

Preparing your Child for Overnight Camp



Pre-Camp Preparations

Getting your child ready for camp starts long before you pack their bags.

- Spend time browsing through brochures and/or visit the camp's Web site with your child so they can get a feel for the camp cabins/dormitories and facilities.
- Confirm that all medication forms have been properly completed by your child's health care provider and that the information is current and accurate. Areas concerning specific medical issues, such as asthma, diabetes or seasonal/food allergies, should be reviewed to ensure they are updated.
- If your child is 11-18 years of age, talk to your child's health care provider about meningitis immunization.
- Familiarize yourself with camp regulations regarding food and money.
- Research camp phone call regulations and discuss them with your child, as many camps do not allow cell phones or only permit calls at certain times of day.

Practical Packing

Before your child heads off to camp, make sure they have everything needed for a comfortable camp experience.

- Begin packing several weeks in advance to avoid last minute shopping trips. Most camps will send a packing checklist to get you started.
- Involve your child in the packing process to ensure they know where things are and to make them more comfortable with the camp experience.
- Label your child's clothing and other items you do not want them to lose with their name or initials.
- Do not buy a brand new wardrobe. While one or two new items are fine, camp life can be rough on clothing.
- Save plastic bags or a laundry bag for wet or dirty clothing.
- Pack the essentials, including lip balm, sunscreen, bug repellent, protective sunglasses and a hat.

Have a Happy, Not Homesick, Camper

Camp can be an overwhelming experience for your child, especially for new campers.

- Send a letter before camp begins to ensure your child has mail waiting for them upon arrival.
- Encourage your child to leave Game Boys, CD players and iPods at home. Urge them to bring items that can be shared with other campers or cabin mates, such as board games or a deck of cards instead.
- Prepare stamped envelopes or pre-addressed postcards so your child can mail you updates from camp.
- For younger campers, pack a photo, stuffed animal or other comfort item as a reminder of home.