

Today's Kids Is Your Camper Homesick? What Parents Can Do to Help

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Just about now, there's a good chance you've sent one or more of your children off to summer camp. And about this time you may be facing a camper who has gotten homesick.

What can you do to keep your summer camper from feeling homesick? For one thing, make sure your child had a hand in selecting the camp in the first place - the most acute forms of homesickness occur when a child has little desire to go to camp in the first place!

Once you've selected a camp, allow your child to select and pack favorite clothing, books and maga-

zines and items that will make him/her feel comfortable.

Talk about the experience before it starts. Share your own enthusiasm for the camping experience by telling tales of your personal camping adventures and reading camp stories together.

Knowing someone else always helps.

Encourage your child to meet other children who have been at camp.

If your child expresses feelings

of homesickness, both before and after camp starts, acknowledge and discuss those feelings. Be enthusiastic about the exciting new activities and friendships in store for your child — but don't get carried away. Both you and your child should have realistic expectations about the camping experience.

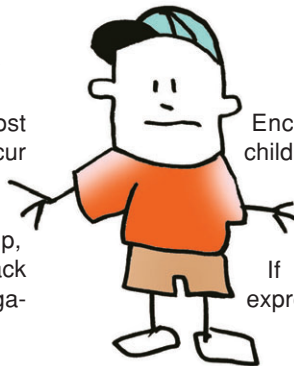
Send frequent communications with news and love from home!

If you anticipate homesickness, try this: Welcome them to camp by sending a letter or fax that's waiting for them when they arrive.

If homesickness occurs, don't react immediately to your child's request to come home. Such feelings are not uncommon and are usually temporary. Encourage your child to discuss their feelings with a camp counselor. They're skilled at helping resolve these issues.

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