMER

Practical tips for finding and preparing for summer activities that support your child's needs and interests



## SEARCHING

**Every child is different. Start with what brings yours joy!**

Music, movement, water, animals, books, crafts?

Use their interests to guide your search for camps, playgroups, or events.

Things to consider when searching online or asking around:

- Interest match: Does this activity fit what my child enjoys?
- Group size: Will it feel overwhelming or manageable?
- Environment: Indoors or outdoors? Loud or calm? Structured or flexible?
- Schedule fit: Time of day, duration, and transitions
- Location: Can we get there easily?
- Cost & access: Are there free spots or scholarships?

**TIP:** Use your child's strengths and needs to guide what you say when reaching out.

## FIND THE RIGHT FIT

**Before signing up, reach out to staff or the organizer:**

- Can you preview the space or ask questions?
- Is there a chance to chat with staff before the first day?
- Can you share what works best for your child?
- Are they open to using visuals, sensory tools, or flexible routines?
- Is there flexibility with breaks, participation, or coming and going as needed?

Start small. Even one positive experience can make a big difference. If something doesn't go as planned, it's not a failure, it's just part of finding the right fit. Keep exploring. Belonging is built and worth the effort!

## PREPARE FOR A BETTER EXPERIENCE

**Make a simple one-page profile**

Include:

- What your child loves
- Strengths and gifts (curious, great memory, kind helper, etc.)
- Sensory, mobility, or communication needs (tools, devices, or routines that help)
- What helps in tough moments (breaks, space, choices, support strategies)
- What to avoid or adjust (e.g. loud buzzers, long wait times, certain textures)
- Your goals or hopes for their participation

**TIP:** You don't need to share a diagnosis, just what helps your child feel welcome and included.

## PACK WHAT HELPS

Things to consider bringing:

- Noise-canceling headphones, fidgets, visual supports
- Water, safe snacks, sunscreen, extra clothes
- Comfort items or visual support
- Medications or feeding tools
- Charged devices, batteries, mobility aids



**TIP:** Plan a calm exit strategy, and build in breaks throughout the day.

## KEEP IT BALANCED

**Summer should feel joyful, not overwhelming.**

- Build in time with friends, peers, or supportive adults
- Include quiet time and breaks
- Learning can come from music, play, nature, books, and connection
- Celebrate wins, and be gentle with changes

**Explore:**

- Libraries
- Parks & Rec
- Children's museums
- YMCA or local community centers
- School offerings
- Southern Oregon Mom & other community building websites
- Bridging Communities' calendar & newsletter



**Contact Us!**

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