

Amelia's Holiday Wish



"The ethos of Camp is that magic happens here."

**Steve Grove,
Camp Manager, Camp Easter Seal**

Sugar and spice, and all things nice...oh wait, and mischievous, silly, and full of life – that's Amelia Mason! The bubbly 9-year-old attended Camp Easter Seal for the first time this summer and made quite the impression with her cabin mates and Camp staff. Never one to shy away from sing-alongs, playing with new friends, or messy crafts that turned her hands purple for a day or two (and her shirt, sorry mom!), Amelia lived her best life at Camp this summer!

The road to get to Camp Easter Seal had a few twists and turns for Amelia, the first was convincing her mom! "It took a long time for Amelia and the rest of the family to get me on board with letting her go. Up until the day she left I was still a little unsure because aside from one-night sleepovers at her grandparents' house here and there, she had never been away that long," explains Jenny Mason, Amelia's mom. With her family and daughter persisting, Jenny eventually warmed

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Camp Easter Seal opened its doors once again for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic, welcoming new and returning children, youth, and adults experiencing disability to a one-of-a-kind, barrier-free camp experience. With many upgrades and new additions to Camp, the grounds came to life in new and exciting ways for all campers as they safely explored their scenic surroundings throughout their week-long stay!




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up to the idea. From there, it was up to Amelia to show her mom she was ready for some independence. "There were things we practiced like putting her shoes on, getting dressed on her own... big girl things that I wanted to make sure she could handle, right?" says Jenny looking at Amelia, who confirmed with a big smile and a head nod.

Born premature at 23 weeks and weighing in at one pound and seven ounces, what Amelia lacked in size as a baby she certainly made up with her fighting spirit and big personality! Diagnosed at age two with Mixed Cerebral Palsy, Amelia, with the support of her family, hasn't let that discourage her from getting involved in activities and trying new things. "Amelia does a lot of things other kids do, she just does it in a different way. She's in karate, she just does it from her chair, same with Girl Guides," explains Jenny who is quick to note with a laugh that her daughter is very social, outgoing, and doesn't have a filter when it comes to speaking her mind!

This holiday season, give the gift of Camp! A much-needed sanctuary in Saskatchewan, Camp Easter Seal allows children like Amelia a safe place to exert independence, learn more about themselves, and the opportunity to just be a kid! With the gates to Camp now very much open for future summer adventures, we are asking generous donors like you to help us ensure no one is left behind from living their best life at Little Manitou Lake!



Zippering around Camp in her wheelchair, it didn't take long for Amelia to make herself right at home! "One of my favourite things was the swing," exclaimed Amelia, who happily took full advantage of the accessible playground – something not easily available outside of Camp. Other top favourites on Amelia's list included swimming in the aquatic centre, the arts & crafts program (the messier the better), and of course giggling with new cabin mates and friends!

While Amelia is still riding the high waves from her first visit to Camp Easter Seal, she is calling in some reinforcements to ensure she makes it back again real soon! When asked what was on the top of her list to Santa this year, she made it very

clear: slime, plush toys, and of course a return to Camp for more adventure, freedom, and fun! Having proved to her mom that she can handle the time away from home and is embracing more opportunities for independence, it looks like Amelia's wish is left in the trusted hands of Mr. Claus and his team at the North Pole!

Sincerely,

Ian Wilkinson,
Executive Director

Attending Camp Easter Seal is a life-changing experience where the focus is on what is possible rather than what is not! The magic that is Camp is found in the utter joy campers experience when they can just be themselves and have fun without worrying about challenges they may experience in their everyday lives. For many, Camp isn't just a place - it's an experience and an opportunity to thrive, make meaningful friendships, and collect memories that are not only remembered but are felt long after summer draws to a close. Let's make Amelia's holiday wish come true.

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