



PREPARING YOUR DAUGHTER FOR CAMP AND MISSING HOME

Whether your daughter is a returning camper or is embarking on her first Fernwood Cove summer, please take a few moments to familiarize yourself with some important ideas that will assist you to help your child in her transition from home to camp.

HOMESICKNESS: Fernwood Cove has never had a case of homesickness. This is because we do not believe that *missing home* is a sickness. When a camper is missing home we qualify her feelings by pointing out that she is simply missing the familiar things and people she loves. We then give her tools/life skills to help her deal with her feelings of missing home and prepare her for future endeavors of independence. We ask that you assist us by preparing your daughter for camp.

Here are some important guidelines and hints:

- **Helpful preparations with your child prior to camp** might include making a calendar (with important dates on it like visiting day, birthdays, 4th of July) to help her visualize the length of her stay at camp; assuring her that when she gets home things will be just as she left them; or making sure she feels confident that you will look after and love any of her pets while she is gone.
- **Have a letter waiting for your daughter upon her arrival at camp.** A cheerful letter encouraging her to have a wonderful time at camp will help her not to dwell on feelings of sadness or what she might be missing at home. To allow for mail delays, please mail your letter the week before your daughter arrives at camp.
- **Especially for new campers,** the first few days can be exhilarating, exhausting, and sometimes a little sad. As always, the directors are available by phone or email at camp. Please give us a call or write an email, if you have any concerns or questions you would like to discuss.
- **Most importantly, never discuss a "pick-up deal" with your child.** Example: "If you don't like camp you can come home," or "Just try it and see if you like it and if not I will come get you." Your daughter has committed to camp for the entire session of 26 days, and it is important that she understands the significance of finishing what she has begun; she will hold you to your promise to pick her up - even if she is having a great time. If at the end of her stay at camp she decides she does not wish to return to camp next year, she will have made an informed decision having accomplished her original goal.

Should your daughter become homesick, one of our directors, a counselor, and/or an older camper will work with her to help her understand and overcome her feelings of homesickness.

- **Camper Phone Calls** - Campers are not allowed to make phone calls home during the first 12 days of camp, since a premature call can bring a dormant case of homesickness to life. If you feel the need to know how your daughter is transitioning into camp, call or email one of the directors. We will be prompt in initiating a call to you if homesickness or other issues develop. If there is an occasion such as a family birthday that falls within this twelve-day period, we will be happy to arrange a special call. *Please see the "Telephone Policy" information within this packet for more detailed information on telephone calls in and out of camp.*