

## **Cavett Kids Foundation**

The mission of Cavett Kids Foundation (formerly known as Camp Cavett) is to provide a forum of support through various camps, events, and retreats for children with life-threatening or chronic illnesses, and to promote character, coping skills, and wellness. Under the umbrella of Cavett Kids Foundation, four very different camps are available. In addition, kids are invited to participate in trips to the zoo, museums, sports events, and outings to go fishing or to the movies.

The largest camp, known as Camp Cavett Summer Camp, takes place each July near Lake Texoma. Here, 160 kids from all walks of life enjoy five days of fun in the sun. Though they have many different types of illnesses — cancer, heart disease, kidney disease, GI disorders, sickle-cell, and lung disease are among the most common — together they learn coping skills and benefit from sharing life experiences with one another.

In cooperation with the Oklahoma Children's Cancer Association (OCCA), Camp Cavett sponsors OCCA Ski Camp for kids disabled by cancer, either through amputation or by involvement of muscle tissue. Each April, they receive special instruction and equipment for four days in Winter Park, Colorado, one of the world's largest programs for disabled skiers. The children learn from one another and are challenged to overcome their disabilities.

Camp Wildfire is a weekend retreat for children with Spina Bifida. The camp takes place at a facility near Guthrie, Oklahoma. Spina Bifida affects many areas of function for a person. Therefore, this camp requires more staff support than any other at Camp Cavett.

Kamp Kidney is designed for kids who have been diagnosed with End Stage Renal Disease and are either on dialysis or have had a kidney transplant. This camp provides each child the opportunity to meet others who share the problems of diet and fluid restriction and other aspects of a chronic disease. Camp Cavett's is the oldest kidney camp in the nation.

One benefit of the camp setting is that it provides an informal forum for dialogue among kids and medical personnel. Fun, non-threatening settings can help children develop friendship and trust with physicians, nurses and hospital staff. they build understanding about their disease processes; they learn interpersonal skills and self-care; and they identify action steps to deal with their social needs. Character, increased self-esteem and self-confidence are the results of the education process entwined in camp activities. When campers return home, they are empowered to manage their diseases and their lives, more completely.