

## **Explorations/Transitions Summer FAQs**

### **Do I have to sign up for the full 6 weeks?**

Yes, participation in the full 6-week summer session is mandatory. Consistency is crucial to the success of our participants. We are a skills-based program that succeeds by creating a sense of group belonging and fostering connections between peers. If participants come and go, it greatly impacts the success of the program, group process, and individual progress.

### **What is the participant-to-staff ratio?**

Our participants are placed into smaller groups, typically including six peer-aged participants. Each group is supported directly by two Aspire staff. We also have leadership staff running activities or accompanying groups into the community, ensuring that we always have a participant-to-staff ratio that is at least 3:1.

### **What level of education and training does the staff have?**

Many of our summer staff have post-secondary education and/or training in such areas as mental health, special education, speech and language, and occupational therapy. All staff take part in more than 40 hours of intensive pre-program training and orientation, as well as on-going professional development and individualized supervision throughout the summer.

### **Are electronics or other personal items allowed during programming?**

Yes, electronics are allowed, but may be distracting or socially detrimental in some settings. Navigating technology use in an appropriate and responsible way is a goal that we hope to support during the summer. Phones are also important tools in the community and may be used effectively to support groups in activities (like researching recipes for a cooking block or estimating the travel time of a field trip). If technology use becomes problematic, staff will coordinate with families and plan supports collaboratively.