



2020 MDA Virtual Summer Camp Impact Report

MDA Summer Camp: Not Just a Place, but a Feeling

MDA Summer Camp isn't just a place, it's a feeling. It's a week of fun, but it is so much more than that. Friendships are built, independence is fostered, life skills are developed, self-esteem is encouraged, and connections are made with nature and the outdoors. Given the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was simply not possible to safely continue forward with in-person camp in 2020. Once this decision was made, we had to create a new program to virtually connect our community and help bring the spirit of MDA Summer Camp to them.

What our community is saying about Virtual Summer Camp



"From a parent's perspective this has been amazing even to give a boost to her spirits and her mental health after all of the very necessary, but discouraging, isolation"

– Parent of camper

"[My daughter] was so excited to talk to me about another child she met with CMT Type 1A who has a mom with CMT too (same as us!), and wears braces too! ... She said she can't believe the connections she has made all over the country!"

– Parent of camper

"[Virtual Camp has] been a great little taste of what we have in the summer when we are all able to come together. The activities... were just awesome. I was so excited to meet so many new campers from around the country."

– Virtual Camp camper

"What I loved most about the program was how it was a testament to the tenacity of MDA, showing how serving others cannot and would not cease in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Being able to connect with campers from all over the country and forming sincere connections with them through a virtual medium was exciting, beneficial, and of course: fun! "

– Virtual Camp Counselor

"Even though it wasn't the usual camp it was still the best week I had with my daughter this summer! It was a lot of fun"

– Parent of camper



The Powerful Impact of MDA Summer Camp

MDA Summer Camp is a big and impactful program. As the world pivoted to virtual, MDA had to take a multi-faceted approach to do it justice.

In **Virtual Camp**, nearly 750 campers joined one of 7-weeks of a summer program where MDA crafted custom-created content to fit within the virtual space. This included fun and engaging activities (themed arts & crafts projects, snack suggestions and activities tied to the daily theme of camp), paired with an online message board space to connect with others. Additionally, campers were given project ideas to enjoy offline with their family.

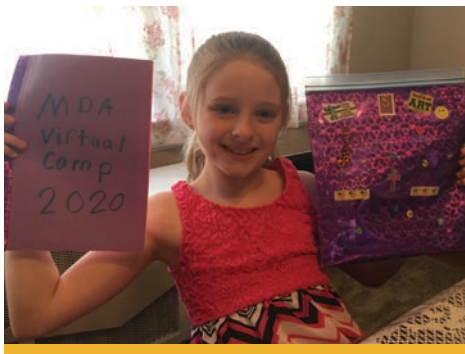
Camp Connections focused on connections and friendships, cornerstones of MDA Summer Camp. These video calls created mini-reunions with campers, volunteers and medical staff who traditionally come together at specific in-person camp locations.

Signature Programs was a series of several partner programs conducted in 2020. Participants could participate in a variety of online programs focused on specific interests. Programs included:

- [Collaboration with Open Style Lab](#), where participants were able to show off their creativity and love of fashion by creating a 'hack' to create accessible fashion.
- [Partnership with The Difference](#), an online storytelling platform where participants could share their "Powerful Story", activating the power of story to create connection, inspire self-advocacy, and build understanding for what it's like to live with neuromuscular disease.

Virtual Summer Camp and Recreation Programming Statistics:

-  **1,000 + participants** in virtual camp & recreation programming
-  **25% of participants** in the program were new to MDA Summer Camp
-  **100 volunteer** 'camp counselor' facilitators
-  **24 activities** each week
-  Average of **10,000 messages** exchanged per week
-  **100% of respondents** shared that the Camp Connections videocall reunion was fun and engaging.





Muscular
Dystrophy
Association

For more information about the
MDA Summer Camp program, please visit
mda.org/virtual-camp.