

The Children's Link Society

Suite 245, 720 - 28th Street N.E Calgary, Alta. T2A 6R3
Phone:230-9158/ Fax:230-3252/ E-mail:child@nucleus.com
Website: www.childrenslink.ca

Recreation and Extra-Curricular Pursuits

Every child deserves some time away from difficult challenges, to relax and just have fun. Extra curricular activities allow your child to let go of the stress and worry in academic performance, and be successful in developing other life skills. By learning to make a new friend, pursuing a passion, strengthening physical or athletic abilities, or discovering a hidden talent or interest, can expand a child's universe. Most importantly, an extra curricular activity can be very important in the development of a child's self-esteem.

There are many issues for parents to consider when choosing programs for their children. Individual interests, time commitments, costs involved, and pre-requisite skills required are a few of the basic factors. The benefits make it worthwhile to search for a good fit between child and program. Start by creating a list of your child's strengths, interests and needs. Then use the following questions to help guide you in your search for an ideal program:

- **What are my reasons for enrolling my child in this program?**
- **Do I want him to just have fun, to learn and practice social skills, to develop his strengths, or to work on his challenges?**
- **What kind of activities will my child be involved in?**
- **What is the training of the leaders offering the program?**
- **Will the instructors be able to handle my child's needs?**
- **How many kids are in the program?**
- **Will there be sufficient individual attention to safely monitor my child's behavior and meet his needs?**
- **Will my child be overwhelmed by the pace?**
- **Is my child able to handle a group experience?**
- **Will the program leaders understand my child's unique qualities?**
- **Will they have the patience and skills my child requires to experience success?**
- **How do the program leaders deal with social and behavioral challenges?**
- **Will I be expected to do any work with my child at home? (Example: work on a badge for Brownies)**
- **Will I, or an aide be allowed to accompany my child in the program?**
- **Is it possible for me to contact other parents who have enrolled their children in this program?**

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Once you find that perfect extra curricular activity for your child, their abilities are boundless, new friendships are eager to blossom and adventures are just waiting to begin!

RECREATION OPTIONS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- ◆ **Alberta Association for Disabled Skiers – (403) 286-8050.** Operating at C.O.P. on Friday nights during the winter months, Disabled Skiers is a great way to enjoy and learn to ski with extra support and guidance.
- ◆ **Altadore Gymnastics Club – (403) 720-2711.** Preschool, recreation and competitive gymnastics. They have a special program called “I can do it too!”
Website: altadoregymnastics.com
- ◆ **Autism Aspergers Friendship Society (AAFS)-Dean Svoboda- 608-5651.** The AAFS offers respite care in a recreational environment for families with children with Autism/Aspergers/PDD in the Calgary area. The Little Autism Aspergers Friendship Society (LAAFS) does the same for children ages 5-10. Regular events include Video Games Club, Arts/Film Club and Girls Club. See our website for a complete schedule.
Email: aafs@shaw.ca
Website: <http://members.shaw.ca/aafs>
- ◆ **Little Autism Aspergers Friendship Society (LAAFS) – (403) 608-5652.**
Email: laafs@shaw.ca
Website: <http://members.shaw.ca/aafs>
- ◆ **Between Friends Club – (403) 269-9133.** Between Friends offers a number of recreational options for children and young adults including school-break camps, a summer camp - Camp Bonaventure - and ongoing recreation programs including Integrated Programming.
Website: www.betweenfriends.ab.ca.
- ◆ **Calgary Zoo – (403) 232 – 9300.** Offers year round programs and activities for all ages. *Website:* www.calgaryzoo.org

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- ◆ **Canadian Paraplegic Association- Alberta (403) 228-3001**
CPA provides peer events, recreational activities, ongoing counselling and family support to individuals of all ages with spinal cord injuries and other physical disabilities.
Website: www.canparaplegic.org/ab
- ◆ **Centennial Little League - Challenger Division – (403) 274-7120.** Please call for more information on this baseball league for children with disabilities.
- ◆ **Cerebral Palsy Association of Alberta Recreation Programs – (403) 543-1164.** Activities include children's water therapy, CP Kids bowling, a dance mentorship program and a resource catalogue for other activities available within the Calgary region.
Website: cpalberta.com
- ◆ **Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services – (403) 284 – 6200.** The DHHS is pleased to offer a Children's and Youth Social Club for ages 6 – 12 (1st Saturday of the month), and ages 13 – 18 (last Saturday of the month). Year long recreational and social activities for children who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- ◆ **Disabled Sailing Association of Alberta- (403) 225-8050 (Office) or (403) 2308-0689 (dock- May to Sept)**
DSA- Alberta offers sailing programs for children and adults with disabilities. DSA- Alberta also offers independent sailing and lessons for those who wish to sail on their own.
Email: businessmanager@dsaalberta.org
- ◆ **Diversified Leisure Services Inc. – (403) 225-3735.** They design recreation and/or life skills programs according to request. Qualified Recreation Therapists.
- ◆ **Dr. Pauline Kamps – (403) 217-5749** In safe and supportive environment, students (especially those with coordination problems) are able to learn general skills such as running, throwing, kicking, catching; and the basics of other sports such as: baseball, volleyball, badminton, basketball; riding scooters and/or skate boards, and other activities done in physical education classes. Dr. Kamps also provides one-on-one instruction for children and/or teens who want to learn to ride a bicycle.

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- ◆ **Pamper Your Princess Parties – (403) 948 – 2294.** Pamper your little girl with special needs. Creatively planned Birthday parties for girls of all ages.
- ◆ **Recreation Discovery – (403) 268-2026.** Recreation Discovery is a publication produced by the City of Calgary, Community Services and Protective Services Department; provides information on recreation/leisure programs for people with disabilities. It promotes recreation/leisure programs provided by non-for-profit organizations throughout Calgary.
(www.calgary.ca)
- ◆ **Respite Care Connection – (403) 233 – 2681. Active Saturday Respite Group & Creative Saturday Respite Group.** Two specialized recreation programs for children with challenging behaviours, ages 5 – 12. Children participating need to have involvement with Calgary Rocky View (FSCD, C/W or post adoptive support).
- ◆ **Rotary Challenger Park – (403) 250-2707.** Rotary Challenger Park is, **Where everyone Can Play!** It is a **premier sports facility** that will meet the needs of challenged and able bodied athletes. It is specifically designed for persons with disabilities; a **barrier-free environment** with a sense of safety and dignity, and is the first park in North America if it's kind! Offers many different indoor, outdoor and educational activities for persons of all ages with all disabilities.
<http://www.challengerpark.com>
- ◆ **Round-Up Band – Bob Jensen (403) 246 – 8708.** Funding available to families whose kids wish to join the band, however some type of music experience is a must. For the kids with no music background, they could still join the band as members of the Colour Guard. Activities run from September to end of Stampede. Fundraising required.
- ◆ **Scouting About (403) 283-4993.** This is a brand new program offered by Scouts Canada. They offer structured play using games, crafts, outdoor activities consistent with Scout's Canada values. Please call Dave Pascut at the above number for more information.
- ◆ **SpacePort – (403) 717-7678 – Fax – (403) 717-7677.** Located at the Calgary International Airport, SpacePort offers activities and camps for children 6 – 12 years of age. Please speak to Crystal Rainbird the Educational Program Director regarding integration opportunities. They are not set-up for special needs children but with the help of an aide, children could be integrated. Please call for more details.

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Email: sport1@yyc.com

- ◆ **Special Olympics Calgary– (403) 735-1022.** Please call for more information on this all abilities program for disabled athletes.
Website: specialolympicscalgary.org
- ◆ **Stage Left Productions – (403) 831-0455.** Drama classes specialized to support teens and adults with disabilities to explore imagination, creativity and skills development. They are accessible to people of all mobility and all types of disabilities.
Email: michelle@stage-left.org
- ◆ **Talisman Centre (Lindsay Park Sports Centre) – (403) 233-8393.** Fitness facility with personal training programs for people with disabilities. Integration possible for most programs.
Website: www.talismancentre.com
- ◆ **The Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary – (403) 276-9981.** The Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary offer a number of inclusive programs. Please call for locations and information on programs.
- ◆ **Variety Park – (403) 228 – 6168 (Variety Club).** A barrier free recreation park for children with special needs. It has pre-school and school age play areas, water play and picnic areas for family and caregivers to enjoy. Located in South Glenmore Park, 90th avenue and 24th street SW.
- ◆ **V.R.R.I. - Vocational Rehabilitation Research Institute – (403) 284-2231** The VRRRI offers a number of programs including summer camps where children with special needs are integrated. Call for more information. Fee assistance available.
- ◆ **Wild Flower Arts Centre – (403) 249-3773.** Children have been integrated into art/drama/dance classes in the past. Please call for details and to discuss possible options for your family.
- ◆ **William Watson Lodge – (403) 591-7227.** William Watson Lodge offers families a chance to experience Kananaskis country.

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YMCA's of Calgary - The Calgary YMCA's offer a number of programs that children with disabilities can integrate. Please call your local YMCA for more information.

Website: ymcocalgary.org

Locations:

- **Community YMCA – (403) 531-1660**
- **Crowfoot YMCA – (403) 547-6576**
- **Eau Clair YMCA – (403) 269-6701**
- **Rocky Mountain YMCA (YMCA Camp Chief Hector/Outdoor Schools/Outdoor Centers) – (403) 269-6156**
- **Shawnessy YMCA – (403) 256-5533**
- **South YMCA – (403) 255-8131**

Horseback Riding for Special Needs:

Lethbridge Handicapped Riding Association:

Location: RR8, Site 24, Box 6, Lethbridge AB T1J 4P4

Contact: Shay at (403) 328-2165

Email: lhra@telusplanet.net

<http://www.equestrian.connectcomm.ca>

Little Bits Therapeutic Riding Association: Runs programs throughout the year as well as in the summer they run “Camp Horseshoe” at Joseph Lake, AB.

Location: Box 29016 Lendrum P.O., Edmonton, AB T6H 5Z6

Phone: (780) 476-1233

Email: info@LittleBits.ca

Website: www.littlebits.ca

Mount View Special Riding Association: Runs programs in spring and fall sessions, can accommodate up to 30 riders, and has a specialized cart for wheelchairs. They are certified through the Canadian Therapeutic Riding Association (CanTRA).

Location: 5629 49 Ave, Olds AB T4H 1G5

Contact: Sandra (403) 556-7247

<http://www.revealconnections.com/site/view.php?folder=mvsra>

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Opening Gaits Therapeutic Riding Society of Calgary:

PO Box 48034 40 Midlake Blvd SE

Calgary AB T2P 2G6

Contact: Yvonne (403) 254-4184 or email at yvonneanderson@shaw.ca

Website: www.openinggaits.com or email at openinggaits@shaw.ca

Peace Area Riding for the Disabled (PARDS): Therapeutic Riding is for children and adults who have various physical and mental disabilities. Riders can experience not only physical, but emotional and mental benefits as well. Children must be at least 4 years old and up to adults, the age is limitless! For 3 weeks in July PARDS partners with Camp Tamarack to offer week long horse camps. These are integrated horse camps for children ages 6 - 16. We have 30 kids each week attending and taking part in riding lessons, stable management & crafts...they also take part in other activities during their stay at the beautiful Camp Tamarack.

Location: RR1, Site 24, Box 2, Grande Prairie, AB T8V 2Z8

Contact: (780) 538-3211 or fax: (780) 528-3683

Website: www.pards.ca

The Riding Habit Stable: Offers horse back riding to children with special needs however they cannot accommodate children who require extra support/equipment for physical disabilities. They have experience specific to children who have Autism Spectrum Disorders and/or developmental delays.

Location: 242002 Range Road 32, Calgary AB T3Z 3L4

Contact: Cheryl Tycholis (403) 585-5811 or main office (403) 242-9110

www.kestrelridgefarm.com

Rundle Riders: Our program is based out of the Rocky Mountain YMCA located just east of Canmore Alberta.

Contact: (403) 678-3764

PO Box 8186, Canmore AB T1W 2T9

www.rundleriders.ca

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