



ANTI-HOMESICKNESS-ADVISER

Dear Parents,

now it's almost time: In summer your child travels with Camp Adventure for the first time. Maybe it even will be the first time that he or she travels alone without parents or relatives. As we are getting more and more questions, we have decided to put together a small package for you parents with little tips from experts to make everything as easy as possible for you and your child. Follow our tips and your child will have a fantastic holiday, have many new experiences and make friends from all over the world!

All these tips have been developed together with the "International Camping Fellowship". And the more you think your child will be a "homesick candidate" - or your child even claims to be one - the more you should consider the following tips.

1. Co-decide: We have different camps and also from other organizers there are still many great travel possibilities. Please ask your child if he or she can imagine a camp with us and if he or she would like to travel with us. Take a look at our offer with your child and decide together which camp suits him or her best. Simply registering your child without asking is a bad start!
2. Inform and enjoy: Have a look at the photos of the last years together. Encourage your child that a lot of great new things are waiting for him or her and that he or she should try everything. If you show interest in the camp, your child will quickly feel like finding out more - and anticipation will be awakened!
3. Train the "Without Mom and Dad" time: If your child has never been separated from you before, try it in small steps first. Whether visiting your grandparents or your friends over the weekend - start small. So your child gets used to it and experiences that it is not bad to stay a few nights away, because you always come back again. Important: During this time please do NOT call the child, but consider the separation also as a training for you.
4. Go shopping by yourself: Go shopping with your child for the trip and let them decide which toothpaste or shampoo they want to take with them. Even these little things strengthen the child's self-esteem enormously and they learn to take responsibility for themselves.
5. Try sleeping bag: We sleep in sleeping bags in our camps. Please let your child try out how he or she sleeps in the sleeping bag to get used to it. Then he or she falls asleep much more calmly on the first evening. You could also go camping with your child before. The sounds of nature are fantastic, but perhaps a little disturbing for someone who doesn't know it. The more often your child has tried camping in a familiar environment (e.g. in the garden), the easier it is to get used at camp.
6. Pack yourself: We all know this from our first trips: Mom packs best. That may be right, but to give your child the comforting feeling that really everything has been packed, only packing helps. Our recommendation: Pack the different types of clothes in different coloured plastic bags. So the child knows immediately where to find the fresh T-shirt or socks and doesn't have to empty the whole suitcase or backpack. In addition, the clothes can be stored better in the tent.
7. When saying goodbye: There are absolute taboo phrases that make it impossible for teamers to work with the child if there are any signs of homesickness. Even if you have these feelings at the moment of your farewell - the following exemplary statements (Don'ts) are no help to the children:

Don'ts	Dos
"Don't be afraid! If you don't feel well, I will pick you up quickly". - "Just call me when you get homesick - I'll take care of everything."	"If you get homesick, let your teamer know. He will take good care of you. Think of all the great things you'll do."
"I will miss you so much! I don't know how I can stand it without you."	"I'll miss you, but we'll see each other again soon - after the camp. So have a lot of fun!"

So please make it clear when saying goodbye that your child should simply have a lot of fun. Understandably, saying goodbye is not easy for you either. But if you show your child your fears too much, it worries about YOU - not about himself. And this is the no. 1 reason for homesickness: the concern for the parents that they are sad!!!

8. At camp: If it comes to homesickness attacks, it's usually only on the 2nd - 3rd day. And homesickness is not a disease, but quite normal. Everyone knows the feeling of missing something from home. Therefore: Please give us the chance to teach the children how to deal best with this problem. Solving problems is one of the most important so-called "soft skills", i.e. skills in dealing with people, situations and decisions. In order to learn these skills, which are important for life, it is important that you give your child the freedom he or she needs. If you want your child to contact you to tell you how he or she is doing, you are depriving him or her of the chance to develop further with the help of the teamers alone. So PLEASE DO NOT CALL YOUR CHILD IN CAMP! Instead, ask your child to write you postcards or letters (see the "Writing Letters" section of the info package). If there are heavy messages to deliver, such as the loss of a pet or similar, do not call or write directly to the child. Instead, either call the office and ask if you should call the child now or tell them personally when the child is home. And in the case of serious family incidents, please inform the camp management in advance so that they can keep a special eye on the child and better interpret any abnormal behaviour.

9. Too much homesickness: If the homesickness becomes too strong or lasts for several days, we will call you and give you the chance to talk to your child directly. After the interview, we will discuss with the camp management whether it makes sense to pick up the child. But also here due to bad experiences we would like to point out again: Please NEVER arrange the pick-up directly with the child by phone call. Give the child and us the chance to try again. For insurance reasons, visits or even the collection of the child are only possible after prior agreement with the camp management or the office!!

10. Visits to the camp: Please do not simply visit your child at camp. As already mentioned above, visits to the camp are only possible after prior agreement with the camp manager/office for insurance reasons! In addition, visits promote homesickness rather than it helps, not only for your child, but also for the other camp participants: "Why does xy get visitors and I don't?" Envy and homesickness are often the result of visits.

Maybe it's comforting to know that every year only very, very few children have to go home because of homesickness. If you follow our tips, your child will certainly have a great time, make many friends and return to you strengthened from the camp experience.

We have summarized our homesickness tips in a Youtube playlist for you.