

Making Memories for a Lifetime!

“It was awesome!” That’s how Patrick, an 8-year old hemophilia camper, described his first summer camp experience during Boggy Creek’s Bleeding Disorder session. Patrick and his family attended their first Family Retreat program in October of 2009 and, understandably, his Mom, Jennifer, had some concern that Patrick’s one-week stay might make him a little homesick. However, his arrival home was filled with exciting stories of new friendships, fun activities, and lessons that will last him a lifetime!



Hemophilia is a bleeding disorder that affects mostly boys. They are missing an important protein (Factor) in their blood that aids in clotting and, thus, controls bleeding. Although girls are mostly carriers, their genetics allow them to produce a sufficient quantity of Factor to avoid the affects of hemophilia. Volunteer Nurse Lynn, shares “A chain of events has to happen for a clot to form, the missing protein is like missing one of those steps. Children with hemophilia will not bleed faster or more, but they will bleed longer.”

Because of the care that this illness requires, children with hemophilia do not generally participate in activities where the possibility of bleeding may occur. “No other camp can take a boy with a bleeding disorder and let him climb a tower and come down a zip line,” adds Nurse Lynn. Although Patrick has a few years before he can challenge the Tower, he is still able to enjoy so many activities that normally would not be available to him.



At Camp Boggy Creek, children diagnosed with severe hemophilia, like Patrick, are not only able to participate in all the camp activities that “normal” children can, they also have the opportunity to attend classes where they learn how to self-infuse their own Factor. During scheduled rest-time, campers may sign up for self-infusion classes taught by Hemophilia Nurses Natalie and Mary Ann in the Patch, Camp Boggy

Creek’s medical facility. The lessons are overseen by volunteer physicians who also happily serve as test subjects! Patrick’s Mom knew of the classes and encouraged him to attend (if he wanted). “When he got home, he was so excited to share how he did a self-infusion for the first time,” Jennifer shared. Because Patrick has severe hemophilia, he must infuse three times a week. “These classes provide the children with more than just a lesson on self infusion, it

allows each child to become empowered and take control of his or her illness,” states Nurse Natalie.



Patrick starts 2nd grade in a few weeks and when he arrives at school on the first day, most won't notice the changes that he has undergone. However, some will detect an unmistakable optimism and confidence that was carefully nurtured and fostered during his week at Camp Boggy Creek and will remain forever. If you would like to help children like Patrick attend the life-changing programs at Camp Boggy Creek, [please click here](#). Your gift gives more than a week of camp; it gives a seriously ill child a lifetime of love. Thank you!