

## CMS SUPPORTS ZEBRA CROSSINGS!

Zebra Crossings is a non-profit organization, located in Dover, NH, that provides adventure based experiential learning programs for children who have chronic health conditions, such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, and moderate to severe food allergies.

On February 19, 2016 the Diversity Project held a pajama day at CMS and raised \$200 for Zebra Crossings, helping make it possible for kids to be able to participate in programs regardless of their financial situation.

What does Zebra Crossings actually do? If you have ever been on the low and high ropes courses, that is one form of an adventure based experiential learning program. During the year, Zebra Crossings holds various programs once a month...the locations change each month and what they do changes as well.

Besides the ropes course, they go hiking, kayaking, swimming, and frog catching. They learn survival skills and build lean-to's, learn archery, how to cook, do science experiments, meet endangered animals, complete urban scavenger hunts, go sledding and snow shoeing, and find their way through corn mazes!

*Why does Zebra Crossings do these things?*

Think about whether you have felt challenged or nervous on the ropes course. Now imagine that you also have a chronic health condition. In the back of your mind you are worried that your body will have an "episode" of some sort... You are worried that you may physically get hurt, that you are going to have to sit out, again, and watch everyone else have fun. Usually the greatest worry is that all of your classmates are going to see the "episode" and they are going to laugh and make fun of you. Now imagine that this could happen to you at any time of day, doing any activity.

How many of you have ever felt that you are different? That no one else understands? That you are surrounded by people and yet you feel alone? Kids with chronic health conditions often quietly manage their fears and their health, feeling that they are alone and no one understands. At Zebra Crossings, they discover a community that is there to support them. One 13 year old boy was asked "After all these years, why do you still attend Zebra Crossings

programs?” He said: “In middle school, everyone is trying to be someone...at Zebra Crossings, I get to be myself, and that’s all I ever wanted to be.”

To find out more about Zebra Crossings programs, please click on the link below:

<https://www.zebra-crossings.org/>