

Words of Wisdom
Advice shared by Parents
Recreation

- 1) *How does your child find recreation and Leisure opportunities in your community?*
- 2) *How have you supported his/her participation in these activities?*

WOW Response 1

Our family has found the local community pool to be a great place for relaxation and fun. We feel very comfortable there among the community while the water cools our bodies. Being in the pool also serves a dual purpose. The water is a great medium for physical and occupational therapy and stimulates the senses as well as providing an inclusive environment.

Through an annual membership to the pool and through swim lessons, our children have benefited from the activities that the pool has to offer. It is a great place for kids to practice social skills with strangers and friends alike. Our kids have learned how to make simple requests at the concession stand and how to use small change properly. They manage their time, learn proper skin care, follow directions appropriately, and take responsibility for their wet clothes upon returning home.

All around, our community pool has provided a well-rounded learning experience for all.

Cindy Dollinger

WOW Response 2

We are a family with three special needs kids comprised of two with autism and one of whom has heart problems and behavior issues. Our youngest has a seizure disorder. The choices we make for recreation must be simple ones that involve no direct contact sports, no bright strobe lights, loud frightening noises, etc.

We are fortunate to live in South Park, and we live 1/4 mile away from the actual county park of South Park. We spend a lot of time there allowing the kids to use the playgrounds and just enjoy nature. We have also put up a swing set with a special needs swing which greatly helps with the sensory issues.

Definitely you need to "think outside of the box" when you have kids like ours, but we are usually willing to try anything to let them have a good time. Vinnie, our oldest is a Make-A-Wish kid who actually went to Disney World when he was 3 1/2. He is now 10. We drove from PA to FLA, not so much fun..... but an experience we would not have changed.

Everyone deserves to enjoy life to the fullest of their potential. We believe that what we do to help our kids relax and enjoy themselves today will give them a better outlook on tomorrow.

Cathy Ferrelli