

# Homesickness

## Do's & Dont's

When sending your child to Camp

### -Do-

- Focus on how much FUN camp will be
- Tell them it's natural to miss their parents and home when they're away and those feelings are normal.
- Discuss coping strategies:
  - keep a positive attitude when feeling sad
  - talk to their counselor or other adult at camp
  - keep a journal about their experiences at camp
  - write a letter about camp and their feelings
  - keep busy with camp activities and friends
  - keep a calendar and mark off days to see how quickly time at camp is going by
- Let them know how proud you are of their independence and how excited you are to hear of their adventures when they come home
- (If they ask) Tell them that there is not an option to call you or come home early
- Encourage them to write letters telling about their new friends and the fun activities they are participating in at camp
- Write encouraging, cheerful letters to your child
- Acknowledge your own feelings about your child being able to live without you for a week, but don't express your sadness about missing them

## -Don't-

- Tell them – “If you are sad after a few days of camp, call me and I will come pick you up.” This will set your child up for failure, since most likely they will have some sad feeling that they will need to work through. Trust that the staff at Army Lake Camp will keep your child engaged and give them every opportunity to work through these feelings.
- Express a lack of confidence in their ability to be successful while away at camp – either directly to them or in front of others.
- Tell them you’ll be sad and miserable at home without them.
- Write them sad letters expressing how much you miss them or about all the events they are missing at home. If your child is homesick, it will be important for them to hear they aren’t missing anything at home that is more fun than the exciting and different opportunities they are experiencing at camp.