

Hi- My name is Jennifer Vacanti and I am a Special Education Teacher. I have been working at Aspire of WNY since I was around 11 years old-with a couple short breaks to work at Tops and for Cleve Hill Elementary School. That is more than 30 years that I have been working with children that have special abilities and special needs. When we were thinking about new camps to offer- we decided that what we needed in WNY was a camp for families that have a child or children that are diagnosed as being on the Autistic Spectrum. This is where this camp started. I just want to share that I am very excited that you and your family signed up to come to our "One Piece at a Time " Camp! I am looking forward to getting to know you and your children and making some great camp memories!!!

I will start by explaining what we will be doing and how this weekend will work!

On Friday evening you will be welcome to start arriving at the camp at 5:30pm (please have dinner before you arrive-but we will have snacks available). Come to the Pilgrim Lodgeto register as you get to camp. The Pilgrim Lodge is just past the playground-look for the sign! Here you will talk to me, get your cabin placement. We will get settled in our cabins, get to know each other and have an opportunity to play and hang out on the grounds, doing some games, activities and having an evening snack, maybe even a campfire. (Please feel free to bring snacks your child enjoys or even something to share if you would like!) We will have a mini social gathering around 7:30. Each family will have a volunteer counselor assigned to their family to assist with the children so that the parents can relax, enjoy the campfire after the kids go down, or so they can just have another set of hands to help. (If you know of someone who might like to help your family-let me know! We are always looking for new people to come to camp!)

On Saturday morning we will have breakfast, then do some crafts or activities. Sensory based activities, or sports- depending on the youths interests. Parents will have 2 groups of guest speakers- to share some ideas and answer questions. After lunch we will have an hour of quiet time-then we will walk down to the creek (weather permitting) and find some crayfish or hang out on the beach looking for shells and sea glass, or do some fun games and activities. After Dinner we will do a group activity and before bed we will have a campfire.

On Sunday we will have breakfast and you will be able to leisurely pack and get ready to depart by noon.

Any specific allergies and food restrictions should be sent to me or the camp so we can make sure everyone has food the are able to eat and enjoy the camp experience.

If you have any questions or comments please feel free to contact me-716-681-4210. Can't wait to meet all of you!

Jennifer Vacanti
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Here is a list to bring to camp:

Both warm/cool changes of clothing-(may get wet and muddy)

At least 2 pair of sturdy shoes/1 pair pool or shower sandals

Towels and wash cloths

Flashlight

Suntan lotion/bug spray

Personal items (Toiletries-w bag or basket to keep in)

Rain gear

Sleeping bag, sheet and pillow -sleep on single beds

Labeled water bottle-(save on cups-environmentally friendly and keep your child hydrated)

Prescription medication if needed

Comfort items

Optional but useful:

Fan
Camera
water gun/ free time games
Something to put dirty clothes in
clock
extension cord
chair to sit and relax outside
night light

Do not bring:

Small appliances

TV's (unless your child need this to soothe them)

Cabins are heated- each family will have their own cabin with bathroom. Shower facilities are in another close building.