

Tips for Missing Home

Did you know that everyone misses something about home?

That's right, missing home is completely natural and expected! Usually these feelings are short-lived and will go away as your child gets used to the new environment, but here are some things that you can do BEFORE your child arrives at camp that will help him/her have a more enjoyable experience:

- ◆ Provide an opportunity for your child to see the camp and meet some staff ahead of time. Seeing a familiar face on arrival day who your child knows he/she can go to for help will be a comfort to them once you are not there.
- ◆ Provide an opportunity for your child to stay overnight with an extended family member or friend. Or, allow your child to “camp out” for a night in your backyard, a different room, etc. so he/she is able to experience sleeping and waking up someplace new before coming to camp.
- ◆ Avoid making a “pick-up” deal. Pick-up deals are when you promise in advance to pick your child up if he/she misses home, and they are a tempting response to a question of “what if I miss home?”. These deals usually backfire though, as all kids will miss something about home while they are away, and these deals diminish the camp staff's ability to help your child persevere to have a great rest of his/her time at camp. In most cases, homesickness is short-lived in an otherwise fun week, and most children who leave early come to regret missing out.

*What if I
miss
home?*



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So, what can you say instead??

- ◆ “I’m sure you will miss some things about home.”
- ◆ “Everyone misses home when they’re away. It’s normal but doesn’t mean you can’t also have a great time at camp.”
- ◆ “I believe in you and know you can handle being away from home.”
- ◆ “Remember, you can go to _____ if you need help. She/he will help you if you need him/her.”
- ◆ “It may take some time, but the more you stay busy with activities and make friends, the more comfortable you’ll feel at camp.”
- ◆ “I hope you’ll write to me – I will write back so that we can stay in touch.”

Tips for dropping off on the first day of camp:

- ◆ Let your camper set up his/her bed and cubby area. It may be tempting to set everything up for them, but letting them set it up the way they like will help them to feel more comfortable in their new space.
- ◆ If your camper knows a counselor or staff member, make sure your camper sees that person and says hi to him/her before you leave.
- ◆ Reassure your camper with some of the previously mentioned phrases. Remind them you’ll be able to see pictures throughout their session and can’t wait to see all of the fun activities they’ll be able to try.
- ◆ If you have any tips for your child’s camp counselor to help him/her have the best experience possible, speak with the counselor before you leave.
- ◆ Take comfort in knowing that if your child is homesick and it is interfering with his/her ability to enjoy camp, we will let you know. No news is good news!