



## Overview

**Camp Chatterbox**, sponsored by Children's Specialized Hospital, is a weeklong overnight camp for children and young adults, ages 5-22, who use synthesized Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices. Chatterbox offers two unique programs - a Family Program for children ages 5-14 and an Independence and Self-Advocacy Program for teens and young adults ages 15-22. All Campers must be able to participate in the program without requiring one-on-one behavioral support.

All Campers are involved in a range of activities to promote use of their communication systems across multiple settings. They have the opportunity to interact with other children using AAC systems while learning to use their devices in fun and functional activities.



Children's  
Specialized Hospital

For information on additional services,  
how to volunteer, or donate, contact us at:  
**1-888-CHILDREN (244-5373)**

Or, visit our website  
[www.childrens-specialized.org/camp-chatterbox](http://www.childrens-specialized.org/camp-chatterbox)



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**A THERAPEUTIC CAMP PROGRAM  
FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS  
USING AUGMENTATIVE AND  
ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION  
(AAC) DEVICES**

**August 16-22, 2015**



Children's  
Specialized Hospital

## Location

Camp Chatterbox uses the facilities of Camp Oakhurst in Monmouth County, NJ – approximately 50 minutes from Newark Liberty International Airport. Camp Oakhurst's 15-acre facility is barrier-free and includes 12 entirely accessible buildings to accommodate all program activities. Camp Oakhurst has a heated swimming pool with a retractable roof, a ball field, a campfire site, nature trails, gymnasium, recreation hall, media arts room, arts/crafts area, and a computer lab to support all program activities.

## Family Program

Parents and siblings can join their AAC camper at Camp Chatterbox and actively participate in the camp program as a family. Campers, age 10 and older, seeking to gain greater independence may attend camp without a parent. They will be assigned a counselor who will be responsible for providing daily care.

The Family Program widens the scope of training opportunities for parents and helps siblings become an integral part of the Chatterbox Program. Siblings must be between ages 7-15 years old and not be educationally classified.



During a typical day, a camper will be involved in approximately five hours of therapeutic activities that target initiation of communication and increased use of their AAC device.

Campers also enjoy swimming, nature activities, campfires, and outdoor sports. Lunchtime announcements provide an opportunity for initiated communication. Camp typically ends with an "All Camp Talent Show."

Parents and siblings sleep in the cabins with campers. Several families are grouped together to provide increased opportunities for spontaneous peer interaction.

## Independence and Self-Advocacy Program

This program encourages teens, (age 15 and up) and young adults to use their AAC devices to communicate with unfamiliar listeners, directing their care and advocating for their needs. Daily activities help to build critical thinking skills, problem solving skills and learning to accept responsibilities for one's schedule and actions. These campers take a lead role in orchestrating evening activities for the Family Program, thus increasing peer interaction among all campers.

Campers live in cabins with other campers of the same sex and age range and are supervised by Camp Counselors. There is a 2:1 camper to counselor ratio. A camp nurse is on staff to administer medications and tend to routine healthcare issues. Medically fragile campers may attend the program, but are required to provide their own 24-hour nursing support staff. The camper's family must pay camp associated room and board fees for their nursing/personal care staff.



## Fees and Application

Camp fees are divided into two components: a therapy fee and a camp fee. The therapy fee covers activities that promote AAC device use. The camp fee includes room and meals, bedding, use of the camp's facilities and personal care staff for independent campers. Detailed information about camp fees are available on the camp website at [www.campchatterbox.org](http://www.campchatterbox.org).



Several camper sponsorships are available to those in financial need. For further information contact [campchatterbox@gmail.com](mailto:campchatterbox@gmail.com).

Families are invited to submit their applications beginning January 1, 2015. Returning families can apply using the online registration procedure. New families are asked to mail their application and support materials. Visit [www.campchatterbox.org](http://www.campchatterbox.org) for application materials and instructions.

## Acceptance and Registration

Campers will be notified of acceptance approximately 2-3 weeks after their completed application has been received. Acceptance is dependent upon there being a vacancy in a therapy group with campers of similar age and abilities.

A deposit of \$400 is required at the time the application is submitted. Checks are to be made payable to Children's Specialized Hospital. Those who are receiving funding through a third party agency must submit the "School/Agency Contract" form prior to registering in order to have those fees appropriately applied to their account.

Questions can be addressed to:

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