

Food Allergies Versus Disabilities Scenarios



A food allergy is a medical condition - Inclusion in all situations.

Scenarios with Jessica

Jessica had an amputation when she was little. She has an artificial leg. She is really looking forward to camp.

- **Scenario 1:** The Guider says: I do not see why you need that fake leg. The other girls don't. You aren't allowed to wear it this weekend. You can come, but I'm taking the leg away from you.
- **Scenario 2:** The Guiders says: You can still come to camp, but you have to sleep in a different room and you are not allowed to do the activities with the other girls because you might slow them down.
- **Scenario 3:** The Guider says: I really wish I did not have to deal with a girl like you. It makes things really hard. The other girls suffer because we have to wait for you.
- **Scenario 4:** The Guider calls the parents and says: Jessica can come to camp, but you have to plan all the activities for her. I am not going to try to make sure there are activities she can do. You are fine with that, right?
- **Scenario 5:** The Guider takes a little extra time, talks to the parents and asks if there are any signs she should watch for. Jessica comes to camp, just like all the other girls.

Scenarios 1 to 4 seem hard to believe.

Scenarios with Becky

Becky is allergic to eggs and nuts. Her parents found out about her allergies when she was a year old. She is really looking forward to camp.

- **Scenario 1:** The Guider says: I do not see why we have to have different food because of you. We always have eggs and toast for breakfast at camp. You can come, but we will still be cooking eggs.
- **Scenario 2:** The Guider says: You can still come to camp, but you are going to have to sit at your own table, and eat at a different time than the other girls because I do not want to have to worry about your allergies and cross-contamination.
- **Scenario 3:** The Guider says: I really wish I did not have to deal with a girl like you. You make things really hard. We cannot even have granola on our hike, which is not fair to the other girls.
- **Scenario 4:** The Guider calls the parents and says: Becky can come to camp, you will have to pay the regular registration fee, and you also need to provide all her own food. Since Becky cannot help with cooking or clean up, the other girls will feel like she is not really part of the group, but you are okay with that right?
- **Scenario 5:** The Guider takes a little extra time, talks to the parents, reviews the menu with them to see if they have any concerns or suggestions and Becky comes to camp just like all the other girls.

The reality is that the first four scenarios for Jessica would not be acceptable at all, yet the first four scenarios for Becky happen all the time.