

*For Parents:*  
*Tips for Success for your first time camper*

 **Discuss what camp will be like before your child leaves.**

1. Download the 'Camp Newspapers' from The Writer's Corner on our website and read them with your child; they are written by campers and full of fun details.
2. Look at the photos, slide shows and camp DVDs on the Website together.
3. Go to the 'FAQ' section on our website for descriptions of activities, cabins, etc.
4. Acknowledge in a positive, confident way that "I am going to miss you, but I know you will have a good time at camp." **Share your optimism not your worries with your child.** If you have concerns share them with us on the Personal Data Forms. Please feel free to call us, the Camp Directors, and let us know what's on your mind so we can work together to make sure your child has a successful summer.
5. Pre-address and stamp envelopes or postcards and ask your child to write to you twice a week. Counselors will help younger campers write cards and letters, and we set aside two days a week as 'be kind to parent's day' when everyone writes home.

 **Please do not 'bargain' with your camper, for example: "I promise to come get you if you feel bad."**

We will stay in close touch with you, and with your support, we'll help your child and their counselors work out solutions to the growth challenges that are always a part of going to overnight camp. We want to help your child be more confident and self-reliant rather than have 'going home' be the first option. In very rare occasions we do agree that leaving camp early is the best option, but not until we and the parents and the camper have worked on 'making camp work.' We will contact new camp families by phone during the first few days of camp.

 **Contact us for names of other similar age children who are attending camp the same session**

and you may wish to talk with those parents, or have your children meet or talk on the phone prior to camp. By mid-May we usually have a draft of our bunkhouse groupings for the summer and can provide such information.

 **Let your child pick a special 'comfort' item like a stuffed animal or a favorite toy to bring to camp.**

Encourage older first time campers to bring paperback books, favorite magazines, new CDs or iPod music, their tennis racket, musical instrument or ball glove. (Please do not send cell phones, laptops, DVD players or electronic games)

 **Relax and enjoy your reduced parenting demands! ---your children are in good, experienced and professional hands.** We are partners, and we'll contact you and ask for advice if we have any questions or concerns about your child's well-being. Enjoy your reduced parenting demands----spend more one-on-one time with the younger sibling at home, take a vacation, go to a conference, or just relish late dinners at a favorite restaurant!

 **Send frequent, upbeat letters to your camper.** An email every other day through our Bunk1.com partnership, or 3 letters a week is good. Please don't send letters or emails about the family pet like; "Fluffy is so depressed that you're gone - she won't eat - she just stresses all day - everyone is missing you so much." What kind of positive message is that? Better to say, 'Fluffy is spending her days digging in the garden or harassing the neighbor's cat, and hey dude, what's going on at camp?' If you wish, you may send one 'care package' a week only, with enough of the camper's favorite brownies to go around once to everyone in the bunk, in a sealable container. Multiple, huge packages attract insects, make for unhealthy eating patterns and are a trash recycling problem.