



THE **MARFAN**  
FOUNDATION



## Frequently Asked Questions – Kids Camp

Thank you for your interest in **Camp Victory for Kids!** We created this document to answer the most common questions about Camp Victory for Kids. If you have any additional questions, please contact our Camp Director, Andrea Friedman, MSW at [afriedman@marfan.org](mailto:afriedman@marfan.org).

### **Q: Where will Camp Victory for Kids be held in 2023?**

**A:** This year, we are holding kids camps in two locations:

- Camp Twin Lakes in Winder, Georgia (an hour from Atlanta), July 23-28
- Sierra Nevada Journeys in Portola, California (an hour from Reno), July 30-August 4

### **Q: What time does Camp Victory start and end?**

**A:** Check-in for campers is Sunday afternoon, with dinner as the first meal. Check-out is Friday morning for the Georgia camp, with breakfast as their last meal. Check-out is Friday early afternoon for the California camp, with lunch as their last meal. Kids are still able to attend if you need to arrive later or leave earlier due to scheduling conflicts.

### **Q: How old does my child have to be to attend Camp Victory?**

**A:** Camp Victory for Kids is designed for children ages 7-16. Enrollment is available for both the kids with the condition and their non-affected siblings between the ages of 7-16.

### **Q: How much does it cost to attend Camp Victory?**

**A:** The Foundation greatly subsidizes our camps so we can offer registration at \$200 per child. This includes meals, lodging and all activities throughout the week. Scholarships for registration are available on the camp website.

### **Q: Who are the Camp Victory counselors?**

**A:** Counselors are recruited by The Marfan Foundation. We have an incredible group of counselors who are caring and compassionate, most of whom have personal experience with genetic aortic and vascular conditions – whether with their own diagnosis or that of a loved one. In addition to our counselors, there is a Camp Director on-site from The Marfan Foundation and our partner camps, and numerous other camp staff whose goal it is to provide a safe and rewarding experience for your child/children. All Camp Victory and partner camp counselors, volunteers and staff go through background checks.

**Q: What is the ratio of campers to counselors at Camp Victory?**

**A:** The ratio of campers to counselors varies depending on the age of the camper group. Each group has two counselors responsible for their group of 10-15 kids total. Counselors stay in the cabins with their campers and accompany them to meals and activities throughout the day.

**Q: Can both my children be placed in the same group? What about my child and their friend?**

**A:** Every effort is made to accommodate specific group requests. However, cabin groups are assigned by age group and gender at birth. Please keep in mind that groups often participate in activities together, therefore, the group assignment does not preclude them from being together throughout the day.

**Q: How will my child be cared for?**

**A:** We understand your concerns when it comes to entrusting others with your child/children – especially when your child has a connective tissue condition and/or other medical diagnosis, developmental, or emotional challenges. That's why we ask for detailed information through our secure on-line CampDoc system (including diet & activity, allergies, medications, health and behavioral health history, social and emotional background, emergency contact, health insurance, and immunization history). The more information you provide, the better we'll be able to care for your child/children. You will be sent a link to CampDoc closer to the start of camp.

**Q: How do you ensure everyone's safety at camp?**

**A:** Campers come first and everything we do is focused on your child/children having a positive experience in a safe and secure environment. Our partner camps support the high standards established by the American Camp Association. From our partner camps' emergency management plans, to our gathering detailed information from all participants through CampDoc, we do our best to address the safety of everyone at camp.

**Q: If my child uses a wheelchair or mobility device, will they be able to participate in all activities?**

**A:** Both of our partner camps are accessible for all campers, including wheelchair users or individuals with other mobility needs or physical challenges. A range of activities are available with adaptive tools to accommodate many different abilities, such as water wheelchairs, lifts at the pool and hoist systems at the ropes course. Cabins are wheelchair-accessible, with accessible bathrooms inside.

**Q: What activities will my child participate in?**

**A:** Campers participate in a variety of traditional indoor and outdoor camp activities. All activities are adapted to be safe for children with genetic aortic and vascular conditions. Depending on the camp location, weather and camper age, activities may include archery, swimming, nature walks, arts & crafts, rock climbing wall, zip line, high ropes course, giant swing, horseback riding, boating, drumming, cooking, woodworking and so much more. There are no contact sports during camp and no activities requiring heavy lifting or significant exertion. Campers often have the opportunity to choose activities they are most interested in, and while encouraged to go outside their comfort zone, are never forced to participate in an activity they choose not to. We have many regular breaks and rest periods throughout the day to ensure that campers stay hydrated and can rest as needed. A fun group activity is held each evening, including, of course, s'mores by the campfire! The daily camp schedule is from 8:00 am to 9:30 pm.

### Sample of Camp Twin Lakes (GA) Activities



### Sample of Sierra Nevada Journeys (CA) Activities



#### **Q: Is there educational programming?**

**A:** The week at camp is about the kids having fun and getting to know others with whom they can relate. Rather than providing dedicated educational sessions, we let the education about living with a connective tissue condition happen more organically. Our on-site nurse, Camp Director and counselors are available to answer questions during camp, but most of the learning that takes place is from one kid to another.

#### **Q: How does my child get their medication?**

**A:** Camp Victory has a nurse on-site throughout the week who administers all medications. Any medications that are required during camp must be placed in a clear zip lock bag with your child's name on it. Medications must be in the original containers with labels from the pharmacy, if prescription. The information you provide in CampDoc is critical to our administering the proper dosage and frequency, so please be sure to update information there. If the information provided does not match the label on the prescription, the prescribing doctor will need to be contacted.

#### **Q: What happens if a camper has a medical emergency?**

**A:** Camp Victory and our partner camps have dedicated medical staff. In case of an emergency, our on-site nurse is contacted, along with our on-call doctor and Camp Director. Should EMS need to be called, the camp in Georgia is located less than 10 minutes from the closest hospital and the California camp is less than seven minutes to the closest hospital. Most camp staff are certified in CPR and First Aid.

**Q: What is Camp Victory doing to protect campers from COVID-19?**

**A:** Camp Victory and our partner camps follow guidelines established by the CDC, local, state and federal authorities. All participants should take a rapid antigen test for COVID-19 within 24 hours prior to the start of camp, and produce proof of negative results before or upon arriving at camp. A basic health screening form will be completed for each camper upon arrival, with ongoing monitoring for symptoms throughout camp. Anyone exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms will be given a rapid antigen test, and if the results are positive, will be immediately quarantined and required to be picked up by a parent/guardian. Participants who have been exposed to someone with a positive COVID-19 result will be monitored and a decision made based on CDC recommendations. Currently, there is no COVID-19 vaccination requirement. For more details regarding Camp Victory and COVID-19, please refer to our complete COVID-19 Policy.

**Q: How does camp address bullying?**

**A:** Camp Victory and our partner camps have a “zero tolerance for bullying” policy. Any incidence of bullying will be addressed immediately. Camp Victory, together with our partner camps, reserve the right to remove campers who are bullying and exhibiting behaviors not fitting for the camp environment, and require them to be picked up by a parent/guardian.

**Q: What happens if my child is homesick?**

**A:** Homesickness is a common part of the camp experience. When campers love their family members and their home, it’s natural to miss them. Camp Victory staff are trained in how to support campers who are homesick. Every effort is made to avoid a call home, as the feeling usually passes and the call often makes homesickness worse.

**Q: What do I need to pack for my child/camper?**

**A:** We send a suggested packing list prior to the start of camp, and all items need to be clearly labeled and fit into one piece of luggage and a backpack/smaller bag. There are no laundry services available except for emergencies. Be prepared for clothes and shoes to come home dirty, so please leave the good stuff behind.

Both camps do not allow campers to bring cell phones or other electronics; alcoholic beverages; knives, fireworks, firearms, or other weapons; drugs (except prescription or other legal drugs); forms of smoking (including tobacco, e-cigarettes and vapes); pets or animals (except for service animals).

**Q: What is the policy on electronic devices, such as smartphones, tablets, and video games?**

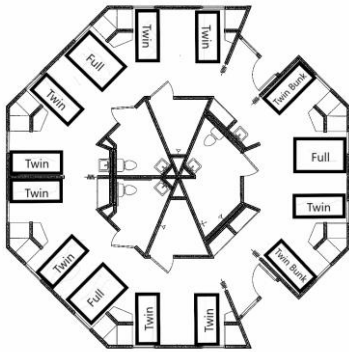
**A:** Camp Victory and our partner camps have a strict “no cell phone” policy and asks that campers not bring electronic devices or other valuables to camp. Any camper who brings a cell phone or electronic device to camp will have it taken away and returned to them at the end of camp.

**Q: What are the cabins like?**

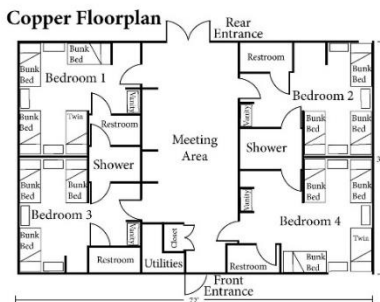
**A:** Cabins at both Camp Victory locations are wheelchair accessible, with restrooms and showers inside. Campers sleep on twin-size beds, most of which are bunk beds, with some stand-alone. All campers must bring their own sheets, blankets, pillows and towels. Cabins are assigned by gender.



## Camp Twin Lakes (GA) Cabins



## Sierra Nevada Journeys (CA) Cabins



### Q: Can special dietary needs be accommodated?

**A:** Our partner camps offer a variety of healthy foods and beverages at every meal, and snacks. Most special dietary needs can be accommodated with advanced notice. Please indicate any special dietary needs in CampDoc. All meals are freshly-made with family-style service. There is always a salad bar option with protein and a pantry for additional options. Food is not allowed in the cabins, so please don't send your child with snacks. All food and snacks are provided during camp.

## Camp Twin Lakes Dining Hall



## Sierra Nevada Journeys Dining Hall



### Q: How can I find out more about the partner camps?

A: We encourage you to visit the web sites for our partner camps to learn more about them:

- Camp Twin Lakes (Georgia) - <https://www.camptwinlakes.org/>
- Sierra Nevada Journeys (California) - <https://www.sierranevadajourneys.org/>

### Q: How do I register for Camp Victory?

A: We're thrilled you've decided to join us at Camp Victory for Kids! Registration is available through:

- The Marfan Foundation website: <https://marfan.org/get-involved/community/marfan-camps/>,
- The VEDS Movement website: <https://thevedsmovement.org/events/camps-for-kids-and-families/>
- The Loeys-Dietz Foundation website: <https://www.loeysdietz.org/get-involved>

