

PREPARATION FOR CAMP FOR FIRST-TIME CAMPERS

As the day for departure approaches:

- Find a few chances for your child to have practice overnights away from you.
- Talk up the fun of being at camp and out in nature.
- Go for a walk together and brainstorm about what kinds of things your child might get to see or do at camp that is the same as, and different from, home.
- Admit to yourself that you will probably miss your child, but do not burden your child with this point.
- Do not dwell on the fact that the family or pets will miss your child.
- Let your child have some practice overnights away from you, such as with friends or relatives, including a weekend away.
- As you and your child pack (do at least some of this together), include familiar belongings and clothes.
- Make sure you and your child understand that you will not be communicating by phone (our phone is for business and emergencies only). Talking on the phone usually tends to make homesickness worse!
- Include a self-addressed envelope as encouragement of a way to be in touch (help resurrect a dying art!), let your child know that s/he can obtain more materials, including stamps, in our bookstore.
- Write a letter a few days in advance so that your child will receive something in the first mail delivery. If you forget, you can slip me one on opening day for hand delivery.

On opening day and during camp:

- Avoid a big fuss at departure. Do say goodbye, but do not draw it out. Crying children do stop crying shortly AFTER the parent leaves.
- Send lots of letters, comic strips, sports statistics, short news bits, something fun, but NOT GUM, CANDY OR OTHER FOOD.
- If you can't get a letter mailed it's okay to send an email or fax through the camp (see first page) but don't ask your child to RSVP in the same manner.
- Avoid sending bad news, saying how much you miss the child, and telling how much fun you are having without him/her.
- Do not be despondent if YOU don't get any mail, or if letters are rather uninformative. We encourage them, and provide time, addresses, etc., for letter-writing, but can only lead a horse to water...
- If you are anxious, you can check in with the director to ask how things are going. You will hear from us if there are any concerns, and we do not hesitate to consult you for advice specific to your child.
- Remember that the staff are trained to deal with homesickness and other woes, and that the whole purpose of the staff is to provide for the happiness and well-being of your child.
- Pick up your child on time. Being the only one left, long after departure time is over, can really dampen the best camp experience.

**IF YOU MUST SEND OVERNIGHT PACKAGES,
USE USPS EXPRESS MAIL AND DO NOT REQUIRE A SIGNATURE;
OTHERWISE WE MAY NOT GET THE PACKAGE FOR SEVERAL DAYS.**