


Naven's Best Summer Yet!

Each summer, the shore of Little Manitou Lake comes to life as Camp Easter Seal welcomes hundreds of children, youth, and adults experiencing disability from all across Saskatchewan. For a week, each camper enjoys a one-of-a-kind camping experience where barriers dissolve and friendships flourish.

Every Monday at Camp Easter Seal marks the beginning of new possibilities and endless adventures for a group of campers from June to August. Those returning know what to expect as they pull up the driveway to Camp Easter Seal's historic Chalet – an abundance of smiling staff waiting to greet them, the palpable buzz of excitement, and, of course, hugs goodbye from parents and caregivers. For new campers and their loved ones, the anticipation of Camp is sure to bring a mix of emotions, including excitement with a pinch of anxiety around the unknown. This was precisely the case for first-time camper Naven and his mom, Kenya.

The decision to send Naven to Camp was relatively easy for Kenya. Residing in a small city northeast of Camp Easter Seal with a population of just under 6,000, there are few options for programs and services for children like Naven. "I heard about Camp through my mom's friend who works at a group home where many residents go each summer. We applied the first year and didn't get in, so when we applied this past year and were accepted, Naven was really excited to go. On the other hand, I was quite nervous," admits Kenya. "I was allowed to go with him, which definitely helped my nerves." The mom of two boys was unsure how the change in scheduling and routine would impact Naven, who loves being around his younger brother and thrives in structured environments. Nevertheless, on July 17, Naven and Kenya made their way south, arriving for their very first week at Camp Easter Seal.

Whatever nerves might have remained for Kenya at the start of the week quickly dissipated as she explored the grounds each day, watching her son make friends and find joy in new activities and experiences. "Naven is a goofball; he generally likes to have fun and joke around. He's a very loving,



For nearly 70 years, Camp Easter Seal has been serving the community as the only barrier-free camp of its kind in Saskatchewan. Not just a summer gateway, Camp is an inclusive sanctuary where differences are embraced and everyone belongs. Most importantly, Camp is not just a special place for campers; it is a trusted place where parents and caregivers can leave their loved ones, knowing they are well taken care of for a week of unfiltered fun and adventure!

Every camper, including Naven, deserves their unique milestone moment of going off to camp for the very first time. Each summer, Camp Easter Seal welcomes new faces of all ages and abilities to the cozy shore of Little Manitou Lake. The best part is that YOU can be a part of making that memorable experience happen for children, youth, and adults experiencing disability in your community! Your generous donations ensure no one is left behind this summer from having that one-of-a-kind camping experience in a safe and supportive environment.

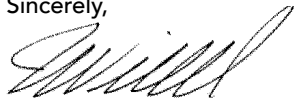
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happy-go-lucky type of kid. At Camp, he really enjoyed playing sports and loved the music program – he loved trying the different instruments and drums. They had a carnival when we were there, which Naven enjoyed and really took to the dunk-tank,” laughs Kenya, giving a small glimpse into the exciting week Naven had at Camp. “He adjusted really well and did better than I thought he would. Even at night, he was so exhausted from all the activities that he just went to bed and slept through until the morning.”

While there were many highlights of Naven’s first week of Camp, the friendship formed between her son and fellow camper, Owen, was most touching for Kenya. “Naven did make a friend at Camp that we have managed to see a few times since. There aren’t a lot of kids with Down syndrome where we are from, and there were two in Naven’s cabin, which was cool,” shares Kenya, who has made the drive with Naven to Saskatoon so the two boys can further their friendship, play, and hang out.

With a successful first camping experience behind them and a new friendship made, we couldn’t help but wonder if Naven would be returning to Camp Easter Seal for even more adventures and fun! We are happy to share that Kenya has applied for her son to return to Camp for summer 2024. When checking in with Naven to see how he feels about the big news ... if you can imagine the biggest smile possible and a very excited “Yes!” that was his response.

Sincerely,



Ian Wilkinson,
Executive Director



Naven’s a very loving, happy-go-lucky type of kid. At Camp, he really enjoyed playing sports and loved the music program – he loved trying the different instruments and drums.”

**KENYA,
NAVEN’S MOTHER**

The countdown to summer is already underway, and we could not be more excited! Your donation is essential in providing first-time campers like Naven with the best summer experience possible. The cost of Camp should never be a hurdle campers and their families must face, especially when they already experience so many barriers in life. Hosting one camper for a week-long adventure costs about \$2,000. That amount can be an overwhelming expense for families who do not have the financial resources to send their loved ones to Camp. Your support can change all that. Together, we can ensure no one is left behind from that milestone, first camping experience at Camp Easter Seal this summer!