

HOMESICKNESS LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Sending your child to camp can be exciting and worry inducing. We are aware this may be first time your child has been away from home, and we want to encourage you! Your child is going to have an amazing time of exploration, opportunity, and personal growth. It is our intent to return your child to you with a new sense of academic wonder, new friendships, increased self-confidence, and awesome camp stories. In order to do so we need your help!

Every week, we anticipate that not only will a few kids get homesick at camp, but every parent will get homesick for their child as well. No matter how fun camp is, homesickness can ruin a child's camp experience. So, use the tips below to prepare yourselves and your child for camp:

1. **NEVER say, "If you feel homesick, I'll come and get you."** This conveys a message of doubt and pity that undermines your child's confidence and independence. Pick-up deals always become mental crutches and self-fulfilling prophecies for children as soon as they arrive at camp.
2. **NEVER use bribery.** Linking a successful stay at camp to a material object sends the wrong message. The reward should be your child's newfound confidence and independence.
3. **Explain that there are NO PHONES and no calls allowed.** Phones are NOT allowed at camp. No exceptions. Calls to home will not be made unless there is a medical emergency. Encourage your child to tough it out; let them gain self-confidence in making it through the week.
4. **Promote independence.** Practice separations (e.g. sleepovers, field trips) to simulate the camp experience.
5. **Discuss what camp will be like before your child leaves.** Talk about the exciting activities, rugged hikes, and having a fun week with their friends!
6. **Send mail and packages!** Remember, snacks and gum are NOT allowed, but mail is a great way to remind your child that they are loved and that you will see them soon.
7. **Keep letters simple and encouraging.** Refrain from going into great detail about what your child is missing back home or that the dog/cat misses them.
8. **Pack a personal item from home.** Stuffed animals, special pillows or blankets are great options.
9. **Don't feel guilty about encouraging your child to stay the whole week at camp!** For many children, camp plays an important role in their growth and development.

A final word: Remember, you will see your child on Tuesday and again on Friday (it's just two days). Let's make sure we make the camp experience one that's full of positive memories!

Mile High Ministries

