

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Megan Knight, and I am a speech language pathologist at Shriners Children's in Portland, OR. I currently work with medically complex patients who utilize augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) or speech generating devices. At Shriners Children's we run an annual AAC summer camp for our patients. Our patients greatly benefit from this camp each year as they can interact with peers who communicate the way they do. This camp is one of the highlights of the year for these kids and they always ask when the next camp is going to be hosted. Many families express that it is difficult to find opportunities for their children who use AAC and wish there were more chances for them to be around peers who communicate in similar ways.

It would be amazing if there was an overnight camp available for patients who use AAC. This would be a massive highlight for every child who gets to attend this camp, and it would really be something they have never had the opportunity to do before. As a therapist I work hard with each child's team to create fun and engaging opportunities that allow them to communicate in the most natural way possible. Realistically we cannot do that 100% of the time in the hospital setting. So having a place we can refer children to for more natural engagement with their environment and peers would be a huge gift to these families.

I fully support the idea of having an overnight AAC Camp for our more complex children in Oregon.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Megan Knight