

Something new from Camp ALEC ... An Emergent Literacy Family Retreat
September 22-25
Indian Trails Camp
Grand Rapids, Michigan

The team at Camp ALEC is thrilled to announce a new program for emergent literacy learners who use AAC and have significant disabilities. Children ages 5-12 are welcome to attend this retreat with 1-2 parents or caregivers who will provide all personal, health and medical care for this weekend retreat. Adult participants should be involved in the everyday care and educational decision-making for the child.

Children and their caregivers will participate in motivating and fun emergent literacy instructional activities with the expert teams at the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Appalachian State University under the direction of Drs. Karen Erickson and David Koppenhaver. Adult participants will receive hands-on training during these sessions with their children, as well as formal training with Karen and David. During formal sessions, the children will be nearby participating in typical camp activities with Camp Directors Gina Cunningham and Tina Moreno and a team of knowledgeable educators who are Camp ALEC veterans.

This will be intense, yet fun filled retreat. You will leave with tremendous knowledge and a new enthusiasm for learning. We invite you to think about whether this event is for you and your child. Ideal child participants are easily engaged during fun, interactive instructional activities, such as shared reading. They may know some letters and letter sounds, but not all. They have an AAC device that gives them access to a robust vocabulary, but they may only use 1-2 words to communicate for a variety of purposes and are enthusiastic to connect with others. They do not require extrinsic rewards to participate in learning and do not exhibit concerning behaviors that may pose risk of injury to themselves or others.

This Emergent Literacy Family Retreat will take place at beautiful Indian Trails Camp in Grand Rapids, MI. Participants will share cabins with 1-2 other families, sleep in camp beds, share bathrooms and showers and enjoy camp-style meals with other families and the Camp ALEC team. All adult participants will be expected to participate in all literacy and recreational activities with their children and provide all care. We ask that all participants be prepared to have fun, get a little dirty, be silly and be flexible. We encourage you to take advantage of opportunities to share and network with parents who are on a similar journey and enjoy an environment where children gain confidence in communication, reading and writing as they build new friendships.

This retreat will get underway on Thursday, September 22, with dinner and evening activities designed to get to know one another. Friday and Saturday will be packed with a mix of recreational activities and literacy sessions that are so fun that the kids will have a blast learning! On the morning of Sunday, September 25, we'll enjoy our last meal together and wrap things up before sending families home armed with more confidence and knowledge regarding

communication and literacy instruction for their emergent learners. We encourage families to stay connected after the retreat to share their experiences, celebrate successes, and support one another.

Below is a tentative daily schedule:

8:00am	Breakfast
9:00am	Parent/Caregiver training (Campers in Recreational Activity)
10:30am	Literacy Activity (Campers and Parents/Caregiver)
12:00pm	Lunch
1:00pm	Parent/Caregiver training (Campers in Recreational Activity)
2:30pm	Literacy Activity (Campers and Parents/Caregiver)
4:30pm	Rest time
5:30pm	Dinner
6:30pm	Evening Recreational Activity (All participants)
8:00pm	Bedtime preparations

Please review our application and registration materials carefully. If you think this program is a good fit for your child and your family, we encourage you to apply. If you have questions or need additional information, send us an email at campalecinfo@gmail.com.

The safety of participants is paramount. To ensure the safety of everyone, a limited number of spots are available. Every precaution will be taken to reduce the risks of Covid. All retreat participants will be required to provide proof of vaccination and boosters, will be tested for Covid upon arrival and will be expected to wear a mask (properly covering nose and mouth) indoors throughout the weekend. A nurse will be available 24/7 should needs arise.