



Frequently Asked Questions

To help you feel prepared for camp, answers to some of our most frequently asked questions are below. If you don't see your question or want to discuss a topic further, please call or email us ahead of time.

- **What activities will we be doing at camp?**

We offer lots of fun activities at all of our programs including campfires, night hikes, arts & crafts, sports & games, archery, and swimming. At each program we have a structured schedule that includes program rotations, evening activities, and down time. Depending on the location of your program, there may be specialized activities such as ropes course, zip line, horseback riding, etc. While our schedules do change every session, you can view example schedules on our website.

At Bearskin Meadow Family Camp sessions we have a day called "Families in the Forest" where families have a whole afternoon to go explore the areas around camp in beautiful Sequoia and/or Kings Canyon National Parks. One popular "Families in the Forest" activity is going to nearby Hume Lake to swim, play on the beach, and grab a milkshake at the Snack Shack.

- **Who are the staff and volunteers? Are they really trained to work with my child and manage diabetes?**

Staff and volunteers come to us from all over the country. They include teachers, college students, recent high school graduates, psychologists, pediatric endocrinologists, residents, interns, and nurses. About 70% of the staff and volunteers have diabetes while the other 30% has experience in diabetes through friends and/or family. All counseling and program staff at summer programs undergo an intensive training session that focuses on everything from child development to conflict resolution to program leadership to diabetes "tricks of the trade." Our staff and volunteers are highly dedicated to the participants, with many of them being past campers and having grown up coming to DYF programs. They will make every effort to ensure that your child has an incredible, exciting, and memorable experience.

- **Are DYF programs accredited?**

Yes! Bearskin Meadow Camp undergoes a rigorous accreditation process of over 300 standards set by the American Camp Association to ensure that we are complying with health, safety, and program standards.

- **What is your staff to camper ratio?**

Our average staff to camper ratio is 1:3, although at most programs this is closer to 1:2 when you include medical staff.



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- **What diabetes supplies should I bring?**
Camp provides a majority of diabetes supplies. Please consult your packing list for specific information and feel free to give us a call if you have specific questions.
- **Do you allow cell phones at camp?**
Please review our Cell Phone Policy for more detailed information, as our cell phone rules are different at Independent Camps and Family Camps. Please note that there is no cell service and very limited wifi (for parents only) at Bearskin Meadow Camp, and most of our other locations are very similar.
- **Can I pack my own food and drinks?**
We ask that you please do not bring any of your own food or drinks unless you have already spoken with the Camp Director and made a special arrangement. Due to a wide variety of food allergies we must be careful about what food products are on camp. We also have lots of friendly critters in our forested environment and additional food attracts them onto living areas. We will have lots of food served at camp, and our kitchen is always happy to offer you a snack (carb-free or carb-full based on time of day and request).
- **My child is going to independent camp for the first time; can they call me if they get homesick?**
Missing home is a normal part of summer camp whether a camper is new or returning. Children who call their parents when they are severely missing home tend to exhibit increased upset and anxiety and therefore under most circumstances, *we do not allow children to call home during camp*. Counselors are trained to deal with missing home by engaging children in favorite activities, writing letters home, and talking about their feelings. If your child continues to exhibit signs missing of home, a call will be placed to you by a staff member and appropriate steps will be taken in partnership with you, the parent.
- **I am concerned about the blood checking, meal times, and insulin times being so different at camp than our routine at home. How will this affect my child's diabetes?**
While your child is at camp they will be introduced to new routines and experiences. We will work with your child to make them feel comfortable with the new routine. We believe that change in routine is a great skill for campers with diabetes to learn as they go from school, to summer, back to school and in all of life's adventures. You may find that your child's blood sugars may run lower or higher at camp than they do at home due to many variables including change in altitude, exercise, wake-up and bed-times, and generally being in a new environment with new people. We will be closely monitoring your child throughout the week. Your child is free to check their blood sugar at additional times whenever they feel the need or would like to.
- **How are you handling all of this new medical technology?**
We are excited to welcome the new changes in diabetes technology! Please read our "Medical Technology Guidelines" document so that you and your child know what to expect at camp.



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- **Will my child's blood sugar be checked during the night?**
At independent camps the counselors check every camper's blood sugar every night at midnight (Bearskin) or 1am (Camp de Los Niños) and will dose and feed as needed. At Family Camps, parents are strongly encouraged to check blood sugars during the night, as changes in routine may impact overnight blood sugar numbers.
- **Can I see pictures while my child is at camp?**
Absolutely! Please "like" the DYF Facebook page for photos during camp. We do our absolute best to post pictures every day, but please be patient with us as the internet capabilities in the mountains are poor and it takes a lot of effort on our end to be able to post. Plus, the more time we spend uploading pictures the less time we are spending with your kids!