

Pathways

STEPPING
STONES

Summer 2021 Edition

Summer camp is right around the corner!

Read on to learn how Stepping Stones staff and participants are preparing for summer camp this year!

Ready For The Adventures Ahead

Andrew's mom felt worried when she dropped him off for his first day of camp. She remembers the 8-year old looking lost, small and uncertain of what this whole Summer Camp thing was all about. The anxiety was short-lived because she soon saw Andrew welcomed into the group with smiles and excitement, guided by his caring counselor. Over the years, camp has become an important part of Andrew's life – something that is close to heart all year round. Every summer, he fills a shoebox with natural treasures like interesting rocks, feathers, and leaves. He loves to look back on his treasure boxes to remember his favorite place when summer is still months away.

Now entering his fifth summer, Andrew is once again looking forward to seeing his friends – collecting memories and being surrounded by the positivity and support that help him thrive. Andrew is already waiting for the adventures ahead and a new Summer Camp shoebox is ready to collect the joy he finds along the way.

Building A Strong Community

Karen Martin serves as the Recreation and Leisure Director for Stepping Stones. Her team plays an integral role in planning for Summer Camp each year. After enrollment opens, they create the summer's program model based on the number of campers attending and the available resources. Safety is at the forefront of the team's planning; they communicate with campers' families to let them know exactly what to expect. New campers complete a pre-program assessment and all families receive a packet with a caregiver guide.

The Rec. & Leisure team determines how many staff members are needed for the summer. They hire unit leads, specialists, lifeguards, nurses, cooks and maintenance workers. Summer staff members go through several steps in the interview process and, upon hire, attend rigorous training where they are given all the tools needed to do an excellent job.

"My favorite part of summer camp is the strong community that is built each year," Karen said. Friendships are created through shared, life-changing experiences at Stepping Stones and that's what the Rec & Leisure team is looking forward to the most.



Countdown To Summer Camp



Above: Camper Andrew At Age 8



Above (L to R): Jacie Simon (Recreation Manager), Karen Martin (Rec & Leisure Director), and EJ Bachman (Recreation Coordinator)

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Pathways to Independence for People with Disabilities

www.SteppingStonesOhio.org

Well-Prepared For Camp

“Counselor training is an incredibly educational experience that always makes me feel well-prepared for summer camp,” said Olivia, Activity Advisor at Summer Day Camp.

Olivia became a counselor in 2018 after connecting with a Stepping Stones volunteer. She started out as a nature specialist, leading groups in outdoor activities. One of her favorite camp memories was Spa Day where she took campers to the creek to find natural clay for face masks. Last summer, Olivia took on a leadership position where she had the opportunity to plan camp activities and lead a staff of specialists. She planned a TikTok-themed challenge where campers recorded dance videos and voted on their favorites.

As Olivia prepares for summer camp this year, she’ll attend a week of supervisor training followed by a week of counselor training. Even though she’s experienced training multiple times, she always learns something new and she loves connecting with the other counselors. They’ll bond through plenty of fun games and activities in addition to their rigorous training schedule. She’s excited to be back at camp this summer!



Above: Counselor Olivia



Above: Camper Mello & Counselor Kerra (Pre-Covid)

Another Summer of Fun

12-year-old Mello knows that Summer Camp is on the horizon. With his backpack packed and ready to go, this camper is already dreaming of summertime swimming, fishing, and fun with his friends.

“He looks forward to camp every year. He loves taking walks in nature and playing in the dirt,” his mom says, relaying how wonderful it is for her son to have something to look forward to all year long. He tells his family he’s ready for camp by bringing out his bathing suit and getting his camp backpack out of the closet — this year he was ready in December! In a year like 2020, Summer Camp is a blessing for his family and they can’t wait for him to have another summer of fun with Stepping Stones.

On the Calendar

- June 7: Summer 2021 Season Begins
- June 7: The Golf Classic
- Sept 11: Bloom Gala
- Oct 22: Sporting Clays Tournament

Stay Connected

Be a part of the Stepping Stones community!
Follow us on social media to see our programs in action and stay up-to-date on agency news and events.



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Community Giving Ideas

Go Shopping for Stepping Stones



You shop. Amazon gives.

How to Enroll Online:

Connect your Kroger Plus Card to Stepping Stones and earn a donation to Stepping Stones.

How to Enroll Online:

1. Log into your Kroger Rewards account at: [KrogerCommunityRewards.com](https://www.kroger.com/rewards)
2. Click 'Link Your Shopper's Card'
3. Search for 'Stepping Stones, Inc.'
4. Select 'Stepping Stones, Inc.' located at: 5650 Given Rd. Cincinnati, OH 45243
5. Click 'Enroll'.
6. Shop to support our programs!

\$2,931 Raised in 2020

Shop Amazon Smile:

Shop on Amazon Smile and Amazon donates a share of your sale back to Stepping Stones.

How to Shop Amazon Smile:

1. Log into your account at: [Smile.Amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)
2. From the Charity Choice List, search and choose 'Stepping Stones, Inc.' as your choice charity located at: 5650 Given Rd. Cincinnati, OH 45243
3. Shop to make a difference!

\$325 Raised in 2020

Allyn Campus

1414 Lake Allyn Road
Batavia, Ohio 45103

Parkcrest Campus

3330 Parkcrest Lane
Cincinnati, Ohio 45211

Given Campus

5650 Given Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45243

Drex Campus

2300 Drex Avenue
Norwood, Ohio 45212