

Summer 2025 Opportunities for Students with Disabilities

Chicago Park District Special Recreation

Multiple Parks Across Chicago

www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/special-recreation-programs

(312) 742-7529

- **Programs for People with Intellectual Disabilities**

www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/programs-memberships/special-recreation-locations-contacts

- Description: Designed to provide opportunities that will enhance skill development, encourage socialization, and promote independence for individuals with intellectual disabilities and developmental delays. Also, includes sports training programs with opportunities to compete in [Special Olympics](#) competitions.

- **Programs for Individuals with Physical Disability**

anc.apm.activecommunities.com/chicagoparkdistrict/activity/search?onlineSiteId=0&activity_select_param=2&activity_keyword=adaptive&viewMode=list

- Description: Intended for individuals with a primary physical disability. Programs include wheelchair sports, adaptive sports, and additional recreation opportunities.

- **Programs for Individuals who are Blind or Visually Impaired**

anc.apm.activecommunities.com/chicagoparkdistrict/activity/search?onlineSiteId=0&activity_select_param=2&activity_keyword=blind&viewMode=list

- Description: Intended for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Programs include adaptive sports and additional recreation opportunities.

- **Programs for Individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing**

anc.apm.activecommunities.com/chicagoparkdistrict/activity/search?onlineSiteId=0&activity_select_param=2&activity_keyword=deaf%20%26%20hoh&viewMode=list

- Description: An opportunity for individuals with all types of hearing loss from early childhood through adulthood to interact with each other while enjoying a variety of year-round specialized recreational activities.

Movies

Alamo Drafthouse Wrigleyville

3519 N Clark St. Suite C301

Chicago, IL 60657

drafthouse.com/chicago/program/alamo-for-all

- When: Tuesdays before 2pm

- Description: Welcome to Alamo for All - a movie program for young families and guests with special needs. All shows starting before 2pm on Tuesdays follow Alamo for All rules, with more shows on the weekends. Schedule may vary during holidays. At sensory-friendly Alamo for All shows, lights are turned up and sound is turned down; all ages are welcome (including infants); talking and noise is allowed and guests can move around; latecomers are admitted; and adaptive technology is welcome (but no other electronics, please).

AMC Sensory Friendly Films

www.amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films

- When: Second and fourth Saturday of every month
- Description: AMC is proud to partner with the Autism Society to offer unique movie showings where we turn the lights up, and turn the sound down, so you can get up, dance, walk, shout or sing! Our family-friendly Sensory Friendly Film program is available on the second and fourth Saturday. Please check your local theater listings for specific showtimes.

Museums

Chicago Children's Museum at Navy Pier - "Play for All"

700 E Grand Ave. Suite 127

Chicago, IL 60611

www.chicagochildrensmuseum.org/play-for-all

- When: First Saturday of the month at 10am *register before!*
- Description: Chicago Children's Museum's Play for All initiative creates a community where play and learning connect for visitors of all abilities. Play for All invites children and families with disabilities and Chicago Children's Museum members to come and experience CCM's inclusive, multisensory exhibits and programs. *The first 250 children and families with disabilities who register will receive free admission! Pre-registration is required for free admission.*

Museum of Science and Industry - Low Sensory Mornings

5700 S Dusable Lake Shore Drive

Chicago, IL 60637

www.msichicago.org/explore/whats-here/events/low-sensory-mornings/

- When: August 24 from 8:30-9:30am *register before!*
- Description: Low-Sensory Mornings provide exclusive early access to Griffin MSI from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m., allowing you to explore exhibits with modified lighting and sound. Your tickets also include Museum Entry for the rest of the day, with most Museum experiences remaining in sensory-friendly mode until noon.

Shedd Aquarium - Calm Waters

1200 S DuSable Lake Shore Drive

Chicago, IL 60605

www.sheddaquarium.org/plan-a-visit/accessibility/calm-waters

- When: Check back for future dates! 9:00-11:00am

- Description: Calm Waters is an exclusive event for guests with disabilities and Veterans to explore Shedd Aquarium's exhibits and experiences in a comfortable and accepting environment. Modifications for this event will include limited capacity and streamlined entry with advance registration; a low-sensory animal spotlight with American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation; an animal encounter opportunity; and complimentary 4D experiences during the event.
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Sports & Games

Aceing Autism - Tennis

1824 S Wood St.

Chicago, IL 60608

www.aceingautism.org/programs/chicago-west-loop-il/

- When: June 7, 14, 21 from 9-10am
- Description: We offer weekly tennis clinics tailored for children with autism aged 5 to 18. To ensure personalized attention and support, each participant is paired up with one or two volunteers based on their needs. Each clinic is led by our trained Program Directors and dedicated volunteers. Your child is encouraged to join us whether or not they have a formal diagnosis.

Adaptive Climbing Group - Indoor Rock Climbing

Brooklyn Boulders Chicago

100 S Morgan St.

Chicago, IL 60607

www.adaptiveclimbinggroup.org/chapters

(312) 268-0002

- When: Usually the 3rd Saturday of the month from 10:00-12:00pm [*register](#) before!*
- Description: Adaptive Climbing Group creates accessible, affordable, and transformational climbing opportunities for youth with disabilities. We offer opportunities for inclusive climbing to ages 5-17 years old and all abilities. No prior experience needed. All climbing gears will be provided for climbers.

Bel Air Martial Arts & Fitness - Jiu Jitsu

2657 N Clybourn Ave.

Chicago, IL 60614

www.teambelair.com/neurodiverse-youth/

(872) 216-4535

- Description: Our goal is to create a safe, inclusive, and positive environment where all students (ages 6-15) can learn martial arts to develop fitness, focus, social skills, and confidence. While most of our neurodivergent students have a diagnosis (i.e., ADHD, Autism, anxiety, sensory processing disorder, ODD, etc.), our program helps any child that may show or experience a high degree of distraction, defiance, anxiety, sensory, withdrawal, emotion, impulsivity, and/or incoordination.

Chuck E. Cheese - Sensory Sensitive Sundays

7142 Carpenter Rd.

Skokie, IL 60077

www.chuckecheese.com/sensory-sensitive-sundays/

- When: First Sunday of the month
- Description: Chuck E. Cheese is proud to support families who have children with Autism and other special needs. Through our Sensory Sensitive Sundays program, we're able to offer families a quieter dining and entertainment environment, dimmed lighting, and a sensory-friendly arcade experience. Our sensory-friendly events also include a trained and caring staff to ensure each guest has a safe, fun-filled visit.

Five Keys Yoga - Yoga for All Abilities

1818 W Belmont Ave.

Chicago, IL 60657

www.5keysyoga.com/yoga-for-all-abilities.html

(773) 857-1763

- Description: Each class is tailored to the individual student, working to augment strengths and improve breathing, posture, and movement patterns. A typical class begins by working with simple chants, which relax and focus the mind and begin the process of mind-body integration. Next, we work on breathing exercises designed to deepen breathing and calm the mind. Some children may work on eye exercises and then, we work on yoga poses geared to the child. We end with a session of deep relaxation, leaving children with a sense of well being.

HMD Academy - Tae Kwon Do for Special Needs Children

4043 N Ravenswood Ave. Suite 118

Chicago, IL 60613

taekwondo-chicago.com/special-needs

(773) 549-0285

- Description: Motor-skill coordination, readiness to engage and respond to verbal and visual direction, ignoring unimportant stimuli, and social interaction are part of our program. Training programs for children with ADHD, autism spectrum disorder, and/or other special needs are developed in concert with parents, depend upon the individual student's needs, and may consist of group and private instruction.

Hubbard Street Dance - Adaptive Dance Videos

www.hubbardstreetdance.com/education-community/autism-project/

- Description: While all of our classes are inclusive, we recognize that some dancers need additional assistance to reach their full potential. Hubbard Street's Adaptive Dance Programs support the needs of all students. Using dance-specific visual supports, students explore dance technique and the choreographic process using developmentally appropriate methods.

iFly Indoor Skydiving - All Abilities Night

800 W Scott St.

Chicago, IL 60610

www.iflyworld.com/programs/all-abilities/

(779) 368-4359

- Description: The dream of flight is accessible to all at iFly's All Abilities Night, a supportive and inclusive program designed especially for those with physical and cognitive challenges. Specially trained instructors will provide assistance and individualized attention and accommodations based on the participant's needs. Traits of children/adults with physical challenges who can indoor skydive are: partial sight or blindness; partial paralysis such as paraplegia or quadriplegia; physical deformities and amputees; and those with limited mobility due to other reasons. Traits of children/adults with cognitive challenges who can indoor skydive are: neurodevelopmental disorders including ADHD, autism, and learning disabilities; neurologic disorders including cerebral palsy; muscular dystrophies; and mental health disorders including anxiety, depression, OCD, and PSD.

KEEN - "Kids Enjoy Exercise Now"

UIC Sport and Fitness Center

828 S Wolcott Ave.

Chicago, IL 60612

www.keenchicago.org

(312) 876-2535

- Description: Programs are all open and unstructured, providing all of our Athletes the opportunity to have fun and be successful. KEEN programs are open to all youth ages 5-21 with physical or developmental disabilities. Certain programs are for select age groups only. *register before!*

Restaurants

The Chicago Diner - Sensory Friendly Night (*Lakeview location only*)

3411 N Halsted St.

Chicago, IL 60657

www.veggiediner.com

(773) 935-6696

- When: Third Wednesday of every month, 5pm to closing
- Description: Unwind with lower lights & music. Please ask a team member about sensory supports like fidgets, headsets, or sensory-conscious menus. We're happy to help! All diners are welcome to join us on these nights.

Sensory Play

Build-a-Bear Workshop

Navy Pier

600 E Grand Ave.

Chicago, IL 60611

www.buildabear.com/sensory-friendly-events.html

(312) 832-0114

- When: Every Tuesday for the first hour of the day (11am-12pm)
- Description: Build-A-Bear Workshop means fun for everyone! We're proud to support children with autism and other special needs by providing sensory-friendly events at all Workshop locations. Sensory-Friendly time is designed to provide a less-stimulating Workshop experience that's still fun-filled and unforgettable. Our Bear Builders are here to make sure each Guest goes through the Build-A-Bear experience in a way that's comfortable for them. Sensory-Friendly time includes dimmer lighting, little to no music playing in the store, a step-by-step informational guide that allows parents/guardians to plan their Workshop experience in advance, and all ages and siblings are welcome.

Sloomoo Institute - Slime Experience

820 N Orleans St.

Chicago, IL 60610

www.sloomooinstitute.com/pages/sensory-friendly-hours

- When: June 19 from 10-11am *register/buy ticket before!*
- Description: Sensory-Friendly Hour is a warm welcome to guests who are sensory sensitive and may have sensory processing differences. For those who are excited about slime, but want a slightly slower/quieter and less crowded experience, Sloomoo will lower the music and limit crowds to make time for everyone to enjoy. Headsets and nose plugs are available, upon request, for students who are triggered by noise and scent.

Summer Camps

Brookfield Zoo Summer Camp {ages 4-14}

8400 31st St.

Brookfield, IL 60513

www.brookfieldzoo.org/zoocamp

(708) 688-8000

- When: June 9-August 8; half days run from 9-12:30pm and full days run from 9-3:30pm
- Description: Zoo Camp is the perfect opportunity for your child to connect with animals and nature in a variety of fun and exciting ways. Children ages 4-14 will explore the zoo through play and learning with our skilled camp counselors. There's so much to see and do with weekly sessions that offer many unique experiences. Our Zoo Camp is an inclusive camp program where ALL children come together to learn, play, and explore together. They make new friends, explore the world around them, and learn that "I can" is much more powerful than "I can't." At Zoo Camp, children are creating memories that will last a lifetime. Campers explore animals and the natural world in a fun, engaging, age-appropriate setting. Activities include nature hikes, animal observations and encounters, games, and crafts.

Camp KEEN {ages 5-21}

www.keenchicago.org/camp-keen

- When: June 22-August 9
- Description: Activities and events include hiking, kayaking, field days, sailing, boat tour, bike camp, disability pride parade, beach day, swimming, and trampoline.

Camp O at the Sonia Shankman Orthogenic School (O School) {ages 6-14}

6245 S Ingleside Ave.

Chicago, IL 60637

www.oschool.org/programs/camp-o

(773) 420-2900

- When: August 4-15, 9am-3pm
- Description: A supportive and structured day camp for young people who require additional supports to access the joys of summer camp. Camp O thoughtfully embeds social and emotional learning into camp activities. A low staff to camper ratio (1:4) allows for increased interaction and supervision with highly qualified and trained staff members. Campers will partake in joy and silliness, discover new interests, make friends, build confidence, and help create a dynamic Camp O community. Camp O campers may have formal diagnoses such as: Autism spectrum disorder (ASD); social communication disorder; anxiety disorders; learning disabilities; obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD); attention-deficit disorder (ADD/ADHD); or those without a formal diagnosis who may exhibit characteristics consistent with these diagnoses. Campers must be able to maintain safe behavior and remain in their groups without continuous 1:1 supervision.

Camp Red Kite {ages 8-22}

Chicago Children's Theatre

100 S Racine Ave.

Chicago, IL

chicagochildrenstheatre.org/red-kite-classes-camp/

(312) 374-8829

- When: July 14-August 1, 9-12:30pm
- Description: Camp Red Kite is a dynamic theater day camp for young people on the autism spectrum and other neurodiverse learners. During three fun-filled weeks, campers explore drama, music, and visual arts! Throughout each camp day, campers rotate through engaging arts classes with their age-appropriate small groups, growing their sense of community, imaginative thinking, and self-confidence. Camp Red Kite is led by a trained team of theater artists, administrators, and CPS special education teachers. Financial assistance is available!

Camp SOAR {ages 7-19}

Wesley Woods Conference Center

250 Stam St.

Williams Bay, WI 53191

www.childrensresearchtriangle.org/camp-soar/

(312) 726-4011

- When: July 3-18 or July 20-25
- Description: A signature program of Children's Research Triangle is Camp SOAR (Special Outdoor Adaptive Recreation), an overnight camp for children with developmental disabilities. The mission of the camp is to provide an inclusive and fun overnight camp experience for children who otherwise would not have opportunities. Campers are partnered with a one-to-one dedicated volunteer counselor who assists them in making the most of their camp experience. Parents know their child is having a wonderful time, making new friends and gaining independence, while in a safe and caring environment.

Eyas Landing - Therapeutic Summer Camp {ages 4-11}

1409 W Carroll Ave.

Chicago, IL 60607

eyaslanding.com/summer-camps/

(312) 733-0883

- When: July 7-August 1, 8am start (4-8 year olds) or 10am start (6-11 year olds); *camp is between a minimum of five hours and a maximum of eight hours, based on therapeutic recommendations and provider availability*
- Description: Our summer camp curriculum has been designed by our multidisciplinary team of pediatric therapy experts and incorporates evidence-based interventions from behavior therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech-language pathology, and social work. Our four-week camp promotes growth and development in a wide range of social, academic, and cognitive domains, including social skills, sensory explorers, bike riding, sports, and handwriting.

Joffrey Ballet - Abilities in Motion {ages 6-18}

Joffrey Tower

10 E Randolph St.

Chicago, IL 60601

joffrey.org/education/academy/academy-programs/adaptive-dance/

(312) 784-4600

- When: June 16-August 10, Sundays 2:45-3:30pm or 3:30-4:15pm
- Description: The Joffrey Ballet's JAM dance classes prioritize providing a welcoming space for individuals with disabilities and neurodivergent children and teens. Participants will have the opportunity to explore music and a variety of movements in a supportive environment. Led by Oliver Till, Head of Children's, Adult, and Adaptive, the Joffrey Academy of Dance's Adaptive Dance programs offer the opportunity for students with diverse movement abilities to learn and enjoy the elements of dance.

Limes Smiles for Miles - Summer Garden Camp {ages 3-5}

2901 W Warren Blvd.

Chicago, IL 60612

www.limessmilesformiles.com/classes

(773) 217-5095

- When: June 7-August 16 from 1-4pm
- Description: A 10-week summer garden camp program for children with Autism and/or Down syndrome. Nutrition, STEM learning, early intervention, physical development, parent group, and a place of our own.

PlayWorks Prep Therapeutic Summer Camp {ages 2½-6}

2500 W Bradley Pl. Suite 109

Chicago, IL 60618

playworkschicago.com/services/playworks-prep/

(773) 332-9439

- When: June 24-August 16, 9:15am-12:15pm

- Description: PlayWorks Prep Therapeutic Summer Camp is an interdisciplinary therapeutic program for children with developmental differences. Our program utilizes a global developmental model with an emphasis on social-emotional development and sensory integration. With our unprecedented 2:1 ratio, your child has consistent opportunities throughout the entire camp day to interact with our masters-level therapy team. Enrollment is limited and children are grouped into pods based on age and developmental needs.

Spectrum Sailing {ages 10-17}

Chicago Corinthian Yacht Club at Montrose Harbor

601 W Montrose Ave.

Chicago, IL 60613

www.spectrumsailing.org

(847) 863-3059

- When: June 17-19, 9am-12pm or 1pm-4pm *free, but need to apply!*
- Description: Spectrum Sailing provides maritime education, programming, and outreach for autistic individuals. Our 3-day camp provides opportunities for skill development, social interaction, and confidence building. Sailing is our platform to positively impact the physical, mental, and social health of our participants.

Tuesday's Child - Summer Extension {ages 4-6}

3633 N California Ave.

Chicago, IL 60618

www.tuesdayschildchicago.org/tc-summer-extension

(773) 573-6936

- When: June 17-June 26; July 1-July 10; July 15-July 24; July 28-August 7 (*children can attend between 1-4 sessions*)
- Description: Our Summer Extension program provides children ages 4 to 6 who are “alumni” of our Behavior Intervention program with an enriching experience that blends fun, learning, and personal growth. The structured program, which takes place in a play-based environment, uses an evidence-based behavioral intervention approach to maintain your child’s success and prepare them to extend their skills into the upcoming school year.

Resource Lists

DSCC (Division of Specialized Care for Children) - Summer Camp List

dscc.uic.edu/events/categories/camp/

RUSH - Recreation for Children with Autism Resource List

www.rush.edu/services/autism-care/autism-resource-directory/resources-children/recreation-children-autism

- Autism Camp Programs; Hippotherapy & Therapeutic Riding; Sports & Play

Shirley Ryan Ability Lab - Summer Camp List

www.sralab.org/lifecenter/resources/listing-summer-camps-kids

- Brain Injuries; Cancer; Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing; Physical Disabilities