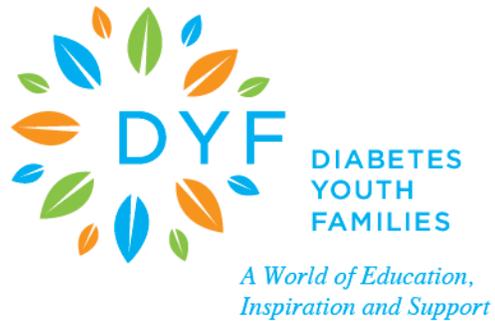


Preparing Your Child for Camp

Whether you are sending your child to camp alone for the first time or are coming all together for a Family Camp session, we recognize that some campers need more time than others to get used to new routines, to adjust to living with others, and to deal with the challenges and choices that inevitably come with group living. As Bob Ditter, family therapist and contributing author to *Camping Magazine*, suggests, ***camp is "...a great opportunity for children to learn to manage emotions, tolerate individual difference and discover that they can resolve many issues on their own."***

Whether your child is coming to camp with or without you, as a parent there are some important steps that can be taken in helping to prepare a child for summer camp, and support them if they experience missing home.

- ✓ Involve your child in packing for camp. Do it together.
- ✓ Pack a favorite item like a favorite article of clothing or a small stuffed animal.
- ✓ Share stories about your first experience away from home when you were a child (keeping the story positive!)
- ✓ Mail a positive, encouraging letter to your child three or four days before they depart for camp. That way it will be there on the first day.
- ✓ Encourage your child to share any concerns they may have with their counselors or another trusted staff member, and let the child know that their counselors are always there for them, including nights.
- ✓ Speak about the camp experience in a **positive** light. Oftentimes a child can sense their parents'/guardians' anxiety about camp and will react. Let the child know that they are going to have a wonderful time at camp, and that as parents, you are excited they are attending.



The following are suggestions about what you as a parent might discuss with your child before they go to camp that will help your child be more successful during the session.

- ✓ Every camper is part of a group, and we expect you to cooperate and help.
- ✓ If you are having a problem, your counselor is there to help you. You don't have to wait to tell us, you can tell your counselor.
- ✓ Clean-up is part of camp. We expect you to participate.
- ✓ There are many new things at camp, and you may not like them all or be as good at some as you are at others. We expect you to try!
- ✓ Things will be different at camp than at home and that's okay! We can't wait to hear about everything when you get home.
- ✓ Go about making a new friend or two. If you are timid/shy about meeting someone new, ask about what they like and be a good listener.
- ✓ Not everyone has to be your friend, and you don't have to be everyone else's friend. If you have one or two good friends at camp, that's great! Everyone, however, is to be treated with respect.

If you are concerned that your child may have difficulty in adapting to camp life, please reach out to the Camp Director ahead of time so that we can work together to create a successful environment for your child.

If you want to know how your child is doing at camp, feel free to contact us at any time during your child's stay. We will connect you to their counselor, who will give you an update and share some stories.