

FIRST DESCENTS

HEALTHCARE PARTNERS



OUR MISSION

First Descents provides life-changing outdoor adventures for young adults impacted by cancer, MS and other serious health conditions.



IMPACT & OUTCOMES

17%

7%

participants who reported feeling depressed before and after First Descents

81%

reported increased self-efficacy

99%

of participants want to stay involved

100%

of participants reported increased ability to cope with cancer and its effects

In the United States, more than 86,000 adolescents and young adults (AYAs) are diagnosed with cancer each year. Cancer is the leading cause of death in AYAs.

Multiple sclerosis is the most common neuroinflammatory disease affecting AYAs. While MS can present at any age, it is most commonly diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 40.

Cancer and MS present unique challenges to young adults:

- Minimal peer support
- Rare and aggressive tumor biology
- Lack of participation in cancer and MS clinical trials
- Disruptions to normative adolescent and adult milestones
- Higher rates of depression and psychosocial distress in response to serious diagnoses

WHO WE SERVE

YOUNG ADULTS IMPACTED BY CANCER

Participants must have been diagnosed with cancer between the ages of 15-39 and currently be between 18-45.

YOUNG ADULTS IMPACTED BY MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Participants must have been diagnosed with MS between the ages of 15-39 and currently be between 18-45.

MS/ONCOLOGY CAREGIVERS

Participants must currently be between the ages of 18-45 and have cared for an individual who qualifies for our Oncology or MS programs. Eligible individuals may only have ONE caregiver apply for our Programs.

HEALTHCARE WORKERS

Participants must currently be between the ages of 18-45 and work within the healthcare industry serving MS and/or oncology patients.





WHAT WE DO

CORE PROGRAMS

Core Programs are free weeklong whitewater kayaking, rock climbing and surfing adventures in epic destinations around the country. Each program includes lodging, gear, professionally guided instruction, chef-prepared meals, and time to kick back with fellow members of our incredible FD community. Core Programs are available to eligible young adults who have been impacted by cancer and multiple sclerosis, as well as caregivers and healthcare workers in those medical fields.

COMMUNITY ADVENTURES

Part of the Out Living It Project, Community Adventures are outdoor experiences created and facilitated around the country throughout the year by FD alumni and members of the FD community. Everyone is encouraged to participate! There are no age limits or other requirements – just a desire to connect with like-minded people who enjoy getting out there for an afternoon hike, a snowshoe trek or a weekend on a river.

GET INVOLVED

First Descents partners with the medical community to engage healthcare professionals in empowering their patients by referring them to experience community connection and life-changing adventures with FD.

Research shows that our Core Programs improve survivorship, and we're reaching more young adults through our growing network of healthcare professionals than ever before.

Here are a few ways you can Prescribe Adventure:



Refer patients



Order our free materials [HERE](#)



Spread the word in your newsletter, at conferences or AYA events

1,200+

healthcare professionals engaged
through Prescribe Adventure

525+

medical centers and healthcare
organizations referring patients

SCAN TO LEARN MORE



Just a few of the incredible entities with whom we partner:



Memorial Sloan Kettering
Cancer Center



Dana-Farber
Cancer Institute



Brigham Cancer Center

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

MD Anderson
~~Cancer Center~~



**KAISER
PERMANENTE®**

TEXAS ONCOLOGY
More breakthroughs. More victories.®



Health

MOFFITT
CANCER CENTER



UCSF Helen Diller Family
Comprehensive
Cancer Center



Massachusetts General Hospital
Founding Member, Mass General Brigham



Duke Cancer Institute

JUSTICE EQUITY DIVERSITY INCLUSION

OUR COMMITMENT

First Descents operates at the confluence of two industries with significant and systemic inequities: healthcare and outdoor recreation. We believe that everyone deserves to experience the healing power of adventure, so we build and maintain a culture of inclusion among participants, staff and volunteers through our commitment to justice, equity, diversity and inclusion (JEDI).

For young adults impacted by cancer and MS, secondary complications after their diagnosis – including fatigue, vision impairment and mobility concerns – are very common. We strive to make every program as adaptable as possible to each participant's needs. For more information, check out our Adaptability Guide [HERE](#).



TESTIMONIALS

“This past week I was able to really remember who I was, not who cancer made me. I was reminded how strong I am, and I felt alive on the river!”

- Oncology Program Participant

“Because of my MS diagnosis and losing my ability to walk, I feel very excluded from life. When I was invited to this rock climbing program, I thought the most I would be able to do is watch and cheer other participants. However, what happened next took my breath away. I was able to climb! And I was able to climb to the top of the world!”

- MS Program Participant





CONTACT US

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