



## Helping Homesickness

Every child will experience some degree of homesickness while being away from home for the first time. When your child is at Camp Glen Brook, there is little that you can do to help if homesickness strikes—it's up to your child to get through it with the support and help of their friends and our amazing staff. The good news is that you can help your child through his or her homesickness with a little preparation before Glen Brook is even in session.

**1. Have confidence in your child's ability to manage the challenge of being away, and have faith in your child's ability to beat homesickness.**

Your children know you intimately-- if the thought of your child being away is unbearable to you, it is going to be very hard for your child to make the transition to camp. If you're not confident, please give us a call! As camp professionals, we've seen and successfully worked through more homesickness than anybody, and we're here to help.

**2. Talk with your child about the possibility of homesickness.**

You might imagine that this will fan the fires of worry, but if you don't talk about it your child won't know what to do if they do experience it. Most importantly, he or she won't know whether you believe he/she's capable of getting over it. You can say, "You will probably feel a bit homesick when you go to camp. Most kids do, but they get over it in time if they try to deal with it head-on and put some effort into coping—your counselor can help you get through it. Feeling homesick just means that you have a home worth missing, a place where people love you. It is the most natural thing in the world to feel homesickness."

Then, if it is true, you might say, "And I felt homesick the first time I went away from home for one/two/three weeks. It is part of going to camp". This kind of normalizing conversation reassures a child that what he or she is likely to feel has been felt before and is survivable.

**3. Arrange for your child to practice being away.** If your child hasn't been away from home, a practice weekend with a friend, aunt, or grandparents can be very helpful-- and celebrate the achievement of doing it successfully.

These tips have been adapted with permission from the wonderful book "Homesick and Happy" by Michael Thompson, PhD. For further reading about camps and homesickness, we highly recommend this book.

And of course we're here for you and are happy to talk about the specifics of your child's situation— just give us a call!

Sincerely,  
The Camp Glen Brook Staff