

STORY COUNTY SUMMER CAMPS/PROGRAMS WITH FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE OPTIONS

United Way of Story County and our educational collaboration, Story County Reads, believe that every child should have the opportunity to attend summer camp. Summer programs are a great way of promoting social interaction and well-being. Plus, they enhance school-year learning.

We are happy to share this list of local summer camps that offer financial assistance. The majority of these organizations participated in the 2025 Summer Camp Fair; a few are partners or collaborators that could not attend but offer free/low-cost programs. Note: this information comes from organization websites and/or leaders. **Don't be shy - reach out and apply!**

2025 SUMMER CAMP FAIR PARTICIPANTS:

Adventures Preschool - www.adventurespreschool.org/summer-camp

1-week summer camps available in June. **How to apply for financial assistance?** Financial aid can be requested on the enrollment request submitted online via our website (www.adventurespreschool.org). Families can also email info@adventurespreschool.org to request scholarship funds. (Note: We offer a 25% scholarship and will have additional funds available if needed. The 25% scholarship is \$32.50 per week.) For questions, call 515-292-1736.

All Aboard For Kids (camps for kids with autism and others) - allaboardforkids.com/registration

At All Aboard for Kids, we work hard to ensure that registration fees don't prevent families in need from accessing our services. While tuition can't be waived entirely, our intent is to work with families to make it affordable and we do everything we can to keep costs as low as possible for any family qualifying for assistance. **How to apply for financial assistance?** There is space on the All Aboard for Kids Summer 2025 online registration form for applicants to indicate their interest in tuition assistance and provide the required information. Registration for Summer 2025 opens in mid-March. Please reach out to Lisa McCarty at 515-290-5349 with questions.

ACPC Summer Camps - www.acpc-childcare.org/

Summer day camp for K-5th graders, 7 am – 6 pm. Sliding fee scale assistance available. For more information, call Jessica at 515-231-2901.

Ames Parks and Recreation - 515-239-5350

City of Ames offers scholarships for many of its youth recreation programs (including for basketball, golf, swim lessons & passes) for those with financial need. *Scholarship Program:* Each Youth receives scholarship assistance up to \$60 each calendar year. Each Youth pays 50% of the program registration fee while the remaining 50% (not to exceed \$60 per calendar year) of the program registration fee is forgiven through the scholarship. **How to apply for financial assistance?** Contact MICA at 515-956-3333. A new form must be completed by MICA staff each calendar year and turned in to the Community Center with registration and payment. *Important criteria:* Recipient must be a resident of the City of Ames. Elementary school age youth (up to age 13) are eligible. Family income must coincide guidelines as predetermined by MICA. To register, the head of household must submit their portion of the activity registration fee and MICA "Certification Form."

Camp Fire Heart of Iowa - www.campfire.org

Summer day camps and overnight camps (K-5 and 6-8 graders) **How to apply for financial assistance?** Families can apply by registering online at www.campfireiowa.campbrainregistration.com and selecting 'Tier A' for any program. This will prompt them to complete a short information form. Once paperwork is submitted, Camp Fire staff will confirm what level of assistance they qualify for. Note: For typical day/overnight programming, the lowest tier rate is 50% off. Some programs, like Camp Brave, have further reduced pricing for specific populations. Call 515-274-1501 for assistance or questions.

Camp Wesley Woods – www.wesleywoodsiowa.org OR www.iaumc.org

The Iowa United Methodist Board of Camp and Retreat Ministries feels strongly that everyone who wants to attend camp can do so, and that no camper will be turned away because they can't afford to pay. Our expectation is that your local church, personal funds, other sources of support, and conference campership support will combine to cover the registration cost for one conference camping event per year. **How to apply for financial assistance?** Visit www.iaumc.org/files/fileslibrary/camping/campership+application+form+2025.pdf

Cyclone Swim School - www.cycloneswimschool.com

How to apply for financial assistance? Full financial assistance is available if needed. Families can request financial assistance by emailing kaitlyn@cycloneswimschool.com or calling 515-450-8863.

Des Moines Y Camp (YMCA of Greater Des Moines) – www.y-camp.org

How to apply for financial assistance? Tiered pricing (3 tiers) available during registration. Fill out additional financial assistance application if more aid is needed. <https://www.y-camp.org/financial-assistance>

Girl Scout Camp Sacajawea - www.girlscoutsiowa.org

Specific camp information: <https://www.girlscoutsiowa.org/en/members/for-girl-scouts/camp-and-outdoors/summer-resident-camp.html>

How to apply for financial assistance? *Financial Assistance for Camp 2025 will open on April 1, 2025.* After you sign up for camp, make sure to submit your Financial Assistance application to cover a portion of your camp tuition! Assistance is awarded based on need, not income eligibility. Our main concern is getting campers to camp, so if this could make that happen, please apply or reach out to our Camp team with any questions. <https://www.girlscoutsiowa.org/en/members/for-girl-scouts/camp-and-outdoors/camp-financial-assistance-request.html>

Kids CoMotion - www.comotion.org OR www.facebook.com/comotiondance/

Kids CoMotion has scholarships available. Full scholarships are available on a need basis. Families with more than one child attending Kids CoMotion can also choose a sliding scale for payment. **How to apply for financial assistance?** Send an email to vjw@comotion.org.

Prairie Flower Children's Center –

How to apply for financial assistance? Childcare assistance funding is available through Iowa DHS for families meeting DHS requirements (the current income requirement is an annual household income of \$49,920 or less, for a family of four). This requires a separate application through DHS. Please reach out to director@prairieflowercc.org to sign up for camp, if you receive assistance. Learn more at: <https://www.prairieflowercc.org/school-age-summer-camp.html>

Riverside Bible Camp - www.riversidelbc.org/summer-master-schedule

Riverside believes that every kid should be able to enjoy a life-changing week at camp focused on having an incredible amount of fun and getting to hear about and experience the extravagant love of God. To make this possible, we have **several ways to help families get their kids to camp!** **Payment Plans** - Sometimes, making camp a priority isn't a matter of financial impossibility, but paying the whole registration fee at once can be crippling to the family budget. If it is easier for families to budget smaller totals of money to go toward registration for the weeks/months in advance of camp, call our office and we'd be happy to set up manageable

payments over time. **Camperships** - If sending your child/children to camp is a financial hardship, please know that thanks to Riverside's generous partners and donors, we want to help make camp happen for the kids in your life! Here is what we'd like for you to do: 1) Check with your church first - they may already have a fund set aside to support families in the church to send their kids to Camp. 2) As a family, we ask that you prayerfully consider what you could contribute - for instance, can you cover the minimum \$135 deposit? Regardless of the amount, we'd like to work with you if that's a possibility. 3) We can visit with you over the phone (515-733-5271) re: getting the remainder of the camp registration expense taken care of. If you have any questions, if you are ready to set up a payment plan, or to make a plan for campership assistance, please call our Riverside office at 515-733-5271 - we'd be happy to visit with you!

Royal Family Kids Camp - rfkcomes.org

FREE camp for children in foster care. *For the Children Ames* holds a "faith-based five day camp, free of charge, looking to create life-changing moments for our campers and respite for foster parents and guardians."

Story County Conservation - www.storycountyconservation.org / <https://www.storycountyiowa.gov/1002/Nature-Camps>

Story County Conservation has the **Nature Connect program** for Story County residents experiencing financial need. **How to apply for financial assistance?** To receive a 75% discount code, call (515-232-2516) or email (conservation@storycountyiowa.gov), ask for a Nature Connect code, and our office will issue one. There is no application form, but the assistance is only available to Story County residents. Participants will need to get a code prior to registering online for camp. *How it works?* The discount code provides 75% off any fee-based services (camps, programming, camping, shelter reservations) when paying during online registration (www.mycountyparks.com/County/Story/Events). The other 25% is paid by the participant at checkout. So for example a \$65 camp is reduced to \$16.25. The code can be used any number of times throughout the calendar year (Jan 1-Dec 31). The codes do expire Dec 31 and a new code must be requested each calendar year. Please call 515-232-2516 with questions or to request handouts ("Nature Connect Guidelines" and "How To").

Story County Extension and Outreach - www.extension.iastate.edu/story

How to apply for financial assistance? Please contact us at 515-337-1601 or xstory@iastate.edu

Story Theater Company - www.storytheatercompany.org/

We want theater opportunities to be accessible to all. **How to apply for financial assistance?** If a family is interested in scholarship assistance, they can send an email to education@storytheatercompany.org. We will then send over a scholarship application for them to fill out! The maximum amount of assistance Story Theater Company can offer through scholarships is 100% of the registration fee! If anyone has any questions, or would like any additional information, they can contact Morgan Reetz, Education Director, at education@storytheatercompany.org.

The Community Academy - www.thecommunityacademy.org

"Summer Experience" camps (Community Projects + Experiences + Skill-Building) for 5 – 18 year olds. Sliding fee scale dependent on household income (\$20 per week and up). To learn more, go to thecommunityacademy.org/current-programs/ and select "Summer Fee Sliding Scale."

Travel Sparq - www.travelsparq.org

Our mission is to give Central Iowa high schoolers from families experiencing financial difficulties the opportunity to learn through travel! *A very brief overview of our Costa Rica: Culture and Conservation Program:* Eligible students will spend 2 weeks with us in Costa Rica, splitting their time between volunteering at a sea turtle conservation and experiencing different cultural excursions. The pre-trip classes are designed to equip students with the necessary information, skills, and insight for their time in Costa Rica. The post-trip classes are aimed at helping them reflect on their experiences and learn from them, fostering personal growth, cultural understanding, and a perspective shift. **This program is free to eligible families.** Applications for our 2026 trip are now open! Email travelsparq@travesparq.org.

MORE ORGANIZATIONS THAT OFFER FREE OR LOW-COST SUMMER PROGRAMS &/OR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:

Boys & Girls Clubs of Story County – bgcstory.org/clubs/

Offer summer programs at both their Ames and Nevada clubs. These are low-cost, very popular, and fill early. To be added to the waitlist, please contact:
Ames: Emma Smith at 515-388-2025. *Nevada:* Krystil Margetta at 515-233-1872.

Raising Readers – Summer Reading Buddies – www.raising-readers.org/programs/reading-buddies-tutors-k-3

This **FREE** tutoring program is open to K – 3rd graders. Note: Raising Readers also offers STARS and Story Pals programs for 0-5 year olds and their families, free.

Threshold Learning Center (Zearing Area) - <https://www.thresholdlearningcenter.com/summer-programs-and-camps>

Affordable day camps (\$50 for a week of morning or afternoon camp). Also offer overnight camps and adventure trips. Those who need **financial assistance** can reach out to Gretta Reischauer at 641-487-7455 / nclitlc@gmail.com

YSS Summer Enrichment – Ames, Collins, Nevada

FREE camps. Involve field trips, water days, arts & crafts, STEM Activities, and FREE breakfast, snack, and lunch! For more information, email Tanner Koder at tkoder@yss.org.

****Register by April 11 to save your spot.** Collins-Maxwell: <https://forms.gle/xpxBfkwgseqRNHXP6> / Nevada: <https://forms.gle/etUF2vxpVNaER4Wk7> ******

- **Collins-Maxwell's "Li'l Spartans Summer Camp" (for EK – 8th).** June 2 – July 10, Monday thru Thursdays, 8 am – 12:15 pm. At C-M Elementary in Collins.
- **Nevada "Food for Thought" (for EK – 8th).** June 9 – July 17, Monday – Thursday, 8 am – 12:15 pm. At Nevada Middle School.
- **Ames (for K-5)** - The school district selects participants based on test scores. Please contact your principal for information about your child's eligibility.

YSS Summer Kids Club – Ballard, Roland-Story (plus Boone, Ogden, United) – www.yss.org/program/afterschool/

Kids Club summer programs run 6:30 am – 6 pm, Monday-Friday, and include centers, academic enrichment, outdoor play, nutritious food, and community connections. Fees for Kids Club are on a **sliding fee scale based on family size and income**. To determine if you qualify for a discount, you will be asked to submit a copy of your most current income tax form. Learn more and find the registration form at the link above.

Public Libraries

All of our county's libraries offer **FREE** summer reading challenges and lots of other fun activities. Check out their websites or stop in to learn more.

- Ames Public Library (515 Douglas Ave.)
- Bertha Bartlett Public Library (503 Broad St., Story City)
- Collins Public Library (212 Main St.)
- Colo Public Library (309 Main St.)
- Gilbert Public Library (207 Main St.)
- Huxley Public Library (515 N Main Ave.)
- Maxwell Public Library (107 Main St.)
- Nevada Public Library (631 K Ave.)
- Roland Public Library (221 Main St.)
- Slater Public Library (105 N Tama St.)



Learn more about year-round, LOCAL educational programs and resources at:

www.uwstory.org/story-county-reads