

Hello,

Children's Cancer Connection's Camp Heart Connection takes pride in being a COCA-I Gold Ribbon Accredited Camp. In order to maintain Gold Ribbon Accreditation and to ensure the best health and safety of the families and campers we serve, Children's Cancer Connection has a very close relationship with medical advisors from major hospitals across Iowa.



Children's Cancer Connection's team of medical advisors recently brought concerns to Children's Cancer Connection staff regarding COVID-19 policies established for Camp. They felt that allowing campers from different households and geographic regions to share sleeping quarters increased the possibility of viral transmission. There were also concerns regarding logistics of medication distribution and the ability to separate patients in the Health Lodge at Camp. Recruitment of volunteer medical staff has been difficult in 2021 due to COVID-19 concerns. Children's Cancer Connection relies heavily on medical volunteers to run the Health Lodge and to assist Camp Heart Connection staff in providing for the safety and well-being of campers. After a long and difficult conversation with Children's Cancer Connection's medical advisors regarding the current pandemic, the decision has been made to adjust camp plans for this summer. Children's Cancer Connection had high hopes of returning to Camp Heart Connection as we know it this year and is highly disappointed that things may look different again this summer. The organization is determined to offer Camp programming to the ever-so-deserving families that are looking forward to it.

Children's Cancer Connection's staff have been hard at work creating an alternative plan for Camp that has just been approved by its medical advisors! Instead of "normal" Camp, Children's Cancer Connection will be holding **four** family-inclusive Camp Heart Connection sessions in place of Sibling and Oncology Camp, allowing families and campers the opportunity to come together and connect during a magical summer camp experience! These Camp Heart Connection Sessions will be held at the Des Moines YMCA Camp in Boone on the following dates:

Session 1: June 12th-15th
Session 2: June 16th – 19th

Session 3: August 14th – 17th
Session 4: August 18th – 21st

Join Camp Heart Connection at these summer sessions as 25 cabins of families will have the opportunity **each** session to experience traditional Oncology and Sibling Camp activities, including Tie Dying, Aunt Fifi & Mortimer's Party, Hair Cutting, Aunt Fifi Night, LIT Planned Activities, Wish Night, and so much more! Each family-inclusive Camp experience will include breakout activities solely for oncology campers, sibling campers, and parents to connect on their own! Each family will be provided its own cabin quarters for the session, unless specifically requested during the registration process, eliminating a large concern for transmission of viral spread.

Parents, if you're not able to take time off to get away during any of these sessions, don't worry! You can send alternate family members or guardians (grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.) in your place. Families that wish to share a cabin with another family may do so by mutual consent and upon request during the registration process. Although Camp will still look a little different this year, Children's Cancer Connection can't wait to have you all **at** camp this summer!

Here is the link to register: campheartconnection.campbrainregistration.com

Jennifer Hines
Chief Executive Officer

Jourdan Reed
Camp Director

Connecting families affected by childhood cancer by providing opportunities that encourage relationships and strengthen community.