



Adjusting to Camp: How to encourage successful campers!

Adjusting to leaving home and coming to camp can often be difficult for campers, parents and families.

We hope the information below will help you prepare for you and your child for their time at Camp Lookout.

Do's:

- Encourage independence year-round – sleepovers, visits to family without mom and dad.
- Talk about what camp will be like – early and often!
- Reassure your child that their counselors will be available to help with problems and encouragement.
- Talk about how often you plan on keeping in touch with each other while at camp. Care-packages and letters are a great way to send your love from afar.
- Talk about how contact may affect your child – contact from home can make campers more homesick.
- Be supportive and positive! It's okay to let your child know you will miss them while they are gone, but do so in a positive way. For example: "We'll miss you while you're away, but we know you are going to have a great time!"
- Give your child the chance to be successful!
- Please remember that no-news usually means good-news!

Don'ts

- ***Make promises to pick up your camper early if they are homesick.*** Oftentimes, campers who have discussed "early exits" with parents will not try to be successful while away.
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- Feel guilty about encouraging your child to stay at camp if they are having a hard time. This is their time and it's all part of the growing-up process.

Camp is a great way for kids to gain independence and self-confidence. Talk with us about your camper's experience. Don't hesitate to call to check-in to see how your child is doing. We understand parents need reassurance too.

Communications:

- **LETTERS:** Everyone, both campers and parents, like to receive "real" post office mail! Short, newsy letters or postcards from home are welcomed by almost every camper. Keep in mind that letters from downstate or out of state will often take 3-5 days to get to camp (or to get from camp to you). You might consider mailing a brief note several days prior to the opening day of the session so that mail will be waiting for your camper. And, if you would like to receive mail from your camper, be certain to send stamped addressed postcards or envelopes with him/her. Although we require at least one letter home as a meal ticket from each camper, it is possible that you may not receive frequent letters from your child. Past experience has indicated that few letters home usually mean that a camper is "too busy to write" and having a good time.
- **PACKAGES:** Who doesn't like to receive packages, especially when you are away from home! We have discovered, however, over the past few summers a "growth spurt" in both the number and size of packages sent to campers at camp. It was not uncommon, last summer, to have 3 or 4 or more post office tubs filled with packages-- some days 20-30 packages. Virtually every package contained food and the total volume of food sent to camp was amazing!

So we need your help! Feel free to send your camper small packages (the key word here is *small*) containing books, clothing, small games, puzzles, deck of cards, makeup, sports equipment, newspapers, etc. - BUT PLEASE NO FOOD.

- **EMAIL:** Email may be sent TO campers using this address: campers@lookoutsummer.com. Please write the first and last name of the camper in the subject line. Email is downloaded and *printed* each afternoon and given to campers with the US mail, shortly after dinner.
- **CELL PHONES / ELECTRONICS:** Please review our full cell phone and electronics policy. In short, cell phones and "connected" electronics are **NOT** allowed at camp!