



Childcare Parent Handbook

Table of Contents

Our Mission	2
About FOCUS	3
COVID Safety Procedures	3
About FOCUS Programs	4
Eligibility for Programs	4
Our Staff and Volunteers	5
Program Schedules	5
Program Hours & Late Pick up Policy	6
Child Drop Off & Pick Up	6
Transport Policy	6
What to Pack	7
Program Registration	8
Camp Payments & ESS Respite Donations	8
Refund Policy for Camps	8
Behavior	9
Toileting	9
Food Allergies	9
Medications	10
Seizure Management Plan	10
Child Illness Policy	11
Medical Emergency	11
Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting	12
Licensing Understanding	12
How to Contact FOCUS Staff	12

Our Mission

At FOCUS, our mission is to embrace and equip families of children with disabilities to make everyday life better.

FOCUS understands and supports the unique needs of families with children who are medically fragile or have significant developmental or physical disabilities. We offer comfort, hope, and information to parents; accessible recreational and social programs for children and teens; prescribed medical equipment for medically fragile children not covered by insurance or Medicaid; and fun, inclusive activities for the entire family. A non-profit founded by parents in 1983, FOCUS continues to embrace and strengthen Georgia families.

About FOCUS

FOCUS is here to help families of children who are medically fragile or have significant developmental and/or physical disabilities. We comfort with hospital visits and support groups, offer hope through information and education, create fun activities for parents and kids, and provide equipment to children in need.

FOCUS began in 1983 when two medically fragile children shared a hospital room. These children had no specific diagnosis, and their parents could not find a support group. They became friends after that hospitalization and, in each other, found comfort, information, and hope. Together they founded FOCUS to help families cope with the overwhelming struggles of parenting a child with special needs. Through the years, FOCUS developed innovative programs for families of children with all kinds of developmental and physical disabilities. In 2017, FOCUS and the Fragile Kids Foundation merged, adding the mission of providing equipment our kids need for everyday life. FOCUS + Fragile Kids now serves 4,500 families, offering free support groups and parent training; sliding scale scholarships for adapted camps and recreational activities; and grants and loans for needed medical equipment.

COVID Safety Procedures

FOCUS takes the safety of its programs seriously and understands the need to follow safety protocols due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Below is a non-exhaustive list of the procedures that FOCUS will follow in 2021 to prevent the spread of disease, specifically COVID-19, and to keep campers safe.

- Parents, staff, and volunteers should monitor for any COVID-19 symptoms in the two weeks leading up to the start of arriving to camp for the first day. If an individual shows symptoms of COVID-19 within 10 days of them being at camp, the parents of the camper should alert FOCUS staff (email cesar@focus-ga.org) and have a PCR test for COVID performed if they would like to attend their week of camp.
- FOCUS staff will take temperatures of all who arrive at the program for the day, including themselves. If anyone arriving at camp registers a temperature of 100.4 or above, the individual should return home and take a rapid COVID test if they would like to return to camp later in the week. Campers will not be permitted to return to camp until their symptoms have passed, regardless of the result of their COVID test.
- Campers who begin to show symptoms of COVID-19 during the camp day will need to be picked up from camp immediately. Parents will be asked to have an antigen (rapid) test performed for COVID so that the remainder of the camper's group can either proceed normally with the week of camp or can be sent home in the case of a positive result. In the event of a positive result, the remainder of the camper group and staff will need to go into isolation in accordance with CDC guidelines. This policy may be updated if CDC issues further guidance regarding those who have been fully vaccinated and their potential to asymptotically spread COVID-19.
- Masks should be worn over the mouth and nose of all who are able to wear them in order to try and prevent any spread of COVID-19. FOCUS understands that not all our campers are able to wear masks for a number of reasons and it will not be a requirement to attend camp. However, we do encourage mask wearing, especially for those who have not been vaccinated against COVID-19.
- Camper groups will not perform activities together, including lunch times, large music sessions, and others that have been a regular part of camp. Campers will be escorted to their starting classrooms for every day of camp and when parents arrive for pick-up, they will be escorted from their final activity of the day to the pick-up area with their parents.
- Parents, staff, and volunteers will be expected to contact FOCUS staff if they begin to show symptoms of COVID-19 and/or test positive for the disease. FOCUS will contact trace to the best of its ability to make sure that everyone has the information they need to make appropriate decisions for their safety.
- FOCUS will continue to update our COVID safety procedures based on guidance from the CDC and Georgia DPH as we plan programs for 2021.

About FOCUS Programs

At Camp Hollywood, we want all children to feel like stars! Campers enjoy a week of fun, indoor activities based on the themes of popular children's movies. Activities include Art, Cooks with Books, Science and Cinema, Recreation, and Music.

- Campers may register for one week of Camp Hollywood.
- Campers travel in groups of up to eight campers.
- Camp Hollywood is offered in various locations around Metro Atlanta (different and fewer locations in 2021 due to COVID safety measures):
 - Lawrenceville –McKendree United Methodist Church, 1570 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road, 30043
 - Marietta – East Cobb United Methodist Church, 2325 Roswell Rd, Marietta, GA 30062
 - Decatur – Oak Grove United Methodist Church, 1722 Oak Grove Rd, Decatur, GA 30033
 - Peachtree City –First Baptist Church of Peachtree City, 225 Willowbend Road, 30269

Camp Team is a four-day camp where “Together Everyone Achieves More.” Campers participate in sports based recreational opportunities, with a blend of indoor and outdoor activities. Activities include sports skill building, relays, music, team-building games, and swimming. Camp Team takes place Mercer University's Atlanta Campus (3001 Mercer University Drive, Atlanta, 30341).

Extra Special Saturday Respite provides 4 hours of fun for children and gives parents the opportunity to take a break, run errands, or relax. Locations vary season to season.

Eligibility for Programs

If your child hasn't attended a childcare program with FOCUS before (or it has been a few years), we'll contact you after you register and complete the application. We'll ask you a few questions regarding your child's care, medical needs, and behavioral issues. After a discussion with you, we'll determine whether we can safely care for your child in our programs. We strive to accommodate as many children as possible but need to ensure that we can do that safely in a group setting. First, we'll list the eligibility guidelines for all childcare programs, and then we'll list guidelines specific to each program.

All Childcare (Camp Hollywood, Camp TEAM, and Extra Special Saturday Respite):

- Your child must be willing to stay with a group and function in a 1:4 caregiver to child ratio.
- Your child must have no aggressive or threatening behaviors to self or other individuals.
- Your child must have no recent instances of elopement or wandering away.
- Your child must consistently respond to words of caution and simple verbal directions.

Camp Hollywood

- Campers must be between 5-21 years old and 14-29 for Teen & Young Adult week.
- Campers must attend to an activity for at least 10 minutes.

Camp TEAM:

- Campers must be between 7-14 years old.
- Campers must attend to an activity for at least 20 minutes.

Extra Special Saturday Respite:

- Your child must be 12 or younger. Siblings ages 1 to 12 are also welcome.

Our Staff and Volunteers

Our day camp staff members are a great team of paraprofessionals, special education teachers, and other qualified professionals who have experience working with our wonderful kiddos. Many of our staff members have worked with FOCUS for over 15 years! All are at least 18 years old. They have positive reference screening, successful background checks, and appropriate FOCUS training.

Our volunteers are community members who are excited to give their time to FOCUS and your child! Volunteers are at least 13 years old. All have received FOCUS training, and those 18 & older have completed a background check.

FOCUS trains all staff & volunteers to meet its childcare policies, designed to provide the highest level of care. These policies include confidentiality, universal precautions, abuse prevention, and appropriate behavior management. In addition, FOCUS childcare strongly adheres to the “three person rule,” which states that staff and volunteers must always have at least one other adult present when with a child.

Program Schedules

Program schedule is subject to change for summer 2021 with no opening/closing music or performance on Friday for parents and families.

We pack our programs with fun! We divide children into groups by age, and each group’s schedule will vary slightly. Here are some sample schedules:

Camp Hollywood	
10:00-10:15	Drop off & Opening Music
10:15-11:00	Cooks with Books
11:00-11:45	Art
11:45-12:30	Lunch
12:30-1:15	Recreation
1:15-2:00	Music
2:00-2:45	Science & Cinema
2:45-3:00	Pick up & Closing Music

Camp Team	
10:00-10:30	Drop off & Warm Up Exercises
10:30-11:00	Obstacle Course & Relay
11:00-11:30	Bathroom & Snack Break
11:30-12:00	Tee Ball & Tossing Games
12:00-12:30	Music
12:30-1:00	Lunch
1:00-1:45	Zumba
1:45-2:00	Bathroom Break & Change
2:00-2:45	Swimming (Wed & Thurs only)
2:45-3:00	Pick up

ESS Respite	
10:00-10:30	Drop off & Check in
10:30-12:00	Playtime
12:00-12:30	Bathroom & Wash Hands
12:30-1:00	Lunch
1:00-2:00	Music
2:00	Pick up

*****DON’T FORGET!!!***** At camp, Friday’s schedule is a little different! **Each week, campers entertain us with an end-of-week performance at 2:00 pm on Friday. We invite all parents, caregivers, and family members to come and enjoy the show. You must pick up your camper by 2:30 pm on Friday at both Camp Hollywood and Camp TEAM.**

Program Hours and Late Pick Up Policy

Please be considerate of our staff at program drop off and pick up times. If you know you are running late, you should contact the FOCUS program staff with your anticipated time of pickup. We understand traffic can be challenging and emergencies arise. We will give parents one 15-minute grace period and then \$1.00 for every minute after.

- Camp hours are 10:00 am to 3:00 pm Monday-Thursday and 10:00 am to 2:30 pm on Friday. You'll need to pay late fees before drop off the next day so that your child can continue with the program.
- Respite hours are 10:00 am to 2:00 pm on Saturdays. You'll need to pay late fees before the next program so that your child can continue to participate.

If, for some reason, you don't pick up your child within 15 minutes of a program's close and we don't hear from you, we'll call all phone numbers we have on file as emergency contacts. If we can't reach anyone at those numbers, we will notify the Program Director and Executive Director to determine the appropriate next step. Depending on how much time has elapsed, we may need to call police and/or social services to keep your child in a protected environment.

Child Drop Off & Pick Up

Child drop off Please don't arrive early, as we are usually busy preparing for the day. Each morning, you (or your caregiver) should walk your child into the facility and initial the attendance roster with the FOCUS staff at the front desk. Staff may then ask questions or share important information to provide the safest possible drop off each morning.

On the first day of camp, please plan on spending up to 30 minutes checking your camper in and talking with staff. We want to give you the opportunity to meet with the nurse, toileting attendants, and your child's counselor, and we need to have a complete understanding of your child's care. The lines can sometimes be long on Monday, and we thank you for your patience!

Child pick up For the safety and security of our children, FOCUS staff will only release your child to an adult listed as an "Authorized Pick up" on your child's application. If you need to make any changes to your child's Authorized Pick Up List, please contact the FOCUS office at 770-234-9111.

Please plan to walk into the facility to pick up your child. Check out with a FOCUS staff member as you leave, and initial the attendance roster. Please watch to be sure that no other children follow you out. We may ask for your photo ID to confirm you are on the authorized pick up list.

Due to COVID-19 precautions, drop off and pick up procedures may look slightly different depending on you location of camp. Parents will be asked to distance from each other while waiting and may be asked to wait outside/in cars so that indoor space is not overcrowded.

Transport Policy

Our insurance contracts don't permit volunteers and employees, including management and caregivers, to leave the camp facility with a child, even in the case of emergency. Should your child need to leave the program for any reason, we'll contact the parent/guardian first, and then other adults listed on the application as approved emergency contacts and authorized pick up individuals. If we are unable to reach an approved adult, we'll notify FOCUS management to determine the appropriate next step.

What to Pack

Our programs are busy and focus on maximizing fun! To help us keep track of your child's items please label everything clearly.

Clothing: Your child should wear comfortable clothing that you don't mind getting messy. For Camp Team, we recommend tennis shoes.

Lunch: All children need a lunch and a drink.

- **Please note that we don't have access to a refrigerator or a microwave, so plan to use ice packs or thermos containers to keep your child's food cold or hot.**
- **Please label lunches on the outside of the lunchbox.**
- **Our programs are peanut-free. Please DON'T PACK PEANUT BUTTER OR OTHER NUT PRODUCTS in your child's lunch. If you have any allergy or dietary concerns, please talk with the FOCUS staff.**

Snack:

- **At Camp Hollywood, we provide a snack each day during our Cooks with Books activity. We'll let you know the ingredients of each day's snack before camp begins. If your child has dietary restrictions to a particular day's planned snack, we encourage you to pack an alternative (no peanuts, please!).**
- **For Camp Team, in addition to a lunch, you'll need to pack a snack each day for your camper to eat during our mid-morning break. Please label and pack the snack separately from lunch since we often take our snacks outside to eat.**

Other Items:

- **Extra clothes**
- **Diapers**
- **Wipes**
- **A water bottle**
- **Sunscreen (Camp Team only)**
- **All emergency medications and medical equipment/supplies that may be needed**
- **Any medications to be given during program in their original bottles**

Swim Supplies (Camp Team only): Swimming sessions will be on Wednesday or Thursday afternoons of Camp Team, the last activity of the day. Please pack the following for your child to swim:

- **Bicycle shorts (the facility requires all campers to wear these in addition to a swim suit to prevent accidental leakage)**
- **Swim suit**
- **Floatation and other swim gear**
- **Pool towel**
- **Swim diaper (if applicable)**
- **Goggles, ear plugs, etc. (optional)**

Please do not send iPads, iPhones, DVD players, or other electronics with your child, unless they use them as a communication device. If you believe your child may benefit from having an electronic device for distraction, redirection, downtime, or reward, please contact cesar@focus-ga.org or 770-234-9111 before sending it.

Program Registration

You can register your child for respite or camp through our online registration system. To request a paper application, please contact the FOCUS office at 770-234-9111 or cesar@focus-ga.org. Once you register, a FOCUS staff member will contact you about the next steps.

We will use the information that you provide in these registration forms to care for your child during the chosen program; please be sure to complete these forms as completely and thoroughly as possible. As each program begins, FOCUS staff will ask you look over your child's forms for accuracy, initialing and dating them as your approval. To update your child's information prior to the program, please contact us the FOCUS office at 770-234-9111 or cesar@focus-ga.org.

Camp Payments & Extra Special Saturday Respite Donations

Camp Fees:

- Camp Hollywood fees are \$175 for the first child, \$150 for each additional child.
- Camp Team fees are \$200 for the first child, \$180 for each additional child.
- A \$50 deposit (included in camp fees) is due at registration to confirm your camper's spot.
- All payments for camp are due by May 1.

Waivers & 3rd Party Payments: FOCUS accepts waiver payments and funding from 3rd parties to pay for camp fees. Families using this form of payment for camp can make a full deposit payment (\$175) to hold their camper's spot. Families also have the option of making a partial (\$50) deposit towards their camper's spot with the remainder of the deposit (\$125) due prior to the deadline (May 1st). These deposits will be fully refunded once FOCUS receives payment from the 3rd party funder. For questions regarding our waiver & 3rd party payment process, please contact patty@focus-ga.org or 770-234-9111.

Scholarships: FOCUS offers partial scholarships to camper families that need assistance in covering camp fees. If your family makes less than \$50,000 a year or has special circumstances (lengthy hospitalizations, loss of job, several dependents, etc.), you may be eligible for some scholarship funding. Please note that the nonrefundable \$50 deposit is due for all campers, including those with scholarships. To apply for a scholarship, please complete your camper's registration and check the appropriate scholarship payment option. You will then be emailed a link to a scholarship application, which requires information about your family's income, any special circumstances, and supporting income documentation (1040, SSI letter, etc.). Once we have your deposit and income documentation, we'll process your scholarship request, letting you know what your remaining fee is, if any.

Extra Special Saturday Respite Childcare Donations

We don't charge any fees at Extra Special Saturday respite childcare. We are happy to accept donations of any amount. Most parents choose to give about \$5 for each child they have at respite.

Refund Policy for Camps

Every child's camp fee includes a \$50 nonrefundable deposit. If you cancel camp registration at least two weeks prior to the camp start date, FOCUS will refund your total camp fee, minus the \$50 deposit. After that time, FOCUS will have already hired staff and purchased supplies, so we cannot offer a refund.

Behavior

FOCUS serves a variety of children with disabilities. We strive to provide an opportunity for parents to relax, knowing their children are safe while having fun. We operate on a 1:4 caregiver to child ratio for all childcare programs. Unfortunately, we don't have the resources to provide one to one attention for any reason – either medical or behavioral.

The safety and well-being of everyone involved is our first priority, and we use positive behavior reinforcement to achieve it. We like to use praise all the time and redirection only when necessary. If your child is clearly unhappy at the program or has behavior issues that are aggressive, unsafe, or disruptive, the on-site FOCUS staff will use positive behavior management strategies. If we are unable to manage the behavior, we'll ask you to share additional strategies that may have been helpful at home or school. Depending on the nature of the behaviors, we'll implement the discussed strategies for a while.

If your child continues to be unhappy or exhibits behavior that is unsafe or disruptive, we will ask that you come and take him or her home. Please understand that our resources are limited, and we must keep the environment stress-free and safe for other children and staff. Unlike the school year where a child has a few weeks to settle in and adjust to the new environment, we only have a day or two to navigate success in our short program. It's tricky! It could be that our particular camp is just not a good fit at this particular time. If we cannot accommodate your child after implementing your suggested strategies, FOCUS will issue a refund to you.

Toileting

We will change or help toilet campers that require assistance at least once during the day, usually around lunch. FOCUS staff members use universal precautions when assisting with toileting or encountering any bodily fluids during camper care.

If your child asks to use the bathroom, two FOCUS staff members will accompany him or her to the toilet. We will do our best to accommodate your child's toileting and requested toileting schedule. Because we require two staff members to be involved with toileting, hourly requests are difficult to honor. Please send extra pull-ups and clothes – just in case.

For children over 70 pounds who need total assistance with toileting, we encourage you to apply, but to call FOCUS after you apply to discuss the safest way to toilet your child. We don't have lifts at programs but will try to accommodate your child's needs. If we can't manage your child's toileting, we'll refund your deposit.

Food Allergies

To ensure the safety of all our campers, we are a peanut-free program. Please don't pack peanut butter or other nut products in your child's lunch or snacks.

We will not give children any food items, unless reviewed first by a parent or caregiver. If we are providing food during the program, we will ask that you review the items and note what your child can/cannot eat. If your child cannot eat a snack we are providing, we encourage you to send an alternative. Please list all food allergies, sensitivities, and reactions on your child's application. Should your child have an allergic reaction, we will notify the parent/ guardian immediately. If your child requires an Epi-pen while at a FOCUS program, please fill out a medication administration form. We will follow directions on the form if an adverse reaction occurs.

Medications

All FOCUS childcare programs will have a licensed nurse onsite. Please give medications to be administered at the program to the nurse each day. Medications must be in the *original prescription bottle* with accurate information on the label. If your camper requires any over-the-counter medication while in our care, you should give it to the nurse in an original bottle as well. During registration, the nurse will work with you to complete a medical administration record, outlining all medications to be administered at camp. Thanks for your patience with this process!

You should drop off your child's medication in its original bottle(s) with the nurse each morning and retrieve the medication from the nurse each afternoon at pick up as we don't have a secure area to lock up medications. *Please don't leave medications in your child's bag at the facility.*

If a child requires a gastric tube feeding, catheterization, or other medical treatment, you should bring all equipment and supplies necessary. Please allow time to discuss all treatments and medications with the nurse upon arrival.

FOCUS will provide basic first-aid supplies during programs, including band aids, antibiotic ointment, and hydrocortisone cream. If your child needs medical care beyond what we are able to provide, we'll call you.

Seizure Management Plan

In the event of seizure activity, FOCUS caregivers will alert the onsite nurse or medical caregiver. If your child has a history of seizure activity, FOCUS will follow the protocol of the physician and/or family found in the application on file regarding management and administration of medication. If seizure activity is prolonged, we'll try to notify you and call "911" immediately. If the emergency responders arrive before you do, a FOCUS staff member will follow the ambulance to the hospital and meet you there.

If the FOCUS nurse administers Diastat to your child, and you are on site, you may decline EMS transport. We'll release your child to your care. *If we've given Diastat to your child, you must take them home, as we aren't able to provide the necessary one-on-one nursing care to monitor vital signs for an extended time.*

We'll call 911 if:

- This is a first seizure or we're unaware of a seizure disorder
- We administer Diastat or another emergency medication.
- A prolonged seizure occurs (typically longer than 5 minutes).
- Repeated seizures occur and the child doesn't regain consciousness
- Injury or breathing difficulties occur or breathing stops.

Child Illness Policy

FOCUS serves many children at our programs, including children who are medically fragile. For the protection of all participants, please don't send your child to a program if he or she:

- Has a fever (over 100 degrees)
- Has diarrhea (more frequent and less formed than usual, contains blood or mucus, or is not contained)
- Has vomited
- Has an undiagnosed rash
- Has eye discharge or pink eye
- Has strep throat, scarlet fever
- Has an open or draining wound
- Has severe coughing

- Has chickenpox
- Has scabies, head lice, or an infestation of any kind
- Is irritable, continuously crying, or requiring one to one attention
- Does not feel well enough to participate in all group activities, both inside and outside
- *Has been exposed to an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19*
- *Is in the same household as someone who is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19*

Any child who develops any of the above symptoms cannot stay with his or her group. We'll call you to pick up your child within the hour. Meanwhile, we'll care for your child in an area away from other children until you or your authorized pickup person arrives.

To return to childcare, children must be symptom free and on antibiotics, if prescribed, for 24 hours. If your child had a reportable communicable disease, be sure and bring a physician's note stating that the child's condition is no longer contagious and that returning to childcare is safe. Please contact the camp director before returning, or you may call 770-234-9111 or email cesar@focus-ga.org.

In order to keep our children healthy, we'll notify you when your child has been exposed to any kind of communicable disease or condition, such as strep throat, pink eye, lice, fifth's disease, or flu. Likewise, please let us know if your child has any contagious condition.

If your child exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 while at the program, FOCUS will require a negative test in order to return to camp later in the week. FOCUS will ask, though not require, that you have your child tested so that other families in your child's group can be informed and contact tracing can be done. Any campers in a group that experience symptoms of COVID-19 will not be able to return to camp for the remainder of the week, unless a negative test for COVID is received. This policy may be subject to change based on the immunization status of campers, staff, volunteers, and guidance provided by the CDC and Georgia DPH regarding those who have been vaccinated.

Medical Emergency

Should a child need emergency transport to the hospital, FOCUS staff will call you and "911" immediately. If the emergency responders arrive before you do, a FOCUS staff member will follow the ambulance to the hospital and meet you there.

Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting

FOCUS staff, day camp staff, respite staff, and all volunteers over the age of 18 years old are *mandated reporters*. A mandated reporter is a person that is legally obligated to report suspected child abuse or neglect to government agencies or child protective services. All FOCUS staff knows how to identify signs of abuse.

Licensing Understanding

The State of Georgia does not require FOCUS childcare programs to be licensed as childcare centers because of their short duration. Instead, FOCUS maintains an exemption listing for each of its programs on the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning(DECAL)/Bright from the Start database. Personnel from DECAL occasionally visit our programs to be sure we are complying with the terms of our exemption. In so far as possible, we try to meet licensing criteria. We also host our programs in facilities that meet local building, zoning, and fire requirements.

How to Contact FOCUS Staff

Should you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact FOCUS staff:

FOCUS office		770-234-9111, inquiry@focus-ga.org
Cesar Munive	Program Coordinator	470-610-0829, cesar@focus-ga.org
Brian Darden	Program Director	470-579-5871, brian@focus-ga.org