

HOMEWOOD CAMP NEWS

Many campers experience homesickness in some way. It is healthy to feel a certain degree of homesickness, because it means that your child is attached to you – this is a very good thing! But we also want our campers to have fun and enjoy the full camp experience. Here are a few things parents can do to set their children up for success leading up to camp.

Homesick Policy:

1. The first person to handle homesickness is the counsellor. They will:
 - Spend one-on-one time with the camper.
 - Attempt to find out what the camper likes to do and try to do it with them.
 - Set short-term goals for the camper to reach.
 - Every effort will be made to have the camper make it through the first night without calling home. The first night is often the most difficult because the camper has not yet become familiar with their surroundings.
2. If homesickness persists, the camper will be brought to a senior staff member. They will:
 - Assist the counsellor with the homesick camper.
 - Free the counsellor up to spend time with his or her other campers.
3. If the camper continues to be upset and still wants to go home, arrangements will be made to contact parents to consult on how to proceed. When parents are contacted, the following steps will be followed:
 - A camp staff member will initiate the call without the child being present.
 - The staff member will brief the parent about the situation.
 - The staff member will ask about any home or medical situation that the parent feels may be contributing to the homesickness.
 - The parent will be invited to leave their child a message if they want him or her to stay at camp and feel it best that they do not speak to their child.
 - The parent will be invited to send the child emails or cards if they think that will help.
 - The parent will be assured that the camp staff will do everything possible to help the child through the situation.
 - **The decision to take the child home or leave them at camp is up to the parent.**
 - Parents must understand that a decision needs to be made quickly and with certainty.
 - If the camper stays, camp staff will call back later in the week to inform the parents how the camper is doing..
4. If a camper is inconsolable, then, in the interest of the homesick camper, other campers and the well-being of camp the parent will be encouraged to pick up their camper as soon as possible. If the parents pick up their child, the program staff will make the following arrangements:
 - Parents will pick up the child in a location apart from the rest of the campers. (Young children are easily influenced by the actions of others and may be tempted to go home too if they see a cabin mate leaving early.)
 - Parents must sign out the camper with the General Director or Office Staff.

Please note: No refund will be given to campers going home early as a result of homesickness.



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